Developing initial teacher education for special education needs, disability and inclusive practice

Thesis

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http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.21954/ou.ro.0000fadc

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M704479X

Developing Initial Teacher Education for
Special Educational Needs, Disability and
Inclusive Practices

Doctorate in Education
Open University
Inclusive Education

October 2013
Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my husband David and my daughters Elizabeth and Martha for their unstinting support and encouragement. They have been loving, patient and forgiving and have foregone Sunday dinners, matching socks and time with me so graciously. I would not have done this without them and they must take the credit and the pride.

I would also like to thank my wonderful supervisor, Dr Felicity Fletcher-Campbell. She has supported me with a perfect mixture of kindness, wisdom and forthright common sense. She has always treated me as an intelligent equal and her approach to supervising me will inspire me as I work with others in the future. I will never forget her. She has made the EdD an important, rewarding and life-changing learning experience.

Inspiring me along the way was a consummate and committed professional, Pam Wooding. Her generosity and unfailing support was an essential resource for me. Much of the credit for this work must go to her. She is a model of inclusive practice and she continues to inspire me.

I owe much to the student teachers and school staff I worked with. Even when times were hard and confidence was low, they kept on board with this project and this was a measure of their concern to do the best they could for their pupils. I had the privilege of seeing how effective they were in providing a happy, inclusive educational experience for the children in their care. Much of the credit for this work must also go to them and their stories (as reported in this thesis) will be an inspiration to others.
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Chapter 1: The context and rationale for the study

The central questions explored in this thesis are:

- How can Initial Teacher Education (ITE) be developed to enhance the skills, confidence and preparedness of student teachers for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and for inclusive practice?
- During school placements what conditions, processes and activities support the development of understanding, skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers?

The research process, located in England, combined an inclusive action research (IAR) project situated within one partnership school with other research tools to enable analysis of the conditions, processes and activities that may be relevant to the development of student teachers in the area of SEND and inclusive practices.

This study sought to contribute to programme design within my own institution in ways that might be of interest to other providers of ITE in the UK and more widely given international concern about the relative inefficacy of ITE and inclusive teacher education in preparing teachers for diverse learners (OECD, 2010).
In applying a collaborative, inclusive action research project, this study sought to construct a methodology that was also a pedagogic framework for inclusive teacher education in the context of school placements within partnership schools. This arose from rigorous analysis of the evidence and hypotheses existing in current literature about models and practices that might be most supportive (see Chapter 2). To a significant extent, the rationale for this thesis was also situated in my own struggle to develop professional readiness for SEND and inclusive practices in my own career and among student teachers.

1.1: Professional biographical rationale for the study

Beginning my career as a teacher in 1988, my first class included two children with the label of ‘SEND’ - Emma and Darren. Though my reactions are vastly different now, I will describe Emma and Darren in the way I recall seeing them at the time. Emma had cerebral palsy and her speech was unintelligible. She slurred and dribbled and wore calipers. She completed work incredibly slowly, despite having the support of a teaching assistant allocated specifically to her. I had never met a person with this degree of disability before. Darren (I was told) had something called ‘pragmatic semantic disorder’ and was unable to read or write. I struggled to design work for him that he could actually manage. Emma and Darren’s presence in my class was the result of the Local Education Authority’s move towards including children with more exceptional needs in mainstream schools and at the time I was not very happy about this policy and its impact on me. In the case of Emma and Darren, I did not know what to do or where to start. The presence of a teaching assistant added an additional layer of awkwardness.
because she could see my failures day after day and I felt exposed. I found myself wondering why my own ITE programme had prepared me so poorly. Since then, Emma and Darren and all of the other children I have encountered have taught me to put aside my fears and misconceptions. Following a career as a primary teacher and a special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) I became a lecturer in SEND on ITE programmes within a large Higher Education Institution (HEI). I wanted student teachers’ induction into the profession to be less traumatic than mine so that their pupils’ rights could be better served. I also wanted these new teachers to be skilled agents for inclusion.

However, this proved to be a much more difficult project than I had predicted. Though my colleagues and I had secured developments to the university-based curriculum, students were not emerging from their training with high enough levels of confidence and skill. My hypothesis at the time was that this was due to a lack of congruence between university-based and school-based programme elements.

Motivated by this hypothesis, I moved institutions so that I could take up the post of Partnership Development Manager (PDM) within a large ITE programme. This role focused on the operational and strategic management of school-based learning in ITE. It enabled more direct collaboration with schools in the area of ITE for SEND and inclusive practices and this thesis forms part of these wider developments.

Since I was responsible for developing partnership working and concerned to prepare student teachers for inclusive classrooms, I decided to undertake a collaborative project
with a partnership school in the form of Inclusive Action Research (IAR). This decision was also prompted by evidence in the literature that there are no simple answers about how best to prepare student teachers (Florian, 2010; Forlin, 2010; Jordan et al., 2009; McIntyre 2009; Sharma et al., 2008; Lewis and Norwich, 2005) but that the solutions were likely to involve collaboration, reflective and reflexive work in authentic contexts (Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi, 2009; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; Ainscow et al., 2003; O’Hanlon, 2003). The IAR involved teachers, teaching assistants and student teachers on placement in the school and focused on the actions that research participants agreed were immediately relevant to the preparation of students for inclusive classrooms. The design of the project was also influenced by my own position with regard to democratic research processes and my concern as a partnership development manager to seek forms of collaboration that bring mutual benefits to students, schools and children. Its design also and drew on key messages from the national and international literature about what practices and principles might underpin effective inclusive teacher education.

Because I sought not only to enhance the practice in my institution but also to contribute to wider knowledge and understanding, it was important to acknowledge the limited scope of action research (Reason and Bradbury, 2013; Jennings and Graham, 2004) and to find ways to address this. I applied methods to produce further data that enabled reflection on the IAR. I used a field-work log, kept a reflective journal and had a series of conversations and reflective meetings with participants during and after the project. This enabled identification of the key qualities of the IAR (and the wider
placement context) that were relevant, not only to the professional development of students but also to school staff.

This research design has resulted in a large volume of data and some related to the IAR has to be reported, even where it is highly particularistic, in order to give credence to the emergent findings.

I embarked on a journey along with those participating with me. My role involved both 'insider' and 'outsider' research and, consequently, was challenging. I had to learn when to step outside and not interfere, and when to intervene to keep things moving forward. Having a very clear idea of my own values and beliefs, I often found the research journey painful when others' beliefs and values did not match my own (see 3.7.5).

1.2: Extending the rationale – ITE in need of development

The singular experiences described above are not enough to justify the relevance of this study to policy and practice. More widely, concerns about the shortcomings of inclusive teacher education have been arising over a sustained period. Davies and Garner (1996) claimed that whilst inclusive education was promoted in policy and legislation, the ITE curriculum was not preparing new teachers for its practical challenges, noting that the development of ITE was a priority if the inclusion agenda was to be forwarded. This view was pervasive in the literature at the time (Reynolds, 2001; Avramidis et al., 2000;

UNESCO (2009) report an international commitment to ensuring inclusive systems of education given that such systems are educationally justified (adaptation to diversity benefits all), socially justified (inclusion builds positive attitudes for a just society) and economically justified (complex segregated and specialised services for different 'types' of children are expensive). That inclusive education is a priority for policy development is confirmed consistently in official European and Global forums (OECD, 2010; Council of the European Union, 2010; Council of the European Union, 2009; European Parliament, 2008; Commission of the European Communities, 2007).

ITE and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is often regarded as the decisive factor in developing a more inclusive education system (Forlin, 2010; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Abbott, 2007; Vickerman, 2007; Ainscow et al., 2006; Golder et al., 2005; Campbell et al., 2003; Mittler, 2000). There is recognition that 'the challenges faced by the teaching profession are increasing as educational environments become more complex and heterogeneous' (European Parliament, 2008, p.2). However, there is also
widespread evidence that teacher education is falling short in securing sufficient confidence, skill and preparedness for diverse learners. For example, the outcomes of the first Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) by the OECD (2009) revealed that surveyed teachers across 23 countries did not feel well prepared to respond to the challenge of diverse learners. The vast majority reported that they had significant development needs in teaching learners with special educational needs and disabilities, with a third identifying this as an urgent development need. The OECD survey of teacher development for inclusion (OECD, 2010) found that though 96% of student teachers and 65% of teachers reported that diversity issues (including SEND) were covered in their ITE programmes in some form, 47% of student teachers and 66% of teachers judged that current teacher education was offering little in the form of effective preparation. Such loss of transfer from input to feelings of preparedness is perplexing and is reflected in my own experience (see 1.3). It may suggest that many contemporary models of ITE may be ineffectual, even when giving attention to diversity issues. The OECD (2010) note the urgent need for relevant, empirical research about what pedagogic models and principles may underpin effective inclusive teacher education; the dearth of evidence does not help policy makers or teacher educators to answer crucial questions about how to move forward. The disappointing lack of research evidence in this field is frequently noted in the wider literature (Florian, 2012; Forlin, 2012b; European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education [EADSNE, 2010; EADSNE, 2012; Florian, 2012).

Though the TALIS survey (OECD, 2009; OECD, 2010) did not include teachers from the UK or England, nor the primary phase, there is evidence from the annual surveys of
NQTs (Teaching and Development Agency, 2010) that in England too, primary teacher preparation programmes are relatively ineffective in this area (see 1.3).

In summary, in England, Europe and across the international community, the literature reports on the continuing poor preparation of newly qualified teachers (NQT) for SEND and inclusive education (Training and Development Agency, 2010; Ofsted, 2009; Abbott, 2007; Moran, 2007). Empirical research exploring the relative effectiveness of particular approaches and pedagogic models is in short supply.

As explained in detail in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3, the methodology was designed to take forward what is already known (or hypothesised) about effective approaches. The study aims to make an important contribution to the national and international debate through designing, applying, evaluating and critiquing a pedagogic model for inclusive teacher education.

1.3: Rationale emerging from work place evaluations

Within my current institution, data on school placement performance between 2009 and 2012 (Table 1.1) suggests that students are less likely to be assessed as ‘good’ or ‘very good’ in their achievement of those standards most associated with SEND and inclusive practices than against a majority of other professional standards. Table 1.1
indicates that though attainment in these areas appears to be rising, it still lags behind other areas.

TABLE 1.1: Percentage of cohort achieving ‘good’ or ‘very good’ against competence standards, 2009 - 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence Standards most associated with inclusive practice (Q18 and Q19)</th>
<th>Range in other areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009 Cohort</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010 Cohort</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 Cohort</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 Cohort</td>
<td>86%</td>
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</table>

In official, National surveys of NQTs by the Teaching Development Agency (TDA) between 2006 and 2010 (TDA, 2010), student teachers reported being relatively poorly prepared by their ITE programmes to support learners with the label of SEND (though there are criticisms of the reliability and validity of this data given limited samples and some conceptual problems as reported later). In my current institution from 2011 onwards, internal surveys and surveys by the TDA were implying improvements in the number of students reporting good or very good levels of preparedness. For example, 86% of the cohort reported this in 2013 compared to 48% in 2010 (see Table 1.2) but this is in contrast to other areas where the range is 67%–93% with most lying between 80 and 92%. My current institution is making strong progress, in part because the findings of this study have consistently informed programme development over the period of its enactment. The will be discussed further in Chapter 6.
TABLE 1.2: Results of TDA NQT survey for current institution (University of X) and nationally 2010-2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of X</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>University of X</td>
<td>National</td>
<td>University of X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Colleagues have shared experiences of the difficulties student teachers have in transferring the inclusive practices they had learned about in university into school placements. It is important to present an example of this to illustrate a phenomenon that is not uncommon. A colleague reported an experience as a University Link Tutor (ULT) making an assessment visit to an undergraduate student in school. During previous weeks in university sessions the student had been involved in exploring personalised planning for inclusion. The value of using a holistic, anti-deficit and anti-labelling approach was considered in depth and these ideas seem to have been received positively by the students. Prior to the ULTs observation of the lesson the student anxiously noted that one of the children was a new arrival in the class and, like her teacher, she knew very little about him except that he ‘had an SEN.’ She reported that she was waiting to find out ‘what was wrong with him’ because he couldn’t do anything and that there was no way to know where to start without a ‘diagnosis.’ Though this event may be variously interpreted, for my colleagues and me it represented the consequences of discontinuity between students’ experiences in school and the university-based curriculum. The student may have been unable to sustain the inclusive discourses learned in university because it would have meant challenging attitudes and practices that she did not feel able to challenge; the mentor and the student may have been adopting the dominant discourses that promote labelling and medicalization as a
consequence of the bureaucracy associated with resource allocation (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011; Slee, 2010; Thomas and Glenny, 2005); the student may have been trying to protect herself from a negative assessment. Whatever the interpretation, there are signs of the problematic nature of student development for SEND and inclusive practices and of the need to bring more coherence to school and university based learning.

In summary, evaluations and reflections arising from my workplace led me to believe that university modules have limited impact if students are unable to work through the practical challenges of inclusive practice in school in a concomitant way. There is strong support for this idea in relation to ITE for inclusion (McIntyre, 2009; Vickerman, 2007; Sharma et al., 2008; Avramidis et al., 2000; McIntyre, 2006; Golder et al., 2005; Garner, 2000; Blake et al., 1998) and in relation to broader conceptualisations of effective ITE (Scheppens et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Korthagen et al., 2006; Conderman et al., 2005). This will be explored in further in Chapter 2.

1.4: The research context

The HEI

The HEI is a provider of ITE in England with a large number of primary undergraduate and postgraduate places and a smaller number of secondary postgraduate places. It operates a collaborative model of partnership where schools and an HEI share responsibility for designing, delivering and assuring the quality of the programmes. In
2010, the provider was judged as ‘outstanding’ by Ofsted who commended the harmonious relationship between schools and university and the positive impact of this on students’ attainment and readiness for employment (Ofsted, 2010). The ITE programmes have a number of partnership steering groups within their strategic structure with these comprising of school and university representatives. One of these is the Partnership SEND Steering Group (PSSG) with a remit to promote readiness for SEND and inclusive practices across the ITE programmes. I am a member of this group and secured its inception as part of my aspiration to develop ITE in this area in a collaborative way.

The school

The processes used to select the school for the study are described in Chapter 3. The school is a large primary and nursery school that has worked in partnership with the HEI for ten years. It hosts several students for placements each year and has a local reputation for being an inclusive school that works effectively with children who have special educational needs and disabilities. The assistant head of the school is also the SENCo. She is a member of the PSSG and has recently been elected as chair of the Partnership Quality Group (PQG), the most powerful forum for strategic development within the ITE programmes. The IAR took place within this school over a period of 22 months. Phase 1 ran between November 2010 and July 2011, phase 2 ran between September 2011 and July 2012.
Participants

There were a total of 22 participants in the project: 5 were teaching assistants, 11 were students and 6 were teachers. Their roles are described in Table. 1.3.
<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Role</th>
<th>Phase of participation</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Phase 1 November 2010 – July 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abigail</td>
<td>Postgraduate student teacher on first school placement (Placed in Year 1)</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alison</td>
<td>Assistant Head Teacher SENCo School Link Teacher (Responsible for overseeing quality of student experience in the school)</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Class Teacher (Foundation Stage) Mentor to two undergraduate students (Claire and Kathryn)</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerys</td>
<td>Teacher (Foundation Stage) Mentor to an undergraduate student (Karina)</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charlotte</td>
<td>Class Teacher (Year 3) Newly Qualified Teacher during phase 1</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claire</td>
<td>Undergraduate student teacher in 3rd year of programme (placed in foundation stage)</td>
<td>\</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine</td>
<td>Assistant Head Teacher (Year 4) Mentor to a postgraduate student (Lorna)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
<td>Undergraduate student teacher in 3rd year of programme (placed in foundation stage)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harriet</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant (Year 4) Supporting a child with Down Syndrome.</td>
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<td>Jane</td>
<td>Class Teacher (Foundation Stage) Mentor to two undergraduate students (Elizabeth and Lisa)</td>
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<td>Karina</td>
<td>Undergraduate student teacher in 3rd year of programme (placed in foundation stage)</td>
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<td>Kathryn</td>
<td>Undergraduate student teacher in 3rd year of programme (placed in foundation stage)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant (Year 5) Supporting children with SENDs in KS2</td>
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<td>Lily</td>
<td>Undergraduate final year student (placed in year 6)</td>
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<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Undergraduate third year student (placed in foundation stage)</td>
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<td>Lorna</td>
<td>Postgraduate student on first block placement (placed in Year 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Michelle</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant (Year 1) Supporting a child with SENDs</td>
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<td>Sascha</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant (Year 1)</td>
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<td>Selina</td>
<td>Teaching Assistant (Year 4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Veronica</td>
<td>Teacher (Year 1) Mentor to an postgraduate student (Abigail)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>GTP student (wished to be a participant only in project action 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>GTP student (wished to be a participant only in project action 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Debs</td>
<td>University tutor – research facilitator and participant</td>
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</table>
Types of placement

This thesis makes regular reference to school-based experiences. There are two types of school-based experiences operating across ITE in England. Fully assessed school placements usually comprise several weeks within one school and placement class, during which students are continuously assessed in their progress towards the Teaching Standards (DfE, 2010). Their progression to QTS depends on attainment of all the standards to at least a 'satisfactory' level. Henceforth, these types of placements will be termed school placements. The second type is the non-assessed placement or field experience that may comprise shorter periods in school (1-4 weeks) to enable development in specific areas. For example in my current institution students can complete an extended placement of four weeks in a special school, a week's placement in a multicultural school or other placements in Key Stage 3. It is important to note that this study is positioned within a school placement though wider literature also refers to field experiences as relevant sites for development as explored in Chapter 2.

1.5: The aims and purposes of the study

This study operated across two distinct but interrelated dimensions - the internal dimension which operated through the IAR and the potentially transferable dimension drawn from the process of reflecting on the IAR through use of additional methodological tools. Chapter 3 provides a full account of the origin, design and intentions of both dimensions.
The internal dimension

As part of the ‘modus operandi’ of the IAR project (reported in Chapter 3), aims were developed by the participating group collectively as follows:

- To develop the understanding, skill and confidence of all school-based participants for SEND and inclusive practices
- To develop the understanding, skill and confidence of student teachers on placement in the school for SEND and inclusive practices
- To enhance the inclusive educational experience of children in the school.

The potentially transferable dimension

Emerging from the internal dimension, the potentially transferable aim was:

- To understand the conditions, processes and activities that might develop student teachers’ confidence, skill and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices during school placements.

As outlined in Chapter 3, both dimensions come together to pursue the essential questions for the study.

Conditions, processes and activities

Within this study ‘conditions’ relate to the wider ethos and culture of a placement school in terms of values and ways of working. For example, where members of a school team articulate and enact commitment to including all learners this could represent one of the conditions associated with the progress of student teachers. ‘Processes’ refers to
more bounded forms of practice that are complex, interconnected and ongoing. For example teamwork and collaboration may be identified as one of the processes that secure inclusive educational experiences for children. Using holistic assessment and planning processes to secure appropriate responses to diversity may be another example of a process. ‘Activities’ refers to more tightly bounded forms of practice that have specific aims and are operated through specific sets of action within defined time scales. For example, where students and teachers engage in collaborative lesson study, this could be described as an activity when it is completed within a reflective cycle over two (or more) distinct lessons.

1.6: Summary and Conclusion

This thesis has emerged from a professional biography where pursuit of improved readiness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers has been a continuing project. My own professional experiences and engagement with the literature has led me to hypothesise that school placements are a significant site for development. The following chapter addresses the literature in more detail with particular reference to how it has informed the methodological design of the study.
Chapter Two: Literature Review.

2.1: Introduction

At this point it is important to reiterate the central questions explored in this thesis:

- How can ITE develop to enhance the skills, confidence and preparedness of student teachers for SEND and for inclusive practice?
- During school placements what conditions, processes and activities support the development of skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers?

This review examines the manner and extent of the literature’s treatment of these questions and how this frames the contribution this study could and should make.

2.2: The rationale for selection of literature in the review

This study presents ITE as in need of development in the area of SEND and inclusive practices. Integral are the concepts of ‘inclusion’, ‘inclusive practice’ and ‘SEND’ and these terms need to be explored with reference to existing conceptualisations. These themes are selected for this review because arguably, and perhaps paradoxically, qualitative studies may gain credibility through demonstrating construct validity. Those adopted by the study may correspond with those more widely prevalent in ways that support comparison and potential transferability (Cohen et al., 2009; Denzin, 1997;
Lincoln and Guba, 1988). These terms are also contested and complex and their
deconstruction reveals the conceptual challenges involved in building effective inclusive
teacher education.

The review of the literature informs the design of a methodology that could also form an
effective pedagogic framework for inclusive teacher education. Hence, it explores what
is currently known about effective approaches to teacher education more generally and
in particular relation to inclusive teacher education so that the study can take these
forward for design, application, evaluation and critique.

In addition, there is widespread debate about the manner in which multiple, dominant
discourses may impact upon the efficacy of inclusive teacher education. It would be
important for any pedagogic framework for inclusive teacher education to promulgate
those discourses that support rather than contradict the concept of inclusion.
Potentially, it would also be important for data collection and analysis to be informed by
a clear theoretical understanding of these. The highly contested nature of inclusion and
teacher education for inclusion is also explored to reflect the significant conceptual and
practical challenges involved in developing inclusive teacher education through
partnership with schools. If this context is not understood, teacher educators may
retreat into using the rhetoric of inclusion whilst failing to make it central to the whole
process of teacher preparation.
The study identifies partnership schools (in the context of collaboration with a HEI) as relevant sites for development and this premise needs to be evaluated against a wider view of where and how development in ITE might best advance. These issues form the focus of this review since they relate most closely to the research questions. However the following themes were relevant but beyond the scope of the thesis:

- **Situated Learning and Communities of Practice.** Lave and Wenger’s concept of legitimate peripheral participation (Wenger and Snyder, 2000; Wenger, 1998; Lave and Wenger, 1991) provides a framework for understanding how inclusive (or exclusive) practices may be co-constructed by beginners (student teachers) and old timers (experienced teachers) through the situated learning of school placements. This conception of learning regards knowledge as relational and meaning as negotiated. This cultural conception of learning in which agents and activities mutually construct each other seems to echo some theories about the development of inclusive cultures as social and participative in character (McIntyre, 2009; Abbott, 2007; Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Nind et al., 2005; Ainscow et al., 2003; O’Hanlon, 2003). Though the review will explore theories on the development of inclusive cultures and practices, this will not be with direct reference to the concept of situated learning. This is largely because the methodology has not been modelled on social-cultural theory and its related forms of data collection and analysis.

- The role of teaching assistants in inclusive education is relevant given the makeup of the participating group (see Table 1.3) and concepts of inclusive practice as collaborative and collectively operated. Though there is no mention
of the place of teaching assistants in the development of student teachers in the literature there is much attention to the manner in which support staff might be best deployed, prepared and worked with to secure inclusive practices (Devecchi et. al., 2012; Webster, et al., 2010; Wilson, 2008; Groom, 2006).

- The **ideological, historical and philosophical nature of inclusive education** and its relationship to teacher development is also of interest since this study adopts particular constructions of what is meant by inclusive practice. Prevalent in the literature is rich and broad debate about the related concepts of difference, equality, justice, identity and education (Allan, 2001; Cline and Frederickson, 2004; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004; Thomas and Loxley, 2001; Clark et al., 1998) and though these ideas are referred to in elaborating the methodological framing for the study the literature review will not provide an in depth analysis. (Methodology), there has not been space to explore them in detail in this review.

- **Partnership in ITE** and its various modes are explored in depth in the literature (Edwards and Mutton, 2007; Smith et al., 2006; Caires and Almeida, 2005) and there is some emphasis on which forms of partnership are most likely to result in generally well-prepared new teachers (Taylor, 2008; Christie et al., 2004; Moyles and Stuart, 2003; Hodkinson and Hodkinson 1999). Though much of this literature is relevant, this review has focussed attention on the conceptualisation of school placements as significant sites for development.
In summary, this thesis does not have the scope to review all of the potentially relevant literature but focuses instead on that most relevant to the construction of this study, its methodological framework.

2.3: ITE constructed as in need of development

Nationally and internationally there is growing interest in how teacher education might be reformed to enhance inclusive education (see 1.2). However, there are many differences of opinion about the nature of the content student teachers should learn, the skills they need, what inclusion actually means and how inclusive practice might be attained. In England, policy initiatives propose the necessity to ‘remove the bias towards inclusion’ (DfE, 2011a, p.17) suggesting doubt about the appropriateness of mainstreaming. In this complex, ambiguous and unsettled context, there remain some important questions about what it is we are preparing students for in terms of SEND and inclusive practices and hence what the task set for ITE actually is. This study takes the position (informed by the literature) that the answer to this question is far from straightforward.

2.4: What are student teachers being prepared for?

The challenges set for ITE seem exacerbated by the contested nature of inclusion and inclusive practice and the uneasy fit between these concepts and the identification of an ‘othered’ category of learners labelled with ‘SEND’ (Liaisidou, 2012; Barton and Armstrong, 2001). Further, the concepts of ‘inclusion’ and ‘inclusive practice’ are
variously interpreted and contested (Liaisidou, 2012). For example, one conceptualisation of 'inclusion' is associated with movement of learners from special education to mainstream settings but with the requirement that those settings are responsive to an increasingly diverse population (Mittler, 2000; Clough, 2000; Barton, 2008). This policy has been vociferously critiqued as unrealistic (Lindsay, 2003; Croll and Moses, 1998) with some reference to the unfair burdens it places on practitioners and the need for major policy reform to secure sustainability (Wedell, 2008; MacBeath et al., 2006). Hence, ‘inclusion’ is an uncertain concept that operates within a contradictory and unsettled political, theoretical and practical context (Hegarty, 2001). ITE may need to prepare student teachers to navigate such an unstable landscape whilst acknowledging the impact of the wider political context on its own efficacy. Further, teacher educators, teachers and student teachers may take the uncertain and ambivalent commitment to inclusive education present in wider policy and parlance, as a sign that they do not have to engage in pursuing it or in striving to make it work. Though teacher educators might favour inclusion in principle, they might build an ITE curriculum that ignores it through prioritising pragmatic and less problematic concerns (such as curriculum content) as a response to external discourses.

In the face of this ambivalence and ambiguity, the argument that inclusive teacher education must include a critical theoretical dimension is significantly present in the literature (Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; Moran, 2009; McIntyre, 2009; Symeonidou and Phtiaka, 2009; Florian, 2007; Pearson, 2007a; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Avramidis et al., 2000; Garner, 2000). Slee (2010) argues that ITE for inclusion and SEND
must stimulate understanding of the political character of social practices in order to secure commitment to active resistance to traditional attitudes and practices that have served to exclude some learners. Florian (2010), Thomas and Glenny (2005) and Garner (2000) also support this view and Forlin (2010) argues for the transformative role of ITE in creating willing participants of the inclusive movement. When making recommendations for the future direction of teacher education in Scotland, Donaldson (2011) argues that ITE should develop reflective activists who are willing to abandon the approaches that have sustained pernicious inequalities in favour of more innovative and just ones. In some countries (such as Scotland, Singapore and Finland), models of ITE and CPD are developed with a concern to support and foster this kind of professional autonomy (Beauchamp et al., 2013; Tatto, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012). However in England, policy for ITE has continued to move towards reducing the autonomy of teachers and teacher educators through emphasising competence standards, high stakes inspection and centralised regulation and control (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012a; MacBeath, 2012; Winch et al., 2013) (see 2.7).

Across the literature, it is widely proposed that ITE's task is to prepare students to be critical activists who can deconstruct exclusive practices. It is important to understand how challenging a project this is for student teachers and teacher educators in the face of the contradictions present in current educational policy in England and elsewhere (see 2.6). Arguably, some unhelpful discourses dominate the field of SEND and ITE (see 2.7, 2. and 2.9). These may also play out in the schools in which student teachers gain their practice experience and where they are relatively powerless. It may be difficult for
student teachers to resist dominant ways of practising and thinking. As an illustration of this, Cook (2007) demonstrates the powerful influence of mentors' beliefs and practices on student teachers and Stoddard et al. (2006) found that on entering a placement or their first job, beginning teachers were likely to adopt the instructional behaviours of their mentors or use behaviours that arose from their own memories of schooling. The relative impact of the alternatives offered by university was poor in relation to the influence of dominant (and arguably, traditional) practices in schools. Breaking the cycle of traditionality (Korthagen et al., 2006) is a necessary step towards inclusive education and one that may require considerable reform across ITE. This raises important questions about the potential of traditional models of ITE to catalyse transformation toward a more inclusive system.

McIntyre (2009) seems exceptional in offering a potential solution to this problem with specific reference to inclusion and partnership. In agreement with others (Rouse, 2010; Hick et al., 2009; O’Hanlon, 2003; Thomas and Vaughan, 2004; Garner 2000), McIntyre argues that critical engagement with practices is best secured when there is coherence between school placements and university:

...if a partnership team of school-based and university based teacher educators agrees that a new practical idea, even a complex idea such as inclusive pedagogy, merits a place in the ITE curriculum, then student teachers will not only be introduced to the relevant practical suggestions (clearly conceptualised and
rigorously justified) in the university, but will also have opportunities in the schools to explore their feasibility and to debate its merits of practicality.

McIntyre, 2009, p.605

McIntyre is distinctive in reframing partnership as a form of collaborative enquiry - schools and HEIs might develop beneficent practices through drawing on equal but different forms of expertise. Inclusive teacher education then is also a question of continuing professional development (CPD). He also argues that where a partnership operates collaboratively in this way, student teachers are more likely to see the relevance of the university programme and of critical thinking since such dispositions are promulgated in schools. McIntyre (2009) notes that progress in inclusive ITE will be thwarted if there is not synchronous development in school given that it might involve the deconstruction of tradition and of the status quo.

McIntyre’s model calls for a substantial change to the traditions of partnership since schools have not necessarily been geared to facilitate the professional learning of adults given their remit to educate children - reforming models of partnership may transform this culture with ensuing benefits for the development of inclusive practice.

McIntyre (2009) has had a strong influence on the stance taken in this study given his acknowledgement that student teachers (and even partnership schools and ITE
providers) cannot be charged with the project of transformation alone. University tutors, school staff and students may need to enter the fray together in order to analyse, understand and deconstruct exclusive practices and build more inclusive ones. It is notable that with the exception of McIntyre this idea is somewhat absent from the UK literature with most studies focussing on development to the university curriculum (Mintz, 2010; Slee, 2010; Winter, 2006; Lewis and Norwich, 2005) structured field work (Pearson, 2007; Campbell et al., 2003) and cohesion between the two (Ofsted, 2009; Vickerman, 2007; Garner, 2000) rather than on synchronous collaborative activity across these domains within the context of ITE partnerships. This study sought to take this forward by constructing a methodology built upon very close collaboration between school and university based upon research informed clinical practice (Beauchamp et al., 2013) (see Chapter 3).

2.5: Contested concepts in the area of inclusion, inclusive practices and SEND:

Implications for inclusive teacher education

As noted, Inclusion is a central concept in this study but difficulties persist in defining it. liaisidou (2012, p.5) describes it as a ‘semantic chameleon’ explaining that there have been diverse theoretical, practical and policy interpretations arising from a host of ideological and socio-political influences. Clough (2000) warns against conceiving inclusion as a singular entity, acknowledging that there can be many inclusions; individuals negotiate and interpret their own inclusions and exclusions. Hence, inclusion is a plural concept that is neither permanent nor constant. For student teachers this may create a context where it is difficult to find a footing. There are likely to be different
interpretations of inclusion and inclusive practices operating in different schools or localities. Additionally, among the teachers in one school there may be diverse conceptualisations and practices, even as applied by one teacher to some subjects or some classes or particular pupils. Internal and external cultures may also be at odds with practitioners’ (and student teachers’) own theories and values.

Norwich (2007; 2009) identifies the ‘dilemma of difference’ as one of the perennial tensions within the field of inclusive education – recognising and responding to difference runs the risk of stigmatising learners in ways that might contribute to their marginalisation but a failure to recognise difference may lead to a homogeneity of practice that cannot address individual needs or serve learners’ rights. Norwich (2007) argues that both commonality and differentiation stances risk negative consequences:

This means there is no place for oversimplified splits or dichotomies too often found in debates over inclusion and should mean the futile pursuit of ideological purity.

Norwich, 2007, p.104

Norwich (2007) brings a very specific meaning to the term ‘dilemma’ noting that it refers to a situation where there is a choice between alternatives that bring some unfavourable consequences. Hence, in describing inclusive practice as ‘dilemmatic’ he
notes the complex, testing and uncertain context in which practitioners work in which
they are charged with finding resolutions that might bring the most positive outcomes
to learners. Norwich (2007, p.3) argues for the value of applying a dilemmatic
framework to inclusive education so as to accept ‘some inescapability of conflict’ and
embrace a less polarised view of effective practice.

Dyson and Howes (2009) and Best and Kellner (2001) also take this stance, arguing that
simplistic, dichotomous conceptions of what it means to be inclusive limit the
development of more socially just education systems since actors within the system
(scholars included) are charged with applying highly context specific responses and
mediations to minimise negative outcomes. Hence inclusion is often regarded as a
process that has no end and as one that requires sustained reflexive engagement
(Liaisidou, 2012; Barton, 2008). Allan (2008) resolves that the challenge for ITE and CPD
is to help practitioners realise that to struggle is permissible given that inclusion
comprises an unending project where failure is part of success.

Allan (2008) identifies the tensions for which student teachers must be prepared.
Specifically, how to demonstrate fixed and absolute competencies at the same time as
recognising the on-going and unending nature of learning; how to be collaborative at
the same time as acting autonomously; how to maximise achievement (in high stakes
tests) whilst ensuring the inclusion of all; how to understand impairment whilst avoiding
disabling attitudes and practices. It would be naïve to believe that any of these tensions
can be resolved easily or permanently.
Further, the core concepts of SEND and inclusion create problems for inclusive teacher education as explored in what follows.

2.6: Contested concepts of SEND

Legally in England, the term SEND signals the right of pupils with learning difficulties and or disabilities to a resource that is *additional to or different from* that which is usually provided (Education Act, 1996, Section 312, Great Britain, 2001) and this is to remain unchanged in the Children and Families Act (Great Britain, 2014). Pupils labelled with the term ‘SEND’ are those who have significantly greater difficulty learning than their peers and/or a disability that might hinder their access to educational opportunity. Though the definition of SEND seems to reflect a strong interest in rights, Slee (2010), Hart (1996) and Corbett (1996) consider this concept of SEND to be problematic given that it involves the comparison of some children with others, reinforcing the presence of a norm. Corbett (1996, p.15) regards it as devaluing with ‘undertones of exclusion and stigmatisation.’ Also problematic is the falsely scientific character of this concept given that identification of ‘SEND’ depends on how criteria are constructed and interpreted by assessors (Graham and Slee, 2008).

Slee (2010) and Thomas and Glenny (2005) argue that the term SEND operates within the discourses of *expertism* (see 2.8) and perpetuates integration over inclusion in representing an out-dated response to human differences which stigmatises learners with pathologising effects. Slee (2010) argues that the term has no pedagogic relevance
and serves a purely bureaucratic purpose creating an 'othered' group for whom teachers feel less responsible and less prepared. When these arguments are held up against the literature it may be noted that the thesis is in danger of adopting a form of language that may counter its central aspiration - to develop in student teachers a readiness to support diverse learners. The manner in which this danger has been minimised is explained in 2.15.

The Code of Practice (DfE, 2001 and DfE, 2014) makes reference to a graduated response where increasing levels of exceptionality signal concomitant levels of resource. SEND is conceptualised on a continuum of exceptionality - the term does not only apply to children with exceptional needs who may previously have been placed in special schools. It also applies to children who have always been in mainstream provision.

Arguably, this promotes SEND as a general and flexible concept and aims to promote the view that all children may experience special needs or disabilities during their life-course. Practitioners are encouraged to apply the term with temporal flexibility in recognition that the exceptionality of need may increase or decrease. Whether this has happened in practice is a subject for debate (Slee, 2010).

The contested nature of the terms ‘SEND’ and ‘inclusion’ present real challenges to practitioners since they are not always compatible with one another and may be pulling teachers in two directions: one which includes all and one which ‘others’ and
pathologises some (Howes et al., 2009). It will be interesting (and essential) to explore how tensions between such concepts might play out during the context of a school placement and to consider how pedagogic design for ITE could be informed by this.

2.7: Dominating discourses in ITE

Official discourses may constrain attention to values and beliefs, creating problematic conditions for ITE. Mittler (2000) is concerned that the squeezing out of these dimensions makes ITE particularly vulnerable to inefficacy. Similarly, Moran (2009) argues that ITE has become highly output driven with quality judged by fixed, measurable competencies that diminish emphasis on personal biographies, opinions and beliefs. Slee (2010) argues for the primacy of political and cultural dimensions in inclusive education, arguing that technical, practical issues are best positioned as secondary concerns. However more widely there is a broader concern to give attitudes, beliefs, theory and practice a more equal and integrated place in teacher education (Cochran-Smith and Dudley-Marling 2013; Rouse, 2010; Barton, 2008).

Within this multi-dimensional conception of teacher education there is a frequent concern to promulgate a culture of reflexive deconstruction given the morally challenging, political and mutable context of inclusive education (Rouse, 2010; McIntyre, 2009; Florian, 2007; Pearson, 2007a; Reynolds, 2001; Avramidis et al., 2000). Slee (2010) argues that being reflexive is condition for transformation, arguing that student teachers need to be prepared to enter the debate on curriculum rather than simply install it.
However, official literature is less likely to report this (Ofsted, 2009; House of Commons, 2006), tending to conceptualise preparation for inclusive classrooms in terms of fixed competencies operated (somewhat compliantly) within stable and politically neutral contexts.

Evaluations by Ofsted (2009) of the quality of ITE in the area of SEND suggest that provision rarely goes beyond what is ‘satisfactory’ or ‘mediocre’. The shortcomings of relying solely on school placements and field experiences were noted in ways that are relevant to the design of this study. Ofsted (2009, p.5) note that where there was reliance on school placements to deliver knowledge and experience of a range of ‘learning difficulties and/or disabilities’ student teachers were left ill-prepared for responding to the wide spectrum of learners they might encounter in their future careers.

However, Ofsted’s evaluative criteria for judging the quality of training are interesting (Ofsted, 2009, p.9) since they emphasise ‘training’ on types of learning difficulty and disability, noting the importance of up to date knowledge on effective strategies for these types of learners.

Ofsted (2009) acknowledge the relevance of generic teaching approaches (such as assessment and reflective practice) but there is an assumption that readiness for SEND relies on knowing about specific pedagogies relating to distinct types of disability and
that these are fixed and unproblematic (a view that is vociferously debated, see 2.8 and 2.9). Reference to critical-theorising and reflexive work is not made. There is no acknowledgement of how ‘learning to be inclusive’ may be embedded in collaborative practice unfolding in an uncertain context (see 2.10). On this theme, Moore (2004) argues that in ITE more widely, the discourses of the ‘competent craftsperson’ and the ‘reflective practitioner’ have come to dominate. Echoing Moran (2007; 2009), Moore (2004, p.32) argues that this results in 'de-intellectualised, competence-based training' and a tendency to pathologise individual practice. Hence, Moore (2004) advocates the enablement of reflexivity in teacher education as a means of catalysing active engagement in the pursuit of social justice.

The literature acknowledges that ITE is set within a wider context where hegemonic forces influence its efficacy (see 2.7) giving additional support to the idea that ITE must develop forms of pedagogy that enable student teachers and more experienced practitioners to understand and manage the contradictory, political nature of inclusive practice and their own position within it. This concern has been taken forward in the design of the methodology (see 3.1).

2.8: The discourses of expertism

Arguably, ‘expertism’ constructs Special Education as technical and specialist and relates the concept of ‘need’ to personal pathologies requiring prescription pedagogies outside the skills base of mainstream teachers. Frequent in the literature is the claim that such
discourses strengthen divisive constructions of education. (Florian, 2010; Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; Boling, 2007; Silverman, 2007; Nind, 2005; Nind et al., 2004; Dadds, 2005; Skidmore, 2005; Thomas and Glenny, 2005; O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002).

Thomas and Glenny (2005) locate the origins of such discourses within the rationalist epistemology of dominant research in the field that has perpetuated a preoccupation with correctives, special techniques and cures, asserting that this has led teachers to believe that they do not have the knowledge and skill to teach all children.

Thomas and Glenny (2005) call for the attenuation of rationalist epistemologies in teacher education and for the advancement of practitioner knowledge and enquiry in order to counter expertism, a discourse which may serve to disenfranchise teachers from SEND. This theory is widely supported (Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Dadds, 2005; O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002; Drever and Cope, 1999; Schön, 1983; Stenhouse, 1975).

However calls to reconstruct ‘SEND’ are at odds with official discourses. As noted earlier, Ofsted (2009) take the position that the most effective ITE curricula cover specific needs and disabilities. The Teaching Standards (DfE, 2012) also assume the presence of ‘distinctive’ pedagogies:

Teachers must: Have a clear understanding of the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs; those of high ability; those with English as
an additional language; those with disabilities; and be able to use and evaluate distinctive teaching approaches to engage and support them.

Department for Education, 2012, p.8

The NQT survey designed to evaluate the effectiveness of ITE programmes is of concern. The question ‘How good was your training in preparing you to teach learners across the range of abilities’ (Teaching Agency, 2012, p.21) is followed with a question several steps down about SEND specifically, ‘How effective was your training in preparing you to work with learners with Special Educational Needs’ (Teaching Agency, 2012, p.21). These official positions may be promoting the idea that there are two types of learners, each requiring distinctive forms of preparation. In this way, there are tensions between Ofsted’s (2009) concern to emphasise ‘what works’ in terms of raising standards of achievement and calls made for a reconceptualization of ‘SEND.’

Sarason (1990) presented evidence of the impact of expertism. He found that preparation programmes in the United States (where teacher education for ‘general’ and ‘special educators’ is largely divided) promulgated particular conceptions of preparedness for diverse learners. Sarason (1990) found that graduates emerged believing that there were two types of human being (those with SENDs and those without) and that choosing to work with one type rendered you incompetent and inadequate for the other. Sarason (1990) suggests that diverse learners might be better served if ITE promoted readiness not for a particular age or type of pupil but for all
learners. Kearney (2007) reports that in the case of disabled children who had been marginalised from mainstream education, their teachers assumed permission to absolve themselves from responsibility on the grounds that they were insufficiently trained in specialist techniques or did not have the resources to cope. This phenomenon (i.e. the negative relationship between expertism, taking responsibility and self-efficacy) is reported very widely in the literature and is a significant issue for ITE to address (Cullen et al., 2010; Forlin, 2010; Florian, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Pearson, 2009; Lambe and Bones, 2006; Nind et al., 2004; Jones, 2006; Campbell et al., 2003; Stanovich and Jordan, 2002; Marshall et al., 2002; Weiss, 2002; Avramidis et al.; 2000; Lyser et al., 1994).

Though there is some support for an ITE curriculum that covers specific conditions and related distinctive pedagogies and an accompanying assumption about the conceptual stability of these (DfE, 2012; Mintz, 2010; Teaching Agency, 2012; Ofsted, 2009; Abbott, 2007; House of Commons, 2006; Winter, 2006) there is more interest in shifting the gaze from pathology and individual deficits. In this sense ITE may have a challenge since it must deliberately resist the discourses of expertism even where these are promoted in policy. On this theme, Florian (2007) presents practical suggestions noting that ITE should:

- Acknowledge difference as an essential, every day and typical characteristic of human development.

- Disabuse student teachers of the belief that they are not equipped to teach all learners.
Help student teachers to incorporate helpful information about human differences into their practice in problem-solving and collaborative ways - though student teachers will come across learners whose skills, competencies and learning styles are differently packaged, they will understand that it is their responsibility to shape their broader understanding of effective teaching and learning around individual differences.

Florian (2007) argues that student teachers may come to see SEND as part of a spectrum of diversity rather than delineating these learners as separate and in need of a specialist pedagogy of which they can never be availed. This concern to promote alternative discourses has been a strong influence on the design of the IAR project actions (see 3.6) but it is important to ask questions about how realistic it is to ‘front-load’ students with such discourses with the hope that they may promulgate them in school. This position is supported by research findings that illustrate the unlikeliness of this promulgation (Cook, 2007; Korthagen et al., 2006; Stoddard, 2006). This point echoes the position taken in this thesis since it does not conceive ‘learning to be inclusive’ as something that is ‘given’ in the form of alternative discourses, but as a participative process embedded in social practices. Such a theory of effective teacher education is widely supported in the field – this is further explored in 2.10 and 2.13.1 since this has been highly influential on methodological design (see 3.1).
2.9: The Discourses of Special Pedagogy

The discourses of *expertism* may have a significant influence on professional development for SEND and inclusive practices. The related discourse of 'special pedagogy' perceives identifiable groups of learners who share common SENDs requiring specialist, attributable pedagogic approaches. However, this position is regularly challenged (Florian, 2010; Norwich, 2008; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Reid, 2005; Thomas and Glenny, 2005; Nind et al., 2004; Norwich, 2002).

Distinctive in the field are Lewis and Norwich (2005) who offer insights into how ITE might be developed. For this reason their position is reviewed in detail. Lewis and Norwich (2005) focused on two key questions – whether pedagogy for SEND is specialised and specific to identifiable groups and whether the categories of need most commonly used in Special Education are pedagogically useful. From this, two conceptual positions are drawn. The first being the ‘general differences position’ in which pedagogic decisions are informed by the specific needs of a sub-group to which an individual belongs (the group being learners with particular and shared profiles of need such as ASD or ADHD). Though individual differences are acknowledged as important, the category or condition is foregrounded for planning an appropriate pedagogic response. Lewis and Norwich (2005) are not critical of the delineation of categories of learners for this purpose *in principle*, but of the extent to which such categories are assumed to be useful without first questioning their validity.

The second position is the ‘unique differences position’ where decisions and strategies are informed only by individual needs and common needs. This is a way of thinking...
about diversity that assumes that, while all learners are in one general sense the same they are also uniquely different. This means that particular pedagogic strategies are potentially relevant or effective for all pupils irrespective of social background, ethnicity, gender and disability.

In support of the 'unique differences position' Thomas and Glenny (2005) vociferously critique the discourses of special pedagogy on the basis that these dehumanise learners. However, Lewis and Norwich (2005) note that though evidence for the 'unique differences position' is stronger, this does not rule out the rectitude of the 'general differences position', particularly as this may relate to autistic spectrum disorders, attention deficit disorders, profound and multiple learning difficulties and profound sensory impairment.

Lewis and Norwich (2005) make recommendations for ITE and CPD arguing for a new conception of pedagogy for SEND based on a continuum of increasingly specialised teaching approaches. They argue that though teaching at different points on the continuum might look distinct they are essentially not qualitatively different but quantitatively different. For example, the teaching of phonics for children who have the label of dyslexia is, in general principle, the same as the teaching of phonics for those who do not have dyslexia. It is simply more intensive (for example, in being more deliberate, frequent and multi-modal). There is a suggestion that this continuum is a more helpful conceptualisation of pedagogy for SEND because it challenges the notion
that such approaches are essentially different and distant from practices that might be
usual for children who do not have SENDs. Lewis and Norwich (2005) conclude that
though practical pedagogies for those with SENDs might look different from dominant
mainstream pedagogies, these differences are in the level of intensity rather than in
principles of curriculum and pedagogic design.

This may have implications for the extent to which teachers feel efficacious and the
degree to which pedagogic decisions can be informed by a wider and richer range of
practices. In parallel with much of the literature reviewed thus far, Lewis and Norwich
(2005) suggest that ITE programmes should enable critical understanding of the
theories, principles and concepts that underpin the competencies they are asked to
produce. Introducing the uncertain, contested and questionable basis of categorisation
and of special pedagogy is also noted as important. In accordance with others (Slee,
2010; Florian, 2010; Thomas and Glenny, 2005; Corbett, 1996; Hart, 1996), Lewis and
Norwich (2005) argue that development in ITE for SEN and inclusion may require more
than revisions in curriculum - it may require the development of new conceptual and
pedagogic frameworks which embrace and make more obvious the uncertain,
ambiguous and contradictory character of inclusive education. This study has attempted
to create such a pedagogic framework and to provide some account of the way in which
competing discourses play out in the developmental journeys of student teachers and
school staff. In this way the literature has not only influenced methodological design in
terms of constructing an effectual pedagogy, it has also alerted me to those factors
(such as dominant discourses) that might be relevant to teacher development for inclusion and hence relevant to the pedagogic design.

2.10: Collaborative approaches as conditions for development

The literature includes reference to the conditions required for the development of inclusive practice of interest to ITE. It is often argued that transformations of practice do not arise from ‘top down’ approaches but from grounded reflection employing one’s ‘own vernacular’ (Dadds, 2005, p.37). It is also suggested that more inclusive practices emerge from collaboration (Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; McIntyre, 2009; Ainscow, 2007; Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Ainscow et al., 2006; Nind et al., 2004) and that development requires opportunities for sustained, thoughtful enquiry in the context of one’s own practice (Hadfield and Chapman, 2008; Dadds, 2005; Kinchloe, 2003; O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002; Corbett, 2001; Reynolds, 2001; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992). Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi (2009) report on how an action research network formed between student teachers, class teachers and HEI tutors resulted in the adoption of relevant pedagogic practices which promoted access to the curriculum for two children with sensory impairments. Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi (2009) claim that the processes of collaborative enquiry played a pivotal role in the development of student teachers’ skill and confidence. They also claim a positive impact on the development of the more experienced teachers. Ainscow et al. (2006) make similar claims noting that in their own studies collaborative enquiry supported a move towards inclusive cultures even in unpromising circumstances. In their in-depth study of four schools, Black-Hawkins et al. (2007) make a powerful case for the importance of
collaboration between practitioners in securing positive outcomes for pupils with SEND. They describe inclusive cultures as those in which collective action is embedded. Nind et al. (2004) argue that collaborative working between professionals can be a pre-condition for fostering inclusive pedagogy and practices and O'Hanlon (2003) argues that inclusive practice emerges from a culture where democratic, investigatory and participatory modes of working are established.

Hence there is widespread support for collaboration as essential to the development of inclusive practices. As noted in 2.7, this study adopts the position that inclusive practices are learned through social participation rather than 'given' or 'disseminated.' The importance of situated, collaborative learning is also verified by the wider, more generic literature on effective teacher education (Sin et al., 2012; Naukkarinen, 2010; Wang and Fitch, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Korthagen, 2006; Smith and Leonard, 2005) (see 2.13). Combined with the earlier analysis of the literature, this point strengthened my resolve to form a research process that engaged collaborative enquiry in ways that are reported in Chapter 3.

2.11: Field experiences and school placements as sites for development in ITE for SEND and inclusive practices.

The significance of field experiences and school placements is broadly recognised and there have been some attempts restructure to these towards greater positive effect. For example, Golder et al. (2005) evaluated a school based task which was designed by
university tutors and communicated to schools via a website and mentor training. This work makes an important contribution since research focused on the deliberate restructuring of school placements is rare in the literature. In relation to the task evaluated, students were required to select a child with SEND, become familiar with the child’s needs and individual goals, collaborate with SENCOs to design a teaching programme and then deliver the programme in 1:1 contexts. The intention was to secure prolonged contact with children with SENDs and an understanding of the value of assessment and collaborative planning. Students were required to write a report on their experiences.

Golder et al. (2005) report inconsistent take-up of the project within schools, a lack of reflective thinking in the students’ work and poor responses from schools to evaluative questionnaires. This seems to echo a phenomenon reported in the wider literature - that there is distance between HEIs and schools that is difficult to negotiate (Rouse, 2010; McIntyre, 2009; Taylor, 2008; Hobson et al., 2005; Moyles and Stuart, 2003; Hobson, 2002; Blake et al., 1998).

Returning to Golder et al. (2005), it is important to note that the evaluated task was not developed in collaboration with partnership schools - rather it was designed externally and then disseminated. This may account for the difficulty student teachers had in making it a focus or priority during their placements and the relatively poor responses to
the survey since school personnel may not have felt investment in it; the limits of
dissemination-based approaches may also be in evidence (see 2.13).

The task focussed student teachers' attention on individual needs and provision in
contexts outside the classroom. Arguably this may not be preparing students to meet
the broader challenge in being a teacher – that of responding to the diversity of all
learners within a class and the task may be contributing to the development of
confidence for SEND but not necessarily for inclusive practices. Corbett (2001) would
acknowledge that such individualised interventions are a worthwhile and appropriate
responses to diversity but only when they exist alongside much more innovative, whole
class and whole school attempts to make learning accessible. However, Hart et al. (2004)
would regard such interventions as inapposite. Whether students have had an
opportunity to debate and explore alternative pedagogic responses to diversity such as
these is unclear and is of concern since tasks promoting limited conceptions of what is
meant by a response to diversity may be counterproductive. This task also represented
one small part of the school placement experience. The extent to which the conditions,
activities and processes embedded in placement experiences come together is neither
acknowledged nor understood. Arguably, this attempt to structure field experience may
represent an oversimplified conception of partnership, with student teachers having to
carry the agenda into school in a relatively unsupported way.

The work of Golder et al. (2005) alerted me to the importance of synchronous enquiry
between students, school staff and HEI tutors and deepened my understanding of the
relevance of McIntyre's (2009) commitment to partnership as a form of collaborative
enquiry. The tendency in Golder et al. (2005) to design a rather crude, unilateral pedagogic framework seems mirrored by Mintz (2010) who analysed the level of knowledge that student teachers and student nurses had about specific learning difficulties and disabilities (such as dyslexia and autism) and concluded that there was a lack of clarity and understanding among both cohorts recommending that diagnostic criteria for such 'conditions' be more explicitly taught towards improved professional preparedness. However, the assumption that such 'conditions' are consistently bounded, politically neutral or absolute appears primitive when held up against the wider literature. As Liaisidou (2012) notes:

> Any kind of unilateral analyses of the issues at stake is incomplete and does not do any justice to the sheer complexity of issues, tensions and dilemmas pertaining to the notions of inclusion, disability and special educational needs.

Liaisidou, 2012, p.17

This argument has significantly influenced the research design since it sought to capture a rich and holistic account of professional learning, avoiding any unilateral analysis or over simplified pedagogic frameworks for Inclusive teacher education (see 3.5).

In addition to Golder et al. (2005), other accounts of the impact of fieldwork confirm its importance to the development of student teachers. Campbell et al. (2003) enacted a survey of student teachers with reference to their knowledge of Down syndrome. Students then interviewed members of the local community (teachers, parents,
learners, students within the university) about their experience of Down syndrome and inclusion and wrote a report about their findings. Campbell et al. (2003) claim that the student teachers reported greater ease in interacting with disabled people. Avramidis et al. (2000) argue that student teachers need fieldwork experience of sustained contact with learners who are labelled as having SENDs in combination with a university programme that offers opportunities for critical reflection. Pearson (2009) argues that such field experiences are essential given that they provide disconfirming experiences that may counter deficit-oriented conceptions of disability.

Sindelar et al. (2006) calls for recognition of the complex range of factors influencing teacher development for inclusive practice, such as dominating discourses in schools, regions and nations. In a comparative study, Sharma et al. (2008) examined the influence of different kinds of ITE on the development of student teachers’ readiness for inclusive practices and many of their recommendations focus on improving the cohesion between university-based and school-based elements. Also noted is that the most effective ITE programmes included enriching field experiences where student teachers met and worked with children with disabilities giving further weight to the claims made by Vickerman (2007) and Ofsted (2009) about the importance of structuring school and university based elements in a more determined way.
2.12: The significance of school-based and field experiences

The literature offers an insight into the significance of school placements and field experiences in teacher development. Prevalent are accounts of the important influence mentoring has on the early socialisation of teachers in terms of the attitudes, theories and practices that they take up (McIntyre; 2009; Jones and Straker, 2006; Christie et al., 2004; Blake et al., 1998). This may have particular relevance to inclusion given the reported literature's concern to connect ITE for SEND and inclusion with beliefs and attitudes. Stanovich and Jordan (2002) present convincing evidence that school norms and cultures influenced teachers' beliefs with this influence being most significant during the early career stage.

Hobson et al. (2005) report that student teachers struggle to see the relevance of the university-based curriculum, wanting more focus on subject knowledge and how to manage behaviour and SEND in their university sessions. Jones and Straker (2006) found that students and mentors tended to prioritise pragmatic, immediate concerns such as the competencies that needed to be demonstrated whilst placing less importance on critical reflection on theory and practice. This phenomenon is also reported elsewhere in the literature and is regarded as a consequence of a competence culture (Cain, 2009; Pitfield and Morrison, 2009; Hurd et al., 2007; Christie, 2004).

The argument put forward by McIntyre (2009) is made more plausible when held against this evidence. Mentoring in its current form may not prioritise or enable the theorising
and reflexive thinking that many writers have described as essential to the development of ITE and which the complex nature of inclusion might demand. It has been argued that the variable degree to which schools expound inclusive practices presents problems for ITE (McIntyre, 2009; Ofsted, 2009; Garner, 2000) particularly in the light of the formative impact of these early experiences.

Many studies from the UK and international literature confirm that field experiences are significant to the development of self-efficacy for inclusive education (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman, 2012a; Loreman, 2010; Chong, 2007; Lancaster and Bain, 2007; Molina, 2006; Sharma et al., 2006; Hopper and Stogre, 2004; Richards and Clough, 2005; Campbell et al., 2003; Yellin et al., 2003) though it is also reported that this impact is sometimes perplexingly modest (Hopper and Stogre, 2004).

There is evidence to suggest that field experiences are not sufficient to strengthen self-efficacy for inclusive practice (Yellin et al., 2003). It is the quality and nature of the experience that is important and how it is supported by a wider set of programme elements. For example, Hopper and Stogre (2004) implemented and evaluated three iterations of an inclusive education course. One of these involved sustained work with individual learners with special educational needs in school, one involved university based clinical application and one was a theory only programme. Though the former two iterations resulted in significant (though modest) relative gains in the self-efficacy of the cohorts that undertook them, some students emerged feeling less prepared than those
who had not had a field experience. Hopper and Stogre (2004) theorised that this was a potential consequence of the ‘ignorance is bliss’ state. Paradoxically then, there is a sense in which emerging from a practicum with a lessened sense of preparedness for diverse learners might be a good thing. Hopper and Stogre (2004) suggest that it will be important to enable realistic estimations of current competence in ways that allow student teachers to journey towards a sense of mastery and accomplishment. Systematic design and scaffolding will be an important part of building effective practicum models as will situating them in authentic contexts and multi-modal approach to programme design.

Hagger and McIntyre (2006) and Conderman et al. (2005) support this view noting that practicum design must be underpinned by systematic theories about effective teacher education. There is evidence that more effective models are ones that acknowledge the complex, integrated and socially situated nature of learning to teach inclusively. For example, Stoddard et al. (2006) designed a multi-modal approach to integrating coursework with a practicum (including careful mentor training, the development of a task portfolio and an emphasis on collaborative skills) and found that this resulted in higher levels of self-efficacy in and more frequent instances of inclusive practice. Gudjonsdottir et al. (2007) report on a similarly complex practicum model. The model was applied in three teacher education institutions in two countries (Australia and Iceland) as part of an applied curriculum project. Members of this community engaged in enquiries into their own practice within school. Collaborative reflective and reflexive work was prioritised. Gudjonsdottir et al. (2007) report that this challenged teacher
educators to be more discursive in their pedagogic approach (requiring them to come out of the comfort zones) but that it brought significant gains to the self-efficacy and sense of mastery of student teachers. As such it represented a model for inclusive teacher education that was socially situated and collaborative. In spirit and design, this manifested the approach suggested by McIntyre (2009).

Given strong evidence about the significance of placement and field experiences, the present study focusses on this context. It has been carefully structured to provide scaffolds to support mastery, accomplishment and self-efficacy as underpinned by the theories emerging from the international literature. Inclusive Action Research (IAR) provided a valuable fit for this pursuit and this is further reported in 3.1.

2.13: Effective teacher education for inclusion: what is currently known?

Though it is fair to say that research evidence on the relative effectiveness of different models of inclusive ITE and CPD is lacking (Florian, 2012; EADSNE, 2010; OECD, 2010), there are accounts and recommendations in the literature that are of value to pedagogic design and reform. These come from a small but significant literature base in the field of inclusive teacher education which when synthesised with wider theories of effective teacher education offer valuable ways forward.
Reviewing this literature enables continued exploration of where and how this study might make a contribution, having the potential to confirm the relevance and substance of the findings reported (see Chapter 6). It also provides support for the design of a potentially effectual pedagogic framework informed by existing evidence and hypotheses about what might work.

2.13.1: The importance of continuing professional development and collaborative models of teacher learning

It is widely reported that inclusive teacher education cannot begin and end with ITE and the NQT year. For example, the OECD (2010) note that surveys of teacher readiness for inclusive classrooms demonstrate the need for high quality Continuing Professional Development (CPD) given that the context for education and the needs of learners are constantly changing. This is echoed by the Council of the European Union (2009) which resolves that as learners become increasingly diverse, teachers need high quality and systematically structured CPD opportunities. Peters and Reid (2009) found that deficit, medical discourses were still firmly entrenched in the education system noting that a shift towards the socio-political discourses that promote inclusive education takes time. Hence, CPD and ITE must combine to provide continuous support for this shift. In the particular case of inclusive teacher education in Finland, Naukkarinen (2010) argues that more opportunities for in service education are essential for capacity building, particularly through intensified collaborations between special education teachers and general educators. More broadly, Darling-Hammond (2006) argues that ITE must prepare teachers to be expert collaborators and classroom researchers. This is because
they must continually adapt extensively diverse teaching strategies to an infinitely
diverse learner population. Hence the pedagogic knowledge base is so expansive as to be impossible to master by any one individual.

This study has taken this idea forward in its methodological design since it seeks to form a continuum between CPD and ITE and to create a forum for reflexive, collaborative action. Though this idea is proposed by McIntyre (2006) and evaluated by Gudjonsdottir et al. (2007) clear evidence of or explanations for its impact on inclusive teacher education is lacking (Florian, 2012). This is a gap that this study seeks to fill.

2.13.2: Integrating theory and practice through integrated models of teacher education

As noted in 2.11, field experiences and school placements have been consistently identified as key sites for effective inclusive teacher education. It has also been noted that ITE must resolve the problem of mismatch and discontinuity between school based learning and university based learning if confidence and preparedness for inclusive classrooms are to be developed (see 1.3).

Taking a wider view, Schepens et al. (2009) argue that traditional approaches to ITE have been characterised by fragmented courses where teacher education institutions provide the knowledge (or the theory) while schools provide the setting where student teachers can apply those theories with little effort to systematically bridge the two. Korthagen et al. (2006, p.9) name this the theory into practice model which they vigorously critique on
the grounds that it does not lead to innovation or transformations in practice because of the phenomenon of the reality shock experienced by student and beginning teachers.

Korthagen et al. (2006) report convincing evidence that the reality shock triggers a return to traditional modes of teaching and a dislike for reflection and theoretical depth. Stoddard et al. (2006) also found evidence to suggest that, on entering a classroom, student teachers and newly qualified teachers often revert to instructional behaviour modelled either by a mentor or from memory of their own schooling. In many ways, these outcomes reflect the dangers of pedagogic models for inclusive ITE that do not enable student teachers to understand and come to terms with the challenges involved in being an effective teacher of diverse learners (Hopper and Stogre, 2004). Korthagen et al. (2006, p.6) argue that ITE must find ways to break the ‘circle of traditionality’ if education systems are to be transformed for social justice and that this must involve some deconstruction of models that assume theory and practice as dualities.

Elliot provides an elegant explanation for the ‘reality shock’ phenomenon noting that:

The perceived gap between theory and practice originates not so much from demonstrable mismatches between the ideal and practice but from the experience of being held accountable for them

Elliot, 1991, p.47
This seems particularly pertinent given widespread evidence that teachers endorse the principle of inclusion but doubt their capacity to enact it successfully (OECD, 2009; OECD, 2010; Johnson and Howell, 2005; Macbeath et al., 2006; Croll and Moses, 1998). The concept of the reality shock (Korthagen et al., 2006) may explain why teachers report receiving inputs on diversity in their ITE courses whilst still feeling poorly prepared (OECD, 2010). Opportunities for working beyond the reality shock into more experimental and transformative practices may not have been available to them. Further, being individually accountable for such a complex and dilemmatic challenge (see 2.4) may lead some to retreat from it. Arguably, what is needed in ITE and CPD is a model that provides systems of collegiate support enabling professionals to be better at accepting individual and collective responsibility for diverse learners (Florian, 2012). Though there has been little account of how this might be achieved (Florian, 2012) this study makes a deliberate attempt to create, apply, evaluate and critique a pedagogic framework designed to promote it.

Across the broader literature (Commission of the European Communities, 2008; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Korthagen et al., 2006) and in the literature related to inclusive teacher education (Rodriguez, 2012; EADSNE, 2012; EADSNE, 2010; Gudjonsdottir et al., 2007; Kershner, 2007; Stoddard, 2006; Jobling et al., 2004), there are calls for more authentic, school situated models of teacher education that acknowledge the problem-solving, dilemmatic, team-working processes involved in being responsive to diverse learners and which involve praxis. There is some connection between models of teacher education that seek to resolve the theory into
practice divide and models that centralise collaboration as a means of effective professional learning (see 2.13.1).

Consideration of what might characterise an effective model of teacher education is further supported through reference to those jurisdictions that are particularly effective in securing high attainment for all, notably Singapore (Tatto, 2013, Goodwin, 2012) and Finland (Burn and Mutton, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012; Naukkarinen, 2010). Common to teacher education in these countries is a systematically planned, well resourced, values based national strategy for ITE and CPD. There is also a concern to ensure that teachers engage in and with research that itself is focussed on instructional techniques and impact on learners. A research orientation is situated within the context of a collaborative professional community (Sahlberg, 2012; Tatto, 2013). Though it is not possible to separate models of teacher education and their impact from the wider culture, history and values of the societies that enact them, research oriented teacher education is widely promoted across the literature. This is reviewed in what follows.

2.13.3: Research oriented forms of ITE and CPD

In the UK, the British Educational Research Association (BERA) was commissioned to conduct an enquiry into the value and impact of research oriented models of teacher education by the Royal Society for the Arts (RSA) (BERA RSA, 2013). In part, this was in response to ITE reform underway in England that does not promote a research orientation in professional learning. In an interim report BERA RSA (2013) report on...
evidence that gives strong support for research informed clinical practice as a means of effective teacher education (Beauchamp et al., 2013; Mincu, 2013; Tattoo, 2013; Winch et al., 2013; Waff, 2009; Rose and Garner, 2006; Hargreaves, 2003). Burns and Mutton (2013) report that such approaches can enable new teachers to work within an established community of practice (Wenger and Snyder, 2000) so that they might engage in a process of enquiry which seeks to understand (holistically) the needs of particular students, design bespoke pedagogical actions and evaluate the outcomes towards increased capacity for inclusive practice. In part as a resistance to the simplistic discourses of 'on the job training' and in deference to accounts of learning to be inclusive as complex, challenging and political, this study sought to build a pedagogic approach based on the principles of research informed clinical practice to shed light on outcomes for professional development (see 3.1). This was its central challenge and purpose.

With further acknowledgement of the challenges set for this study, its central terms of reference (inclusion and SEND) need to be resolved and clarified in the following.

2.14: Concepts of Inclusion and Inclusive Practice within this study

It has already been noted that concepts of inclusion and inclusive practice are complex and contested (see 2.5). However Hammersley et al. (1996) argue that definitions are types of claims in research and as such must be explained and applied with clear parameters in order to support construct validity. A further challenge for this study is
that its design and enactment (through the IAR) must promote helpful conceptualisations of inclusion and SEND, given widespread concerns about the potentially negative discourses arising from the latter (see 2.6).

Many definitions focus on the outcomes of inclusive practice. At one level these outcomes are described in terms of pupils’ experience of achievement and participation in school with reference to the notion that inclusion is not only about SEND (Ofsted, 2009; DfES, 2004; TDA, 2009; Hick et al., 2009; Nind et al., 2006). At another level, these outcomes are described in terms of social justice. In the literature associated with ITE for SEND and inclusion, social justice generally refers to the political dimension of inclusive practice - in this way inclusion is conceived as the pursuit of equality, fairness, human rights and the valuing of diversity (Forlin, 2010; Slee, 2010; Moran, 2007; O’Hanlon, 2003; Reynolds, 2001).

Within this study ‘inclusion’ and ‘inclusive practice’ relate to all children including those with the label of ‘SEND’. Hence, inclusive practice demands continuing consideration of what common, distinct or additional systemic or pedagogic actions might secure inclusion for all children. This must be with an acknowledgement that, from time to time, particular individuals or groups may require more intensive attention from practitioners to what common, distinct or additional pedagogic choices must be made in extending that which is commonly available to all children within a learning community. This echoes Florian’s position (2007) since there is an intention to challenge normative
conceptions of human difference and to signal the responsibility of all teachers for all learners.

The concept of inclusion developed by the participating group is underpinned by the principles of social justice noted above. The research process enabled the participating group to clarify what this would mean in terms of outcomes for pupils and central was a concern to enhance the participation of learners in their classroom communities and to ensure that their voices and choices were valued. This is further explored in Chapter 3.

In defining the terms used in this study, it is also important to note that in adopting inclusive action research, the work adopts and applies a conceptualisation of inclusive practice that prioritises participation, democracy and equality. Hence, a perception of inclusion as a vehicle for and outcome of social justice is securely embedded. In a sense, the study lives out its conceptualisation of inclusion through the principles underpinning its methodological design.

2.15: Concepts of SEND within this study

In response to valid critique of this conception of SEND and concerns about the negative impact of dominant discourses on teacher development for SEND and inclusive practices, this study adopts an alternative conception. This conception (and that of 'inclusion' reported above) has evolved iteratively as a consequence of engagement
with the literature, the values of the participating group (see 3.6 and 4.2) and the research process. In this study, 'SEND' applies to:

- Any child who may be finding learning and/or social participation difficult and who needs from us more intense and deliberate efforts to personalise a response;
- Any child whose individual needs challenge us to be inventive in our pedagogic response so that all children might benefit from enrichments in our practice.

This conception of SEND seeks to counter disparity discourses in favour of diversity discourses that avoid the promotion of SEND as a pathology experienced by an 'othered' group. The OECD (2010) note that it will be important to reject a 'disparity' view of diversity (where diversity is associated with pathologisation, differential treatment and different expectations) in favour of a more neutral conception of diversity that celebrates difference as a natural outcome of the richness of human variety.

2.16: Concepts of ‘development’ for SEND and inclusive practice

In brief, this study conceptualises development in terms of learning with this signified by any forward movement in confidence, self-efficacy, mastery, feelings of preparedness, insight, understanding and skill in the area of SEND and inclusive practice. Though all participants are regarded as ‘learners’ within this project, this term is used to refer to children specifically.
2.17: Summary and Conclusion

The literature does present ITE in need of development, placing some emphasis on school placements and field experiences as key sites for attention. It is suggested that this involves careful restructuring school placements so that cohesion and quality across school and university might be secured (Ofsted, 2009; Vickerman, 2007) and the negative consequences of the reality shock curbed (Korthagen et al., 2006; Hopper and Stogre, 2004). In the UK, McIntyre (2009) proposed revolutionary ways forward in the reframing of partnership as collaborative enquiry. The belief that competence depends on knowledge of specific types of disability and distinct approaches applicable to groups or categories of learners with the label of SEND is also prevalent (Teaching Agency, 2012; Mintz, 2010; Ofsted, 2009; TDA, 2007). This position is adopted in official policy for ITE and teacher development.

However, this position is vociferously critiqued since it demotes the political, personal and cultural dimension of inclusive education in ways that may limit preparedness for its challenges.

Across the literature, there is much concern to resist oversimplified, competence-based models of teacher development for inclusion. It is argued that such approaches perpetuate compliance and tradition in ways that serve the maintenance of a status quo. A more resistant and transformative culture is regarded as a key condition for change. For this reason, a critical-theoretical dimension is seen as an essential quality in
effective ITE. However, I have come to question whether conceptions of student teachers as lone activists who, if properly prepared by ITE, can transform the education system are realistic or productive.

For this reason, McIntyre (2009; 2006; 2005) has been particularly influential in proposing a more collaborative framework for ITE that reframes partnership as collaborative enquiry through which students, school professionals and ITE tutors critique and develop inclusive practice synchronously. This study seeks to put this model into practice since it holds some promise for creating the conditions supportive to professional development for SEND and inclusive practices. In doing so, it seeks to move the debate forward through providing a rich and holistic account of professional learning in the particular context of partnership in ways that are currently absent from the literature. It also seeks to provide some account of the relevance of dilemmas and contradictions to teacher development in ways that may cast light on what ITE is charged with preparing student teachers for.

All of this poses a significant challenge to the methodological design and this is explored in Chapter 3.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1: Introduction – Challenges for the research design

As a consequence of my own professional biography and analysis of the literature, the methodological design is strongly underpinned by the following concerns.

1. This study seeks to capture a holistic account of school placements whilst identifying the specific processes, conditions and activities that are most relevant to professional development for SEND and inclusive practices since such accounts are largely absent from the literature.

Though there have been attempts to structure school placements through specific tasks and activities (Golder et al., 2005), an understanding of how the broader modus-operandi of school placements might enhance development is not yet in much evidence in the literature (Florian, 2010; EADSNE, 2010; OECD 2010), ITE may need to know more about the factors that might be relevant to the design of school placements, field work experiences and other programme elements. Arguably, this is why the potentially transferable question for this study is relevant: During school placements, what conditions, processes and activities support the development of skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers? A holistic account of the development of student teachers and their more experienced
counterparts was also sought to provide a fuller picture of what it is that ITE is preparing students for.

2. This study seeks to create a pedagogic framework to support synchronous critical enquiry and reflexive work among student teachers and school staff.

It is suggested that reflexive and critical activity needs to operate across school-based and university-based contexts if student teachers are to have an opportunity to engage with the dilemmas and challenges of responding to diversity theoretically, practically and politically (McIntyre, 2009; Sharma et al., 2008; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Dadds, 2005; Campbell et al., 2003; Avramidis et al., 2000; Garner, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 1994). In the literature there is evidence of the benefits of reflexive work within action research when it is enacted collaboratively by students, school staff and academic staff (Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi, 2009; Ainscow et al., 2006; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; O’Hanlon, 2003). However, there is also evidence of the limited focus that students and mentors place on critical theorising during school placements (Abbott, 2007; Vickerman, 2007; Jones and Straker, 2006; Hobson et al., 2005). ITE is tasked with finding pedagogic frameworks that might support collaborative critical engagement with the dilemmas of inclusive practice across school and university milieux. I also hold the view that it must ensure that student teachers do not face this challenge alone but are supported by collaborators engaged in synchronous critical enquiry if the cycle of traditionality is to be broken (Korthagen, 2006; Stodard, 2006). Hence the methodological design of the study must reflect a research orientation (see 2.13.3).
The scale and qualitative nature of this study limits its capacity to resolve these challenges on a national scale though it can directly inform programme design within my own institution and that is its primary purpose. However, the study is also tasked with adopting a methodological approach that maximises external validity so that other providers may learn from the insights gained. Hence it is not a matter of simply reporting findings but of making these processes robust and transparent enough for others to evaluate and enact. The methodological design has also drawn on what is known and hypothesised about potentially effective models of inclusive teacher education so that its findings and claims might be better positioned emerging from a strong evidence base (see 2.13). This seems particularly pertinent given the gaps in the literature and the contribution that this study might make.

3. *This study hypothesises that partnership in the form of collaborative enquiry will provide a highly productive context for development.*

The study takes an important step forward in reframing partnership as collaborative enquiry in the field of SEND and inclusion as proposed by McIntyre (2009). However, these are congruent with the principles of partnership in my current institution since it seeks to support the learning of students, school staff and children in all of its collaborations. Methodological design has proceeded with these concerns in mind and this is explored in what follows.
3.2: The conceptual and methodological framework for the study

The section seeks to define and explore the conceptual framework for this research. Thereafter, the selection of participatory forms of action research (AR) and, more specifically, inclusive action research (IAR), (O'Hanlon, 2003) as a primary methodological driver will be justified as will the adoption of additional methods to support reflection on those aspects of the process that were most relevant to the development of student teachers and school staff.

3.3: The paradigm of Inclusion

This study is positioned within a postmodern paradigm of inclusion demanding the adoption of particular epistemological standpoints since, as explored in detail in 2.14, inclusion is conceived in this study, as not absolute or fixed but dynamically co-constructed and re-constructed. This implies that it is best treated from an interpretivist position. Additionally, as argued by McIntyre (2009), Barnes (2005), Thomas and Glenny (2005) and Nind et al. (2005), the pursuit of social justice may demand the deconstruction of dominating discourses and this is reported as a central task for the ITE curriculum to address (Florian, 2010; Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; 2001; 1999; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Jordan et al., 2009). In this way the task set for ITE may be best positioned in an interpretivist and critical-theoretical framework since such stances acknowledge the relationship between knowledge and power, perceiving the political dimension of all social practices.
As explored in detail in Chapter 2, prevalent in the literature is the view that rationalist research traditions may restrict inclusion rather than promote it given their tendency toward pathological discourses. Arguably, the consequence is reduced self-efficacy among teachers as discussed in Section 2.7 (Florian, 2010; Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; Thomas and Glenny, 2005). Though this particular relationship is debatable, it is still important to consider how research operating within an inclusive paradigm may contribute to the construction or deconstruction of inclusive practices (Nind, 2005; Barton and Clough, 1995). Hence, the challenge is to locate methodologies that may operate within an interpretivist and critical-theoretical framework as is congruent with the paradigm of inclusion, whilst constructing inclusive practices in a deliberate way in the context of a school placement. Arguably, the methodological principles of IAR (O'Hanlon, 2003) offer a particular fit.

3.4: The fitness for purpose of PAR and IAR

McNiff (2002, p.15) asserts that 'there is no such thing as action research.' In making this claim McNiff aims to counter simplistic conceptions of AR as a set of procedures that can be routinely operated. Key is the notion that AR can only be named as such when it promotes critical learning (Avigitidou, 2009; Whitehead, 2009; Carrington and Robertson, 2006; Winter, 2006; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988; Whitehead and Lomax, 1987). In practical terms, this means that researchers and participants must engage in the process in a reflective and reflexive way, on their own terms and together:
Action research is a form of collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social practices as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which they are carried out.

(Kemmis and McTaggart, 1988, p.5)

Further, collective action and collaboration are noted as necessary features of AR (McNiff, 2002; Morrison, 1998; Hall, 1996; Noffke and Zeichner, 1987). The specificity of IAR lies in its aspiration to operate inclusively at the same time as promoting inclusive educational experiences for all members of an educational community:

Therefore the action research process for inclusive practice is also action research as inclusive practice.

O’Hanlon, 2003, p.28

However, O’Hanlon’s model is not entirely distinctive in the field of AR. Though other writers may not make such direct connections between action research and inclusion, their conceptions include similar, parallel principles as illustrated in Table 3.1.
TABLE 3.1: Principles and practices inherent in inclusive action research compared with parallel principles in other forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles and Practices inherent in Inclusive Action Research (O’Hanlon, 2003)</th>
<th>Parallel Principles inherent in other forms of critical—theoretical action research (wider literature)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Its purpose is to improve the social justice of practices through making small, local changes.</td>
<td>• Carr and Kemmis, 1996; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Grundy, 1987; Hult and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process should result in usable, practical outcomes.</td>
<td>• Winter, 1987; Hult and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Its enquiry process helps practitioners to deconstruct, understand and reconstruct their practices in pursuit of social justice.</td>
<td>• Carr and Kemmis, 1996; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996; Noffke and Zeichner, 1997; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Action and reflection are enacted collaboratively and participants work together to secure improvements in practice and competency.</td>
<td>• McNiff, 2002; McKiernan, 2001; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Hult and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The research process is a form of participatory problem solving.</td>
<td>• Zuber-Skerritt, 1996; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The agenda for the research reflects the immediate concerns of the participants.</td>
<td>• McNiff, 2002; Hult and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process is democratic and includes the voices, aspirations, accounts and interpretations of all participants. It adopts an interpretivist framework.</td>
<td>• Kinchloe, 2003; McNiff, 2002; Winter, 1987; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Hunt and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The work involves reflexive thought and action and discussions have a discursive style.</td>
<td>• McNiff, 2002; Elliott, 1996; Winter, 1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research methods are eclectic but avoid a positivist approach.</td>
<td>• Kinchloe, 2003; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Hult and Lennung 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The process adopts a participatory rather than distributive epistemological position with participants being knowledge makers in their own right.</td>
<td>• McNiff, 2002; Winter, 1987; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Hult and Lennung, 1980; Stenhouse, 1975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants’ freedom and autonomy are promoted. Participants can come to understand the presence and impact of dominating discourses.</td>
<td>• Kinchloe, 2003; Elliott, 1998; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Grundy, 1987; Hult and Lennung, 1980</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IAR draws on those principles and practices established across critical-theoretical methodologies. However, it is has two distinctive characteristics particularly fitting for this study. It offers a framework for pursuing the construction of inclusive practice through collective and collaborative activity situated within schools. If operated appropriately, it offers an opportunity for participants to deconstruct the traditional practices and discourses of SEND in the specific context of collaboration between student teachers, school staff and academic staff from the HEI. Thus, IAR offers a vehicle for working with the task ITE may need to address – to sustain synchronous critical, reflexive engagement with the challenges of inclusion across school and university. This position is supported by evidence relating the operation of AR with improved inclusive outcomes (Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi, 2009; Ainscow et al., 2006; Armstrong and Moore, 2004; O’Hanlon, 2003).

3.5: The limitations of action research

Jennings and Graham (2004) argue that though critical-theoretical approaches to AR (such as IAR) can support action towards social justice, they cannot support a holistic understanding of the processes involved in their creation or dismantlement. Hence, the pursuit of the potentially transferable dimension of the study (understanding the conditions, processes and activities that may develop ITE for SEND and inclusive practices) may not be fully served by the evaluative focus of single project actions but depends on a richer, wider view of professional development within a particular context. AR is criticised on the grounds that it has limited transferability, being vulnerable to construct effects (where concepts used are peculiar to a select group) and history
effects (where circumstances arise from unique circumstances) with these being threats to external validity (Lincoln and Guba, 1988). The production of thick description (Denzin, 1989) is regarded as a tool for strengthening external validity on the grounds that where data is sufficiently rich, readers can assess the transferability of the findings:

It goes beyond mere fact and surface appearances. It presents detail, context, emotion and the webs of social relationship that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feeling. It inserts history into experiences or the sequence of events for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings actions and meanings of interacting individuals are heard.

(Denzin, 1989, p.83)

With this in mind, the research process has adopted additional methods: The collection of data incidental to the IAR has been a central aspect of the research design (field work journal, reflective journal, participants’ reflective writing, and conversations with participants about their experience of development during the course of the project/placement, reflective meetings, and website posts). Though this study adopts IAR as a pedagogic framework, it seeks to understand what broader conditions, activities and processes within the IAR (and in the broader placement context) are relevant to development so that the design of pedagogic frameworks other than IAR can be informed by these. This offers my institution (and potentially others’ institutions) a richer and more flexible basis for programme development.
Arguably, this is where the study may take the debate forward since it constructs a methodology that is original in its capacity to:

- Develop the skill and confidence of student teachers and school staff through construction of a pedagogic framework for ITE and concomitant CPD in the form of IAR.
- Enable synchronous critical enquiry through IAR in ways demanded by the literature.
- Provide an account of professional development in a partnership school that supports analysis of those aspects of the IAR and the wider context of the school placement) that are most relevant.
- Enable a holistic account of the development of student teachers during school placements that may support analysis of the relevance of dilemma and contradiction in learning to be inclusive.

However, Jarvis (1991) argues that AR is anecdotal, subjective, and inherently biased due to lack of researcher independence or separation from the research process. For this reason, its appropriateness for doctoral level research is questioned (Waterman et al., 2001; Jarvis, 1991). However, it has been vociferously defended on the grounds that it enables praxis in congruence with the philosophy of professional doctorates and as such is gaining credibility in postgraduate research (Reason and Bradbury, 2013; Noffke and Somekh, 2009; Waterman et al., 2001). Further, Harvey (1993) argues that building ‘quality’ into AR through securing fitness for purpose and cognitive transformation for participants helps to secure its credibility and hence it is important to evaluate the
extent to which it has secured this (see Chapter 5). Noffke and Somekh (2009), McNiff (2001), O’Hanlon (2003) and Waterman et al. (2001) present a range of methods for securing valid, accurate and systematic AR studies which have informed methodological design. The strong critique of AR has prompted me to give very careful and rigorous attention to validity in the design of this study and this is reported in transparent detail in this chapter with support from Appendix B which evidences the thorough and scrupulous approach taken to analysing data (see 3.8).

3.6: The research story

To reiterate, the study was located in a large partnership school with a reputation for effective inclusive practice that hosted many students for school placements and fieldwork experiences and had been in partnership with the institution for several years (see Chapter 1). The IAR spanned 22 months with 22 participants (5 teaching assistants, 11 students and 6 teachers). The internal aims of the IAR (as developed by the participants) were:

- To develop the skill and confidence of all participants for SEND and inclusive practices
- To develop the skill and confidence of student teachers on placement in the school for SEND and inclusive practices
- To enhance the inclusive educational experience of children in the school
Phase 1 of the project ran between November 2010 and July 2011 and Phase 2 ran between September 2011 and July 2012. A chronological summary of each research event is provided in Appendix A3.1.

Following establishment of conditions for consent, I met regularly with the participating group to establish collective aspirations and thereafter to provide spaces for evaluative, reflective and reflexive work. A number of strategies were used to ensure that these meetings were democratic and inclusive since it was important to capture all voices. For example, we established a website on which participants could post comments and engage in a forum discussion (illustration provided in Appendix A3.2). I also used validated minutes and notes to ensure accurate and comprehensive summaries. These formed some of the data for the study and extracts of these are presented in Appendix A3.3 and Appendix A3.4. The meetings resulted in some shared statements about aims, values and aspirations. They also led to three specific project actions designed to honour its internal aims. The criteria used to inform the design of project actions were as

Each project action should be:

- Promising in terms of potential positive impact on the inclusion of all children including those with the label of ‘SEND and on the development of our practice and our students’ practice;
- manageable in terms of our workload, our students’ workload and the length of the project;
- linked to the core purposes of our project to enhance students’ skill and confidence;
- something that all or most of us can believe in;
- something that can be investigated through the systematic process of data collection and analysis;
- very unlikely to overwhelm student teachers or limit their progress.
follows:

3.6.1: Project Action 1 (PA1)

PA1 involved a lesson study activity in which a student teacher and more experienced teacher use observation data as a basis for improving the inclusive impact of their teaching. Having selected a focus group or pupil who might particularly gain from their focus, the student and teacher analyse the observation data and then co-plan and co-teach a lesson designed to enhance the participation, success and progress of this group or individual. Thereafter, observation data was used to evaluate the impact of this practice on this focus group or pupil in order to inform continuing improvements (or simply to maintain good practice). The group developed their own criteria for inclusive practice (see 4.3.1) and used these as a basis for analysing the observation data and reflecting on its impact.

PA1 was underpinned by contemporary theories of effective teacher development and recognition of the place of lesson study as a method for action research (Lewis et al., 2009). Significant is the manner in which lesson study exemplifies research oriented clinical practice (Beauchamp et al., 2013; BERA RSA, 2013) having a particular focus on instructional techniques and outcomes for individual learners in an authentic context (Darling-Hammond, 2012; EADSNE, 2010; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Korthagen et al., 2006; Brownell et al., 2005) (See 2.13.2).
3.6.2: Project Action 2 (PA2)

PA2 focussed on the processes of personalised assessment and planning and was termed the 'personalised learning planning (PLP) process.' Mentor and student teacher would select individual pupils or groups of pupils within the placement class who might benefit from more intensive personalisation or innovative pedagogic responses. In collaboration with the mentor and other members of the teaching team, the student would carry out a holistic assessment that captured strengths, difficulties, preferences, significant voices (e.g. parents and other members of the teaching team) and the child's voice. The student teacher then set a goal for the end of the placement that would improve participation, progress or success for the child or group. For example ‘Carla will be able to talk about friends she has learned with in class,’ or ‘Michael will be learning with others’ or ‘Jenny will make progress in her writing.’ The student teacher then set a more specific goal at the end of each week and note how their whole pedagogic approach would be adapted in pursuit of that goal.

As explored later in the analysis of the impact of PA2 (see 4.2), this task was designed to promote the positive discourse of diversity (celebration of the richness of human variety) over the negative discourse of disparity (OECD, 2010, p.21). In this way, PA2 was formed from critiques of the norming consequences of current approaches to planning for SEND. (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2011; Florian, 2007; Florian, 2009; Nind et al., 2004; Hart et al., 2004; Corbett, 2001; Corbett, 1996):
3.6.3: Project Action 3 (PA3)

PA3 involved the planned and deliberate involvement of teaching assistants in supporting student teachers in the development of their skill and confidence as inclusive practitioners. Teaching assistants in the school were invited to attend a workshop as part of a school INSET with the content designed by the participating group. They were given guidance in how to support students in general ways but also in observing student teachers and providing verbal or written feedback. Additionally, some teaching assistants were involved in providing workshop sessions attended by all of the students placed in the school. These workshops focussed on communication, working with parents, nurture groups and behaviour and reflected some of the specific roles that teaching assistants had in the school. PA3 was influenced by studies that emphasise collaboration and collective action as a necessary condition in inclusive classrooms and the position of teaching assistants within this (Devecchi et al., 2012; Carrington and Robertson, 2006; Groom, 2006). It is also underpinned by theories of effective teacher development that centralise collaboration and collegiality (Rodriguez, 2012; Naukkarinen, 2010; Wang and Fitch, 2010; Korthagen et al., 2006; Smith and Leonard, 2005)(see 2.13.1 and 2.10).

Each project action was collaboratively evaluated in a systematic way using the cyclic approach typical of AR. This process did not always run smoothly as reported later. Each project action had a core team who were responsible for its implementation and evaluation. Eclectic methods of data collection and analysis were used to evaluate the success of each action and improvements were made in the light of these evaluations.
The cycle ran over two phases with actions enacted with the first cohort of students in the first phase. At the end of the first phase the actions were re-designed in readiness for application with another cohort of students in the second phase. An extract from the PA2 systematic evaluation is presented in Appendix A3.5. The AR also involved an external validation group comprising members with various relationships with the project. This was one example of a wide range of validation processes applied throughout (see 3.9).

At the same time as data was being collected and analysed to serve the purposes of the IAR, it was also being collected in incidental contexts (for example, in the field work journal) and through a wider lens. At the end of school placements, conversations were held with students, mentors and teaching assistants focussing on what had developed in the area of SEND and inclusive practices during the placement and why this may have developed. The full data set was then used to create vignettes capturing the journey of each participating student teacher in ways that formed a holistic account. Examples are presented in Appendix A3.6 and Appendix A3.7. Participants were involved in validating and reflecting on these vignettes as part of the reflexive work sought. They also provided useful material for staff development within my own institution and more widely. This signals an important point since though the wealth of data and detailed findings arising from the project actions cannot be fully reported here, it has provided an important basis for developing the programme within my own institution. For example, some examples of classroom observation data (see 3.8) have been used with mentors and students to prompt reflection on what is meant by inclusive practice. Of
course, this has all been with the full permission of the participants (Letters of consent: Appendix 3.8).

3.7: Ethical issues and principles

3.7.1: Selecting the research site

The school is described in Chapter 1. It shows a strong commitment to both ITE and to the development of inclusive practice and it was selected for that reason. The project would require sustained commitment to a process that might lie outside the core (and demanding) business of the school as well as beyond the traditional parameters of partnership with an ITE provider that already demand additional time from mentors and school staff (Taylor, 2008; Jones and Straker, 2006; Blake et al., 1998). This context may already represent some of the conditions required to develop ITE for SEND and inclusive practices (Ofsted 2009; Avramidis et al., 2000). This is explored in Chapter 4.

Prior to selecting this school, all partnership schools were invited to express an interest in engagement in the project at the annual conference held within the university in July 2010. The opportunity was also published on the partnership website to take account of those schools unable to send representatives to the conference. Ten schools came forward and those not selected were contacted formally to inform them of the decision and to invite their membership of the university’s steering group for SEND (the Partnership SEND Steering Group - PSSG), that shares good practice and informs
strategic development across the partnership. This was to ensure that the willingness to develop ITE for SEND and inclusive practice shown by these schools was both respected and harvested. It would have been contrary to wider efforts to develop ITE for SEND and inclusive practices not to have done this. Two of the nine schools not selected now have representation on the PSSG.

3.7.2: Entering the research site

Central to educational research is a requirement to operate 'respect for persons' (BERA, 2004, p.2) in terms of their right to freedom, full information, full understanding of purposes, participant responsibility, participant rights and fair representation (Cohen et al., 2009; Simon and Usher, 2000). Further, informed voluntary consent without duress is essential to an ethical process:

Researchers must take the steps necessary to ensure that all participants understand the process in which they are to be engaged, including why their participation is necessary, how it will be used and to whom it will be reported.

BERA, 2004, p6

On entering the research site, operating these principles was a priority not least because of the study's position within the paradigm of inclusion. Arguably, good research in the area of inclusion will engage forms of social action that have an inclusive nature being democratic and fair (Nind et al., 2005; Barton and Clough, 1995; O'Hanlon, 2003). Relatedly, Sheehy et al., argue that:
If inclusive education is seeking to develop a situation where 'learning for all' is achieved for all then should not the research process itself be in the hands of those researched and primarily for the benefit of this group?

Sheehy et al., 2005, p.2

The intention to secure beneficence for all of the participants was a driving principle for the research process. For example, shortfalls in the capacity of the research to offer school-based participants sufficient space and opportunity for reflective and reflexive thinking were addressed through the design of participant study days (see 3.8). Within this study, beneficence is conceived in terms of its internal aims: notably, that all participants would develop skill and confidence in the area of SEND and inclusive practices towards the direct benefits of children in the school. Further, in the context of IAR, participants should experience opportunities to sensitise their own practices. Concomitantly, the process of securing informed voluntary consent with school-based participants began early. Interested members of the school's staff were invited to a meeting during which the purpose and ethical parameters of the study were explained through sharing and discussion of the letter of consent. The letter of consent developed with reference to the ethical guidelines provided by BERA (2004) and from the wider literature (Cohen et al., 2009; Sheehy et al., 2005; Ruane, 2005; McNiff, 2002; O’Hanlon, 2002; Denzin, 1997; Grundy, 1987; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983), was distributed
during the meeting and is presented in Appendix A3.8. It was particularly important, when inviting students into the project, to emphasise their protection from negative consequences should they choose to participate or not participate. Further, it was confirmed that I would not take on the role of the University Link Tutor for their placements and hence had no involvement in their formal assessment. This process of informed consent took place at the beginning of both phases with regular revisiting of the rights of participants throughout the process.

3.7.3: Honouring the study's methodological principles: collaborative democratic approaches

IAR demands a collaborative framework in which all participants (including the research facilitator) have equal standing and can work together in a democratic way (Winter, 1987; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996; Hult and Lennung, 1980). Nind et al. (2005) were critical of their own failure to establish co-operative, democratic partnerships with staff when researching inclusive school cultures and comment:

There were cultural and structural impediments to the sense of partnership we regarded as ideal as the university and school staff had different pressures, priorities and roles. We failed to invest time in building such communities.

(Nind et al., 2005, p.201)

Nind et al. (2005) were particularly concerned that their engagement with a particular school had failed to promote inclusive practices or challenge exclusionary ones. In this sense their study became research about inclusion rather than research for and as inclusion and hence its beneficent potential was diminished. With the warnings these
authors provided in mind, the initial stages of the study were managed in ways that would allow the participants and the research facilitator to develop a sense of collegiality and shared ownership. The early meetings of both phase 1 (November 2010 – July 2011) and phase 2 (September 2011 to July 2012) enabled the group to develop and articulate their values and aspirations. During the start of each phase, the *nominal group technique* (Morrison, 1998) was applied to enable all voices to be represented in the formation of a collective view. This involved time for participants to consider their responses to key questions, sharing and then recording these individual responses and displaying them. Thereafter, all items were grouped and categorised to form a picture of the perspectives and priorities of all members of the group (Appendix A3.4 and A3.9).

Similar methods and starting points for critical-theoretical action research are recommended in the methodological literature (O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002; Winter, 1987; Zuber-Skerritt, 1996; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992; Hult and Lennung, 1980). Minutes of meetings and other artefacts (such as posters, participant notes, and the researcher’s notes) provided a method for securing respondent validation since they needed to be discussed and agreed at subsequent meetings (O’Hanlon, 2003) and also formed some of the data for the case study. In summary, a number of measures were taken to ensure that all participants were included. It is not claimed that this eliminated the marginalisation of some voices or that the research process maximised participation at all times since some shortfalls are explored in what follows.
3.7.4: Challenges and dilemmas associated with ethics and principles

There were frequent occasions when facilitating the research was challenging and complex, not least because of its unpredictable nature and the conceptual contradictions that arose among participants (see 2.4 and 2.5) and that also arose from my status as an insider and an outsider in the research project. As a researcher, I occupied the position of an ‘insider’ (in terms of being a member of the participating research group, the university ‘partnership’ community, someone who had been a primary practitioner) and an ‘outsider’ (an academic, a university tutor, an employee at another institution). I found that I was continually managing the challenges arising from being on the insider-outsider continuum (Humphrey, 2007) (see 3.7.5). I also found that there were times when I had considered myself to be more securely ‘inside’ than I actually was. Following are reports on two critical incidents which are important illustrations of how the research story unfolded in relation to the insider-outsider challenge.

The first critical incident occurred during the early stages of phase 1 and its position in the research chronology is shown in Appendix A3.1. The discourses used by two participants in the project (who were experienced teachers and mentors to two undergraduate students) reflected a medical, devaluing model that did not seem congruent with the values or aspirations communicated by the group previously. During a conversation, these participants were acutely disparaging about children ‘with extreme needs’, their own readiness for inclusion and of the wider system in ways that left me shocked and troubled. It took some time and reflection to understand that the
participants were communicating a sense of professional inadequacy. The related extract from the researcher's reflective journal presented in Appendix 3.10 and a further exploration of findings related to this theme is explored in Chapter 4.

This insight was further prompted by use of the constant comparative method (see Section 3.8) since revisiting the earlier data in response to what seemed a new theme revealed that similar expressions of inadequacy were present in the notes arising from earlier meetings of the participant group. This revealed some researcher bias since these more negative messages seem to have been suppressed in the minutes and posters arising from the early meetings. In this way, the constant comparative method became an important strategy for ensuring that the voices of participants were not stifled.

The event also signalled a need for a role shift. If the project was to enable the discursive and deconstructive discussions that critical-theoretical approaches demand (Kinchloe, 2003; Kemmis and McTaggart, 1992), I needed to take a more directive role in the next step of the research. Following extensive reflection, I decided to introduce some theoretical models and discourses associated with SEND into one of our meetings (the general differences and unique differences position presented by Lewis and Norwich, 2005 - see 2.8). It was hoped that would help participants to understand and identify the competing or contradictory discourses that might be part of the immediate and wider political context. Participants reported the very significant contribution that these events made to their development (see 4.1) representing the potentially fruitful outcomes arising from collaborations between insiders and outsiders (Robson, 2002).
Reason and Bradbury (2013), Humphrey (2007) and Kidd (2009) would argue that the critical incident reported above is representative of the challenge of adopting an insider-outsider role in research. As this was central to my own experiences of the research process and to the role that the project demanded of me, I explore this in more detail below.

3.7.5: Managing insider and outsider roles in the research process

Maxwell (2002) and Coghlan and Brannick (2005) report that role conflict is a typical challenge within insider-outsider, participatory, democratic research and hence is something that must be managed in ways that may maximise positive consequences and minimise negative ones.

Humphrey (2007) explores the deep, personal discomfort arising from her own experiences of bridging two worlds – that of being an insider in self-organised activist groups whilst also adopting the role of an academic engaged in action research with this specific community and among other activist groups. There were times when she was angered by her participants’ judgement and rejection of her (I had experienced this too). There were also times when she could see how the groups to which she had once belonged were oppressive in their practices. Humphrey (2007) presents the idea of the insider-outsider hyphen as a metaphor for the challenging space occupied and traversed by the researcher. She emphasises the researcher’s duty to be cognisant of this hyphen since it can enable the activation of safeguards for themselves and their projects. Where
it is taken charge of, the dynamic of the hyphen can secure discovery and original insight (as it did in the incident reported in 3.7.4). Where it is not taken charge of, researchers and participants can become hostages to it in ways that put the success of projects and the value and validity of the research at risk. I had been naïve about the challenges involved in managing this hyphen and this had endangered the study (see 5.3) and to some extent, my own wellbeing. However the study’s carefully formulated ethical principles (see 3.7.2) and validity measures (3.9) had offered effective protection. For example, the constant comparative method offered opportunities for me to identify and tackle my own biases (see 3.7.4), the length of the project (22 months) enabled me to use reflection as a means of planning a propitious response to problems and barriers (see 3.7.6). The reflective journal had also become an important tool for managing such tensions and contradictions and in some ways became a confidante (see Appendix A3.10).

However, is important not to underplay how painful and challenging the critical incident reported in 3.7.4 (and other similar ones) were for me to manage. When the participants operated deficit loaded conceptualisations (which they did quite regularly) I became angry about the dissonant and (as it seemed at the time) ‘hypocritical’ nature of their thinking, wondering if I had chosen the right school or whether I was actually getting anywhere. Often, I was torn between the need to sustain a positive relationship with the participants and the need to challenge what were (to me) unpalatable, unacceptable self-evaluations and descriptions of children with special needs. There were tensions between wanting to sustain my own integrity and being open to the truth
of others' perspectives and experiences. There were tensions between prioritising my own well-being (as this related to a sense of congruence with my values) and prioritising the successful continuation of the project.

I was also deeply disturbed by discovering how much I had struggled to accept negative perspectives whether arising in participants' feelings of inadequacy, the constraints of their workload or the language they used to describe children. Extensive reflection on this in my journal led me to question whether my approach to working with students (and the participants) had been oppressive since it had become routine for me to counter their expression of 'I can't' with a rather aggressive 'you can' without sufficient attention to the problematic nature of being inclusive (see 4.2). For me, this exposed my own misunderstanding of the complexities involved in learning to be inclusive and I came to recognise this as one of the factors inhibiting effective inclusive teacher in my own institution. In this sense, my insider-outsider status exposed me to myself. I became aware of how my approach as a university tutor and a researcher had been potentially oppressive and began to see myself as an aggressor who had created (as I recorded in my reflective journal) a regime of positivity (meaning an environment where critical or negative thinking was suppressed). Handling this self-discovery became one of the biggest personal challenges of the project.

In relation to democratic and critical-theoretical research, Vilenas (2003) acknowledges that in being an outsider on the inside there is the potential to exploit and dominate
participants, there is also the potential for this dynamic to operate the other way around. Given the democratic principles of IAR, it was important for me to manage the tensions arising from multiple identities in ways that did not lead to the silencing of the participant voice. However, it was also important for me to sustain a strong sense of self since as Kidd (2009) asserts, action research can offer opportunities to strengthen personal ideals and agency in the context of working with others. The account below, explores how I addressed a shortcoming in the research design in order to secure for participants (through my outsider agency), the opportunities for deep learning that I had enjoyed but from which they had been excluded.

The second critical incident (noted in 3.7.4) occurred at a meeting of participating school staff during phase 2 of the project. Two PGCE students had completed their placements at the school and the group were reviewing the classroom observation data arising from research activity centred on those students. One of the students had progressed relatively poorly in her skill and confidence for SEND and inclusive practices and this was revealed in the classroom observation data and in the data arising from a conversation between me and the student - the meeting only provided sufficient time and space to discuss the classroom observation data. Many members of the group were defensive of the student, situating the cause of the student’s lack of skill and confidence with a particular child. Jane (a teacher and mentor) described the child as ‘a brick wall’ and Veronica (a teacher and mentor) described the same child as ‘a complete enigma’. Some participants did not agree with my suggestion that the student’s difficulties may also have been a consequence of her view of the child as ‘extreme’ and ‘othering’, nor that these were a consequence of a limited pedagogical repertoire. It is possible they felt
patronised by this but I had made this suggestion on the basis of careful analysis of the data and theoretical engagement with the literature.

The problem this time was not that the participants were expressing attitudes that were unpalatable to me (since an understanding of how to deal with that had been developed as a consequence of the first critical incident as reported earlier) nor that there was a difference of opinion since these were important to share and learn from. Rather, I began to question where the difference of interpretation might have arisen from and there were a number of possible sources. I had a greater familiarity with the data, literature and theory in the area. I had also formed my own beliefs and values all of which influenced my perceptions of this event. All of this may have been a result of the more extended opportunity I had to reflect than the participants. Though the participants may have continued to make different interpretations, it was important to find a way to provide opportunities for participants to reflect (if they so wished) in order to honour the design principles of the study.

Arguably, these are methodologically significant phenomena in the research narrative and are reported in what follows since they represent the manner in which I tried to secure sustained critical enquiry among both students and school staff in pursuit of the study's aims and principles. They also demonstrate how an outsider may have agency in forms that enrich the experience of insiders (Vilenas, 2003).
Though I had been naïve about the hyphen (Humphrey, 2007) I had managed my status as both an insider and an outsider in ways that safeguarded the opportunities for participant learning and development it had been designed to secure. An example is presented in the following.

3.7.6: The genesis of participant study days

During a meeting of the full participant group at the beginning of phase 2, participants asked whether funding could be secured to support the project. They were aware of how inadequate time had limited the opportunities for learning offered by it. The provision of funding may present ethical challenges since it may be regarded as an incentive to participation and BERA (2004) notes that researchers:

must acknowledge that the use of incentives in the design and reporting of the research may be problematic; for example where their use has the potential to create a bias in sampling or in participant responses.

BERA, 2004, p.8

In April 2012, funding amounting to £1,500.00 was secured and used to fund supply cover so that all participants could attend study days at the University.

3.7.7: Justifying the allocation of funding to participant study days

There were several justifications for the allocation of funding to the project. The university was running a project funded by the TA aiming to develop student teachers’
confidence in the areas of SEND and inclusive practices through placements in special schools. The university was given permission to allocate funds in ways it deemed appropriate, as long as these met the project criteria and since this study had parallel aims, it was fitting to use it. Additionally, the provision of participant study days was an attempt to ameliorate any workload burdens arising from engagement in the project (BERA, 2004, p.8) and to enable opportunities for deeper professional development through reflexive work since it is incumbent on researchers to minimise the impact of their research on the workload of their participants.

It is important to note that this was another way in which the study sought to respond to one of the common criticisms of AR: that limits to validity arise from its time consuming nature and the limiting impact of the working conditions of practitioners (Waters-Adams, 2006). For me, the most demanding aspects of the process related to adapting its design in response to the twists, turns and distractions of everyday life within the school. Balancing responsiveness and sensitivity to participants' viewpoint with the need to present strong challenges to their assumptions was essential if learning was to occur. During the second phase, it dawned on me that being too purist was not going to work. For example, it was important to understand that the words participants used (such as 'brick wall' when describing a pupil) were not always indicative of their wider belief system and represented the spectrum of conceptions that may come into play when teachers are dealing with the dissonant nature of inclusion and SEND. I explore the impact of the research process on my own development in more detail in Chapter 5.
3.8: Methods of data collection, analysis and presentation

This section will explain, justify and illustrate the methods for data collection and analysis applied during the study which operated across two distinct but related dimensions: the internal dimension (to develop skill and confidence in the area of SEND and inclusive practices among participants and to bring direct benefits to children) and the potentially transferable one (to understand the processes, conditions and activities that might develop ITE for SEND and inclusive practices).

3.8.1: Presentation and analysis of data

One problem to be solved arose from the large dataset. Extensive pruning of data (and of thematic categories) had been deliberately resisted in an attempt to retain openness to it (Cohen et al., 2009; Henning et al., 2004) and ensure a rich account. However, descriptions of good practice include reference to progressive focussing where the funnelling, sifting, sorting and reviewing of data identifies those outcomes that are to be the agenda for subsequent focussing either in terms of data collection or management (Mason, 2002; Dey, 1993; Parlett and Hamilton, 1976). There was a particular trigger for the progressive focussing that has supported the preparation for the thesis. Following the close of the project, a validation group was convened comprising three members as follows:

- University colleague internal to the partnership but external to the school and the project
- Deputy head internal to the school but external to the project
• Educational psychologist external to the school, project and partnership but internal to the wider practitioner and academic community

All had research experience at postgraduate level and one member of the group had been working with me as a critical friend from the inception of this study. A validation group can minimise the selection effects and biases that are commonly reported as risks within AR (Hammersley et al., 1996; O'Hanlon, 2003) since a different (and potentially more objective) viewpoint can be given. The validation group gave strong support for the relevance and plausibility of the initial findings and noted that the study had been carried out with integrity - they had trust in the claims being made since the large data set seemed to give general support to them. However they identified a need to demonstrate the specific sources and ranges of data that were supporting particular claims more directly. For example, one member of the group commented:

We discussed the triangulation between the different types of data and felt that the teachers’ comments about their growing confidence and efficacy are backed up by the numerical data and that on a number of occasions, students displayed those criteria. We need to see how other claims can be supported by multiple data sources to strengthen the validity of those claims. We need to know about the prevalence of phenomena across the data and see it more clearly to know whether specific claims are actually backed up by the evidence in the data across multiple sources.

[Extract from written feedback, 19th July 2012.]
This comment is interesting since the value of triangulation in casting light on complex phenomena is supported in the literature (Scott and Morrison, 2005; Denzin, 1997; Adelman et al., 1980). Though Silverman (2001) is critical about the congruence of triangulation with qualitative research (allying it with positivist paradigms), he describes two ground rules for using it. Firstly, as a result of progressive focussing, theories and models should be formed from the data. Secondly, data that will give an account of structure and meaning within the perspective of particular theories and models should be selected and presented together.

Based on Silverman (2001) each piece of raw data was analysed using analytic coding (where singular or recurrent themes were identified) and through annotating it with questions, queries and reflections that might inform further data collection, analysis and theorising (Richards, 2009; Ezzy, 2002). In the spirit of qualitative research, analysis of raw data occurred immediately after data collection and continuously through the project (Weber, 1990). The constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) was used throughout and across the whole corpus data. It involved comparing new data with existing categories to ensure cohesion - if the new data could not be incorporated within existing categories or theories, the categories and theories were re-shaped to capture the new data. A spreadsheet was established early in the process which mapped where specific themes and phenomena arose across the corpus data in terms of who, when, how and how many and what methods. The spreadsheet was continually reshaped and regrouped through the process of axial coding where related themes were gathered to support theorising. For example all participants reported an experience of
being pressured by the demands or conflicting priorities in their work. In the corpus data this theme arose within 100 single occurrences (an occurrence being a single comment in a transcript for example, or an idea within the minutes of meetings) across 11 research events (a research event being a conversation or a set of conversations occurring on the same day, meeting or period of classroom observation) for 9 different participants. Hence, the theory that workload is significant among the conditions in which inclusive practices may or may not develop can be presented somewhat more confidently and then further analysed to glean insights about the relationship between workload and professional learning. In this way the research record formed a map of each of these occurrences with clear links to the raw data from which they arose. (Silverman, 2001) Table 3.2 is an extract from the analysis of the subtheme ‘workload and conflicting priorities’ and demonstrates how categories and sub-themes were identified and enumerated. The whole analytical process resulted in the thematic categories shown in Table.3.3, the formation of which was based on Silverman (2001).
### TABLE 3.2: The process to scaffold analysis the corpus data (extract from full version available as Table 4.1.1: Subtheme (a) Workload and conflicting priorities in Appendix B)

#### MAJOR THEME: Findings 1
The working conditions and professional identities of student teachers and teachers.

#### SUBTHEME (a)
Workload and conflicting priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Mentors and students experience a heavy workload as they manage the demands of the placement and in the case of mentors, as they to manage their wider professional role. This creates a feeling of not doing anything properly.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The placement described as too heavy in content and demanding. Meeting diverse needs is seen to sit within that challenge.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PGCE students have so much to learn that it makes it hard to prioritise PLPs or a focus on individuals at the start. Students have very little experience to go on.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shortage of time/time pressures/heavy workload noted as a hindering factor in making progress towards the project aims and in being able to participate fully in it.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mentors noting that they need more time to reflect with students in order to support them fully. Mentoring as a role should be prioritised and other roles put on hold during the placement period.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis

Across phase 1 and 2, workload pressures, time constraints and competing priorities were experienced as factors that limited the amount of focus that participants could give to the project and more generally to the development of enhanced inclusive practice [1, 4]. Increasing the time available for collaborative reflection and action on the issue of SEND and inclusive practices was seen as a desirable or necessary step towards improved outcomes for children. [4, 5, 11, 12]........

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data

100 single occurrences across 11 research events among 12 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Examples from Data

Extract from transcribed conversation with Anna and Jane (mentors) on 21st January 2011 (during phase 1)

'Jane: I don't think we ever have enough time as teachers because, you know, a lot of, although we have, I mean we are very grateful that we have PPA, but you know within your PPA time, you have to do planning for the following week plus maybe a general assessment, that some of these other things you know, when you are focussing on individual children it can be 'Oh, we have run out of time.' [4, 5]...........
Though all categories and themes in the corpus data have been subjected to a rigorous process of enumeration in the way described above (partly in answer to criticisms of AR to secure external validity), the enumeration has a relatively unimportant role to play in presenting the findings within this thesis. However, for the sake of transparency, this process has been carried out for all subthemes and is presented in full in Appendix B sequenced in the manner illustrated in Table 3.3. In Chapter 4, the evidence which informs particular findings and claims, is distilled and presented in summary tables, all of which were formed from the rigorous process of analysis as described above.

**TABLE 3.3: Findings and thematic categories arising from data analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FINDINGS PREAMBLE</th>
<th>Findings and Thematic Categories Arising from Data Analysis</th>
<th>Related Appendix B Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme a</td>
<td>Workload and conflicting priorities</td>
<td>Table 4.1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme b</td>
<td>The challenges and dilemmas involved in responding to diverse learners</td>
<td>Table 4.1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme c</td>
<td>Self-efficacy and professional adequacy for SEND</td>
<td>Table 4.1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS 2</td>
<td>Conceptualisations of SEND and inclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme d</td>
<td>Conceptualisations of SEND</td>
<td>Table 4.2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme e</td>
<td>Conceptualisations of Inclusive Practice</td>
<td>Table 4.2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme f</td>
<td>Labels and Labelling</td>
<td>Table 4.2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme g</td>
<td>Conceptualisations of pedagogy for SEND</td>
<td>Table 4.2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS 3</td>
<td>Having a positive impact on pupils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme h</td>
<td>Personalised Learning Planning (PLP)</td>
<td>Table 4.3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme i</td>
<td>Lesson Study</td>
<td>Table 4.3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme j</td>
<td>Experiencing diverse learners in diverse contexts</td>
<td>Table 4.3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme k</td>
<td>Evidence of positive impact</td>
<td>Table 4.3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINDINGS 4</td>
<td>Team membership and collaboration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme m</td>
<td>Working with teaching assistants</td>
<td>Table 4.4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme n</td>
<td>Team work and collaboration</td>
<td>Table 4.4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme p</td>
<td>Special characteristics of the placement school</td>
<td>Table 4.4.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In summary, an analytic and thematic approach has been used to categorise and group the data in ways that can support theorising. For this reason it provided a useful scaffold for analysis. However, this structure was less helpful when reporting findings since it was somewhat atomistic and restrictive to narrative flow. Hence, Chapter 4 captures all subthemes (none of the above are redundant) but structures the reporting of these more loosely and fluidly than in Table 3.3.

3.8.2: Classroom Observation

A significant amount of data has been collected in the form of classroom observation presented as rich narrative accounts. Observations took place during lesson time either within the classroom or in outdoor settings and included reference to focus pupils or groups (selected for PA1 or PA2) but also to the whole class, the activity of the wider teaching team (mentor and teaching assistants) and the activity of students so as to ensure as holistic an account as possible. When collecting the data, quick, fragmentary notes were made about settings, events and interactions in the manner outlined by Moyles (2002) and Le Compte and Preissle (1993). Though there is rich debate about the relative value of participant and non-participant research (Cohen et al., 2009; Le Compte and Preissle, 1993; Lincoln and Guba, 1988) I adopted a largely non-participating role on the grounds that this might provide me with the opportunity to describe what I observed in full detail and in ways of most use to the participants. I also made sound recordings so that the dialogue could be reported accurately and combined these with photographs of the setting and of the children’s work. An unstructured approach was used in pursuit of a naturalistic account serving the internal and transferable dimensions
of the study. Table 3.4 provides a summary of the fit between this method and key questions and describes the efforts made to maximise validity and minimise selectivity and bias – this process was managed very carefully.
### TABLE 3.4: Validation measures and purposes for classroom observations and accounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Question explored by the study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How can Initial Teacher Education (ITE) be developed to enhance the skills, confidence and preparedness of student teachers for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and for inclusive practice?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Purposes of the Study</th>
<th>Transferable Purpose of the Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To develop the skill and confidence of all participants for SEND and inclusive practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To develop the skill and confidence of student teachers on placement in the school for SEND and inclusive practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To enhance the inclusive educational experience of children in the school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• To understand the conditions, processes and activities that might develop student teachers' confidence, skill and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices in the context of collaboration between school and the HEI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The data could be used for:</th>
<th>The data could be used as:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• evaluating the impact of particular practices on individual and groups of children;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the implementation and evaluation of project action 1 (lesson study) and project action 2 (personalized learning planning)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• describing what skills and processes all participants were applying in terms of inclusive practice in the context of the classroom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• evaluating and improving inclusive outcomes for children;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• catalysing the reflective and reflexive work of the participants.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a thick and rich description of practices in their natural context;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an important contribution to the case study;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a basis for theorizing about the conditions, processes and activities that develop student teachers skill and confidence for SEND and inclusive practices (since the observations capture the physical, human and interactional setting for the practice and capture the practices not only of the student but also of the wider teaching team).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods to maximize validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rich, naturalistic classroom observation offering opportunities for ecological and descriptive validity providing an accurate portrayal of a social situation and the realities of participants (Moyles, 2002; Bogdan and Biklen, 1992; Maxwell, 1992).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Dialogue recorded to enable accurate capturing of this and to minimise selective data entry and attention deficit (Shaughnessy et al., 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Narrative accounts written up immediately after the observation to minimize selective memory (Dey, 1993).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Respondent validation with all participants who were captured in the narrative account to ensure accuracy and minimize selective memory (see examples in Appendix 3.12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Researcher as much in the periphery as possible and non-participating to reduce reactive effects (Moyles, 2002; Dey, 1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Narrative accounts audited for high-inference statements and these removed (Wilkinson, 2000).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Co-coding of narrative data with participant to ensure accuracy and consistency and to reduce expectancy effects (Cohen et al., 2009).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Permission to observe and record was secured from all adult participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permission to observe children was secured from parents (as was the policy of the school) but it was decided to make as little mention of my role and purpose in the classroom as possible given the reactive effect this might cause.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No photographs of children were taken (as was the policy of the school).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An example of classroom observation data is presented in Table 3.5.

As noted previously, the research process had to evolve in response to changing circumstances and my own growing awareness of how to support participant engagement. For this reason, the data is presented in rich narrative form to make it more accessible to participants who may wish to reflect on it as a basis for professional development. Participants were excited by these forms of data and by the vignettes that provided holistic accounts of each student teacher’s professional development. As it turned out, finding accessible ways to present data became one of the most exciting accomplishments for me as a researcher and it gave me pleasure to see how engaged participants were by it and how useful it was to their reflection and development.
Karina: Now, working with me we have Lewis, Lauren and Mia. If you could sit near the computer and wait for me for a moment? Well done! Now who can go into our play area? We need to know who didn’t go in yesterday. Alfie, Lexia, Lee and Seth and Faye - you want to go out? Great, okay. You can go out today. Now, Mrs Cartwright’s table is the place where we will make our sensory maps of our walk through the sensory garden!

There are some children remaining on the carpet. The children are up on knees, raising their hands to be chosen. After Mrs Cartwright and Karina agree that it is the orange group who need to do the collage, the first group for the sensory garden are chosen. Some children look a little disappointed but one of the children says to the others ‘No, we are going to do that afterwards.’

One of the children suggests that an activity she has spotted on the IWB is about shapes. It seems to be about choosing the right shape to fit in with the pattern. I didn’t quite hear what she said but Karina responds with ‘You might be right Lauren we might have to guess what the shapes are, but that is okay because we know what our shapes are don’t we?’

Karina joins Lewis, Mia and Lauren at the computer and Lewis is attentive as Karina types in a web address. Mia and Lauren are also watching and waiting.

Karina: Right then! Oh dear, it’s not working! It’s not here. I will try again.

Karina is successful in finding the online resource she was looking for. It is a game where 3D shapes are hidden in landscapes (such as deserts, glacial regions etc.). Only part of each shape is visible, since other parts are hidden beneath the sand or ice. It becomes clear that the children must name the highlighted shape by clicking on the picture below that matches it.

Lauren points at the screen and says that she can see some shapes.

Karina: Can you see the shapes?
3.8.3: Using classroom observation data as a basis for reflective and reflexive work

At the mid-point of phase 1, I brought the classroom observation data to a full meeting of the participant group and asked the group to identify where they could see inclusive actions and practices in the data – the intention was to enable discursive and developmental work as is congruent with the critical-theoretical and collective approach inherent in the research design. Through a prolonged collaborative process this led to the development of specific criteria for inclusive classroom practice. Appendix 3.13 is a representation of this process at work and illustrates how segments of data came to represent criteria for inclusive practice and how these were linked to values expressed by the group - that all of our practices and actions should be pursuing positive, inclusive outcomes for children. The criteria were also used as a means of coding the data for instances of inclusive practice. For example, one of the criteria was: ‘Monitoring children’s participation - practitioners monitor involvement and intervene to promote engagement, a sense of togetherness and equal access,’ and this could form a basis for evaluating and developing the quality of practice among student teachers and their more experienced counterparts. This reflects the practices inherent in inclusive action research that operates a participatory epistemological position (O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002) and aims to be authentic to participant voices (Hammersley, 1992). The process was exciting since given the problematic and diffuse meaning of ‘inclusion’ it enabled the group to develop clarity about its own conception of inclusive practice and seemed to be significant in moving us forward.
3.8.4: Conversations

Much of the corpus data was collected in the form of conversations that were transcribed and analysed using qualitative methods (Section 3.8.1). An example of a transcribed conversation and its analysis is presented in Appendix A3.14 and A3.15. The approach taken was largely non-directive so that participants could initiate and lead the conversation. This supported the potentially transferable dimension of the study since it enabled expression of deeper attitudes and perspectives and hence some illustration of the context where participants were working. However, as noted by Patton (1990), it is important to balance this with methods that enable more precise focus on the questions being pursued by the research. For this reason some more directive interventions were used (such as returning to an earlier remark or raising a new but related topic) to enable deeper reflection. Though there were some instances where participants were subject to some unclear questioning and exposed to the researcher's viewpoint, careful measures were taken to ensure ethics and validity. These are summarised in Table 3.6.
### TABLE 3.6: Validation measures and purposes for conversations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal Purposes of the Study</th>
<th>Transferable Purpose of the Study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The data could be used for:</strong></td>
<td><strong>The data could be used as:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Creating a secure space for participants to reflect on their own professional identities, belief systems and practices</td>
<td>- Sources of rich, personal accounts of personal and professional learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Enabling participants to describe and illustrate personal and professional development</td>
<td>- A basis for analyzing which conditions, processes and activities were most relevant to professional development within and beyond the IAR from the perspective of participants themselves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- As a consequence of the above, support for professional learning</td>
<td>- Thick descriptions of the context in which participants develop (e.g. in terms of discourses and dilemmatic situations).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods to maximize validity</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Use of largely non-directive methods to enable respondents to initiate and direct the conversation so as to capture as naturalistic, rich and personal an account as possible but with 'interview guide approach' (Patton, 1990) where topics and issues to be covered are broadly specified in advance but the sequence of which is contingently altered during the interview or spontaneously adapted in response to remarks made by participants.</td>
<td>All conversations began with a review of the conditions of consent and then the purpose of the interview supported by a written summary: provided for the participant prior to the conversation. ‘Thank you for giving up your time for this conversation. The aims of this project have been to develop the skill, confidence and preparedness of student teachers (and school staff) for SEND and inclusive practices. Can you tell me what developed for you [the students] and why you think that development happened? You can start anywhere you want to and say anything you feel is relevant. Your perspective and view is valued and will help us understand what it is that helps people develop in this area. To reiterate, our conversation is about what developed for you (the students) and why you think that developed.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Use of checking techniques such as summarizing and reflecting to enable participant reflection and accurate interpretation (Brenner et al., 1985).</td>
<td>Checking, reflecting and summarizing were used to create trust and rapport and to encourage further reflection as in the following example: ‘Yes, so to you, the term of SEN tends to be a child whose needs are greater – have I got that right?’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accompanying a dominant concern to be non-directive with some more directive techniques (such as probing the last remark, probing a prior remark or reflecting on remarks – Whyte, 1993) to secure focused data related to the research aims.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethical Considerations</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Conditions of consent were revisited (storage of data, respondent validation, and protection from negative consequences) so that interview was as non-threatening and secure and environment as possible and the purposes of the interview were clearly explained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Presence (and communication of these to participant) of interviewer dispositions such as empathy, unconditional positive regard and acceptance (Rogers 1945). During the interview, staying within participant’s own frame of reference and forms of language/ expression.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interviewer sensitivity and awareness of where own biases may devalue or diminish participant voice (Walford, 2001).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Awareness of body language and response so as not to communicate disapproval of participant remarks or viewpoints (Arksey and Knight, 1999).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.8.5: Other sources of data

Written up accounts of meetings with participants and the researcher’s own fieldwork and reflective journal were other sources of data. Participants were asked to validate all data (aside from the reflective journal). As described previously, the reflective journal was an important tool for managing role, bias and dilemmas. Two extracts from the journal (as this related to the critical incidents reported in Section 3.7) are presented in Appendix 3.10.

3.9: Validity

In response to critique of action research (see 3.5) a number of measures were embedded into the process to secure validity. Many of these have already been explored but to summarise these are:

3.9.1: Validation Group

At the end of the second phase, a validation group was formed with three members. Their critical friendship and feedback resulted in some changes to the presentation and accuracy of data analysis in the form that has been explained above.

3.9.2: Triangulation

The data set was broad and complex and enabled opportunities for data to be collected across different times, contexts, people and settings and via different data collection
methods. There has been an account of the ways in which this has been secured in what has preceded. Most notably, triangulation has been achieved through the collation and management of a large, varied and complex data set.

3.9.3: Reflective Journal

The reflective journal supported the reflexive work of the researcher and, combined with the fieldwork journal, enabled the uncovering of researcher bias. It also supported the processes through which the researcher managed role conflict and informed decision making that would inform next steps in the research. An earlier account of its use in two critical incidents in the research process sought to illustrate its value and presence in the work.

3.9.4: Critical friendship

The researcher has maintained a critical friendship with another EdD student working on a programme outside the OU.

3.9.5: Respondent Validation

Much care has been taken to secure robust systems for respondent validation across the study. Examples of the use of respondent validation to support the internal aims of the project have been outlined in this section. An example of respondent validation is provided in Appendix 3.12.
3.9.6: *Ethnographic tools*

Ethnographic tools have been applied to serve the purposes of validity mainly in terms defined by Maxwell (2002) and Lincoln and Guba (1988) as follows:

*Descriptive validity:* Respondent validation has helped to secure the factual accuracy of the accounts made. Further, transcripts and detailed classroom observation narratives have sought to secure descriptive validity.

*Interpretative and ecological validity:* Respondent validity and the democratic management of the research process have sought to capture meaning, conceptualisations and interpretations as expressed by the participants themselves.

*Catalytic validity:* The selection and application of inclusive action research has sought to enable action that might develop more just practices through reflexive enquiry.

Essentially, these measures have sought to maximise the validity of the study and this has depended, at least in part, on sufficiently rich data so that readers can access its potential transferability. Further, extensive forms of checking have been built into the study in ways that might secure reliable findings (Lincoln and Guba 1985). Generally, I would argue that while there could be improvements to the research design (as explored in Chapter 5) there have been careful and extensive efforts to secure the integrity, credibility and validity of the process and that these are sufficient to support
the formulation of plausible theories and to defend the study in the face of critique of AR.

3.10: Summary and Conclusion

This study has implemented IAR within one partnership school over a period of 22 months among 22 participants. It aimed to provide a framework for engaging in collaborative critical enquiry towards professional development for school staff and student teachers in the manner proposed by McIntyre (2009). This methodology sought a new pedagogic framework for ITE in direct response to the challenges set by the literature and my own professional biography.

This chapter has provided rigorous account of the IAR so as to be transparent to those who may wish to evaluate its credibility or apply it. It has also captured some of the very significant challenges and dilemmas I faced as a research facilitator trying to realise a pedagogic framework that was democratic and collaborative but which I had hypothesised (with strong support from the literature and my own experiences) would be a profitable way forward in the development of ITE for SEND and inclusive practices. Though the process was profoundly challenging, it was also exciting and provided genuine space for professional development. This is further reported in Chapter 4 and 5.
Chapter 4 explores findings in relation to the conditions, processes and activities that may be relevant to professional development for SEND and inclusive practice. This will provide an insight into the complex and multi-modal nature of this development and of the difficult conceptual and practical context in which it unfolds.
Chapter Four: Analysis and discussion of findings

Introduction

To reiterate, the central questions posed in this thesis are:

- How can ITE be developed to enhance the skills, confidence and preparedness of student teachers for SEND and for inclusive practice?
- During school placements, what conditions, processes and activities support the development of skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers?

This chapter will explore what did develop for students and school staff and also what the data can reveal about the conditions, processes and activities that seemed to have been relevant to this development. Chapter 6 will examine the wider implications for my own and other institutions in terms of the development of effective models of inclusive teacher education.
4.1: The working conditions and professional identities of student teachers and teachers.

Across the corpus data there were regular instances when the issue of workload (and its relationship with inclusive practice) was raised. Further, where time and space were carved out for reflective and reflexive work (within a collaborative context) there was evidence that this provided a boost to professional confidence among the school staff.

4.1.1: Workload and the value of reflective and reflexive activity

The data provides evidence of the constraining impact of workload on the participants’ opportunities to develop inclusive practice through collaborative planning and reflection.

**TABLE 4.1.1: The constraining impact of a heavy workload and the value of reflective and reflexive activity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Heavy workload:</td>
<td>Class teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SENCO/assistant head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>constraints time and attention for building inclusive practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>limits opportunities for collaborative planning and reflection towards enhanced inclusive practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Space for collaborative reflection has a potential and actual impact on developing a positive professional identity for inclusive practice</td>
<td>Class teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SENCO/assistant head</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevalence across the corpus data**

100 single occurrences across 11 research events among 12 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

**Extracts from the data**

I don’t think we ever have enough time as teachers because, you know, although we have, I mean we are very grateful that we have PPA.... but you know within your PPA time you have to do planning for the following week, plus maybe a general assessment, that some of these other things you know, when you are focussing on individual children it can be ‘Oh, we have run out of time!'

[Extract from transcribed conversation with Jane (mentor to Elizabeth and Lily, 3rd year undergraduate students), 21st January 2011]

All participating school staff felt that REFLECTION and more particularly, COLLABORATIVE REFLECTION was something that we wanted and needed to do in order to develop ourselves and our students as confident inclusive practitioners. This theme was paralleled in both meeting groups. Carving out and prioritising time to reflect with others was seen as an essential element of inclusive practice.

[Extract from Minutes of meeting of full participating group, 11th January, 2011]
The participating school staff placed high value on collaborative reflection as was evident from the minutes arising from our earliest meetings. They believed that it was an essential element of developing the inclusiveness of their practice and building opportunities for this was a major motivation for participation. The opportunity to reflect together on their strengths and weaknesses as a team (and even to plan together) was something they believed that they had been starved of and there was strong evidence in the data that frustrations arose from not being able to talk and reflect critically with one another (and their students) about inclusive practice because of their own intense workloads and, in the case of teachers, complex roles. For school staff their most important task (i.e. maximising inclusive outcomes for learners), was deprioritised by other demands (paperwork, assessments, meetings, preparing for school inspections) in ways it was hard to counter.

Teaching assistants often mentioned that they wanted to support students more closely but they were aware that there was not much time or space for this in their working day. Mentors were also concerned about the heavy workload carried by students and the way in which this interacted with their own complex roles to drive out the time available for critical, reflective dialogue.

However, all students reported the abundance rather than the insufficiency of the support they received. For example, Lorna (PGCE student) felt fully included in a teaching team that operated a collective interest in the welfare of children.
the project, all students remarked on this team membership and appreciated the
opportunities it had offered for collaborative reflection towards positive outcomes for
children. They reported that a commitment to keeping them informed and involved was
a particular feature of this school. The relevance of this is explored in more depth in 4.4.

The data indicated that in this particular context, it was school staff and not students
who wanted (or needed) more time for critical reflection. For students, reflection seems
to have been an ever-present feature of their collaborations with others and this seems
to have been sufficient. School staff however, needed something more and the
inception of participant study days was a response to this (see 3.7.6). During these,
school staff wrote personal learning statements that indicated the high value they
placed on reflective and reflexive work. It is important to present them in full as
evidence of the positive impact the project had on their professional identities as
inclusive practitioners.

*Jane (Class teacher and mentor to Elizabeth and Lisa – 3rd year undergraduate
students)*

The project has helped me to reflect on my own knowledge and practice. It has
been interesting to be part of a team and to have professional discussions about
teaching and learning. The project has moved my understanding forward. I think
that I initially wanted to be part of the group to help me understand specific
special needs 'conditions'. I have come to realise that this understanding isn't the
most important factor in teaching 'SEN' children. The most important thing is to see all children for who they are and for what they can do. You then have the knowledge to move all children forward.

[Personal learning statement, participant study day, 15th July]

As a consequence of her engagement in the IAR, Jane has deliberately demoted knowledge of ‘conditions’, preferring a capability oriented conception of diversity in a way that implies growing trust in her own capacity to respond. Charlotte explains how valuable collaborative reflection had been to her professional development:

Charlotte (NQT and PA1 Lesson Study project leader)

Being involved in the research project has allowed me to spend time working collaboratively with students which has resulted in many reflective discussions. The reflection and discussion with others has helped me to clarify my own thoughts, views and understanding of inclusive practice. I now feel I have a strong understanding of how I feel about SEN, labels and inclusive teaching. For me, it is not about labels and I understand how closely I agree with a social model approach. I will be more confident about providing time for play-based learning for those children who need it in my class since when I succumb to the pressure of standards and the curriculum, I end up teaching less inclusively. It has been useful analysing the data and seeing things from a student’s perspective and learning about what challenges they met along the way because it helps me to appreciate how challenging it is but how valuable our school has been in helping them - being involved in the practical aspects of the research allowed me
to spend time concentrating on individuals in my class and supporting their learning needs which resulted in the wider group making progress. Reflecting on the entire project has made me realise how much we do that is already good, inclusive practice rather than worrying about not doing enough. I feel better about myself, my own judgement and my own practice.

[Personal learning statement, participant study day, 17th July, 2012]

Charlotte seems to value the clarity she has gained about her values and beliefs, attributing this to the time for reflection enabled by the IAR. She has found the process productive and uplifting. Alison reports similar outcomes but as a manager within the school, has come to value the contribution that staff make more highly. She also reports on her awareness of the qualities needed in effective mentors:

Alison (SENCO, Assistant Head and Senior Mentor)

Taking part in the research project has been an opportunity to be part of learning that I had forgotten how much I enjoy. I have benefited from opportunities to reflect and discuss issues with my colleagues. This has helped me to clarify and develop my own thinking about inclusion. I have learnt to value more fully the contribution of teaching assistants on children’s learning and their future. Their value is often lost in the rush and day-to-day routines of school life. I have also learned that a number of contributing factors will impact on the success of an inclusive placement for students. This includes the experience/mind-set and
attitude of the mentor and this is something I must be aware of when allocating students to mentors in our school. As a school, I feel I have learned that we do try to be inclusive to meet the needs of all of our pupils and that we have made an impact on the development of inclusive practice and confidence of student teachers. I know I need to find time for reflection and to continue my own learning. I think it is important to question things and pull apart our assumptions.

[Personal learning statement, participant study day, 17th July, 2012]

Similarly, Cerys (class teacher) explains that the project has provided an opportunity to celebrate the contribution that teaching assistants make anew and that being a participant provided her with valuable opportunities for reflection that she would not otherwise have had:

Cerys (Class teacher and mentor to Karina – 3rd year undergraduate student)

Having a student in my class who was thinking about SEND and being very proactive in designing inclusive practices helped me to think about their needs too and about new ways forward. It helped me to evaluate my practice. The project has also affirmed our approach to special needs. We deal with the children in our class instinctively most of the time. To have time to evaluate our practice, think about how we have supported individual children and how we could move our practice forward has been a luxury not usually available to us.
We can take each other for granted – we do appreciate our teaching assistants but to have their contribution affirmed has helped me to celebrate them afresh!

[Personal learning statement, participant study day, 10th July, 2012]

All of these statements include reference to the IAR as an affirming process that helped participants to appreciate their professional skill, competence and commitment. For school staff, this seems to have countered the influence of the negative messages coming from ‘outside’ (the media, Ofsted and the Department for Education). One result was that they were able to identify those effective practices that were already in place and hence perpetuate them.

The constraints emerging from workload pressures did not surprise me and this is an important issue to acknowledge. Though my job title implies an academic role, the vast majority of my working life is taken up with the operational complexities of ITE. The time I spent working with the participants had to be carved out of this with the consequence that I was ‘catching up’ with the day job during evenings and weekends. This implies that in my institution and this partnership school at least, the time needed for deeper forms of collaboration with partnership schools is not prioritised. This finding prompts important questions: To what extent does the policy in my own institution enable research-oriented styles of partnership? To what extent do ensuing policy developments for ITE enable school staff to prioritise this kind of professional learning?
Smith and Leonard (2005) found that (in the context of US schools), special educators and general educators were concordant in their view that there was insufficient time to collaborate to the extent that school inclusion could be implemented effectively. It is also notable that among high performing jurisdictions (Singapore and Finland) the workload of teachers is managed to enable collaborative enquiry and action in pursuit of school improvement (Burns and Mutton. 2013; Tatro, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012). In the context of the research site, the space for this was significantly lacking. It is possible that the movement towards more inclusive education could demand of policy makers attention to the working (and professional learning) conditions of practitioners.

However, though I had hypothesised that the collaborative and reflexive nature of IAR would have a positive impact on participants' professional development in the area of SEND (see 3.1) the extent of this still surprised me. I had underestimated the influence of reflexive work on the formation of more positive professional identities. This is further discussed in the ensuing section.

4.1.2: Professional adequacy and self-efficacy for SEND and inclusive practices

One of the students (Abigail - PGCE) and two of the mentors to third year undergraduate students (Jane and Anna) communicated significant anxiety about their professional adequacy for SEND.
TABLE 4.1.2: Professional adequacy for SEND and inclusive practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Feeling inexpert in dealing with diagnosed or undiagnosed SENDs</td>
<td>Mentors (Anna and Jane – mentors to third year undergraduate students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Identifying oneself as an amateur when it comes to SENDs</td>
<td>Student (Abigail, PGCE student teacher)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Feeling ‘panic’ and ‘pressure in the face of SENDs</td>
<td>Mentors (Anna and Jane)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Moving to a more positive view of own professional adequacy for SEND</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prevalence across the corpus data
28 single occurrences across 6 research events among 3 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

Extracts from the data
Abigail (PGCE student)

[my mentor] said there is nothing particularly wrong, she has a referral, we are waiting, there are processing problems but as yet undiagnosed…….I mean, you know, I said to [my mentor] such as what sort of problems, you know ‘expand’ and she said that it was that you would say something to [Sophie] and she would come back with something inappropriate – concentration really. I wanted to know as much as I could about it so you can, you can differentiate with your lesson planning because if you have not actually had the experience of working with children with any particular need, it is panic ‘what do I do, where do I start?'

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]

Jane (Mentor to 3rd year undergraduate students)
Well, the problem here is that for medical conditions we just do not have the training! Like Prader-Willi – we are not doctors but equally, with say Kirsty [a child with very challenging behaviour in Anna’s class] we don’t even know what she has got so we can’t even look that up in a book!

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 17th February 2011]

Anna (Mentor to 3rd year undergraduate students)
I haven’t felt confident in the past. As teachers we do feel like amateurs but now I have thought about this, I would question this assumption. I am less of an amateur than I thought I was. I think that what makes us feel like amateurs are the messages that keep coming from the outside world about teaching and teachers. We are told what to do and how to do it but actually, the people who are instructing us are not usually classroom practitioners. I think I am a professional because I try to do the right thing and to be moral for the sake of the children. The data and my own assessments of children have shown that I do know what I am doing and that has been a real benefit for me.

[Extract from systematic evaluation of PA2, 5th April 2011]

Abigail (PGCE student on her first placement) was anxious about ‘extreme’ needs that were ‘diagnosed’ or ‘undiagnosed’ – in reflecting on her reaction to the news that one of the children in her class (Sophie) might ‘have’ SENDs she describes feeling very anxious
since she had not had experience of working with children with a ‘particular need’ and her emotional reaction rose to ‘panic’ about what to do and where to start. There was frequent evidence in the data that Abigail was continually uncertain in the absence of clear guidance and anxious about her capacity to respond professionally in such indefinite circumstances.

In the early stages of the IAR, Jane and Anna (mentors to third year undergraduate students) were regularly voicing similar concerns about falling short in their responsibilities for children with the label of SEND and regularly commented on not being knowledgeable enough in the special techniques that were needed for particular needs such as Down syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome and even ‘syndromes’ that didn’t have a name.

Jane and Anna had tended to communicate a feeling of professional inadequacy, locating expertise for SEND among the medical community who have the ‘training’ and the specialist knowledge needed for working with children with particular ‘labels’. Jane seems to feel vulnerable as a consequence of not being knowledgeable enough, not even trusting that the expert knowledge she needs is accessible to her when there is no clear ‘label’ to start with – ‘we don’t even know what she’s got so we can’t even look that up in a book!’ There is a sense in which Anna, Jane (mentors) and Abigail (PGCE student) felt hostages to fortune in the face of SENDs that may be diagnosed or undiagnosed and which they have not encountered before. Jane and Anna (in the early stages of the project) and Abigail (throughout her placement and after it) regularly
communicated a strong sense of professional vulnerability when they were talking about SEND.

The data also reveals Abigail’s operation of a medical model. For example, when talking about how best to prepare for SENDs and related conditions she considers what response she might make when informed of children’s ‘rare complaints’ or diagnoses:

Well, I think with a medical diagnosis you need to know what, I mean...... people can throw in all sorts of long sounding, you know, lists of this, ‘this is a child and they have whatever it is’, um, and if you come across one you’ve never heard before.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December, 2011]

Abigail (PGCE student) is tending to associate SEND with medical discourses (syndromes, complaints, and physical difficulties), deficits (problems) and human differences that might be difficult to understand and respond to (long sounding names and long lists of characteristics). She believes that once a ‘syndrome’ or ‘condition’ is introduced, the first response is to do some basic research on how this might present in the classroom. Abigail may be overgeneralising the relationship between ‘conditions’ and ‘learning’ and placing too much confidence in ‘labels’ as reliable and expedient starting points for pedagogic planning. However, there is a strong critique of this standpoint in the
literature since though, for some children, medical conditions may be relevant to the child's learning, very often, a child's 'condition' or 'label' or 'type' of learning difficulty has a highly questionable relationship to learning and teaching (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Thomas and Glenny, 2005; Slee, 2010; Nind et al., 2004). When considering the weight that labels might carry, Abigail remarks that it is important not to make assumptions or to appoint yourself as an expert. Abigail regularly communicated the belief that ill-informed assumptions about 'what is wrong' with a child are dangerous without access to the 'proper, proper medical facts.' Though she is cautious about labels in one way, she places great faith in them in another indicating the adoption of some contradictory positions. Such contradictions arose frequently in the data for participants and are discussed later given their potential relevance to understanding of what ITE is preparing students for.

Returning to Abigail's professional identity, the data suggests that the expert knowledge she believed teachers needed to 'build on' was located outside the school among the specialist teachers and medical professionals that had the diagnostic tools and skills needed to inform pedagogy. Abigail's location of expertise as external to teachers and schools came through strongly in the data (see 4.2). This may indicate the discourse of expertism, which constructs special education as technical and specialist and relates the concept of 'need' to personal pathologies which require prescription pedagogies outside the skills base of mainstream teachers (see 2.9). Anna, Jane (mentors) and Abigail all seem to be operating such discourses in evaluating the extent of their professional preparedness.
That there is a negative relationship between *expertism* and self-efficacy for SEND and inclusive practice is strongly evidenced in the literature as is reported in 2.9 (Forlin, 2010; Florian, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Pearson, 2009; Lambe and Bones, 2006; Nind et al., 2004; Jones, 2004; Campbell et al., 2003; Stanovich and Jordan, 2003; Marshall et al., 2002; Weiss, 2002; Lyser et al., 1994). Avramidis et al. (2000) found that when teachers perceive themselves as competent enough to cater for pupils with the label of SEND, they hold more positive attitudes to inclusion. With particular reference to professional identity, Jones (2004) reports that teachers of children with severe and profound learning difficulties construct their professional identity in terms of those values, attitudes and practices that are distinct from teachers in mainstream schools in ways that may reinforce the separation of ‘us’ from ‘them’ and ‘our pupils’ from ‘all pupils’. He argues that ITE and CPD must undermine such divisions and promote professional identities that connect all teachers with all learners. In this way, Jones (2004) is arguing for the deconstruction of the discourses of expertism, a view also purported by Slee (2010) and Sarason (1990) (see 2.8).

Data arising from the systematic evaluation of PA2 (personalised learning planning or ‘PLPs’) is potentially relevant here in pursuing the theory that the discourses of expertism had a relationship with self-efficacy among these participants and that their deconstruction might bring positive consequences (Jones, 2004). In earlier stages of the IAR Jane and Anna (mentors) had identified themselves as inexpert and amateur in the area of SEND. However, at the end of phase 1, they had revised these self-evaluations
and were positioning within themselves a particular expertise that arose from their role and experience in linking the curriculum and pupils within the particular context of the classroom.

Jane and Anna (mentors) began to identify within themselves (and their ‘day to day’ craft knowledge), the skills and capacities needed by inclusive practitioners. Once this had happened, the discourses of expertism seem to be in abeyance with a consequent re-evaluation of themselves as skilled professionals rather than inexpert amateurs. In the case of Jane and Anna, the IAR seems to have resulted in more positive self-efficacy as a result of reflexive work. This may serve to validate the model proposed by McIntyre (2009) since it implies that the reflexive space facilitated by the IAR supported the formation of more positive professional identities for SEND and inclusive practices as a result of the attenuation of expertism.

Analysing the data relating to other students may cast further light on the relationship between expertism and professional development. With the exception of Abigail (PGCE student), students reported positive feelings of preparedness, at least in part, as a consequence of this placement. For example, Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) was generally more confident about ‘having a go’ and taking risks. Her experiences over the course of her programme seem to have led to a change in attitude about SEND. She developed a belief in children’s capacity to learn and her capacity to trust in that:

.....when I’ve got a child with SEN I don’t particularly see them as any different, anyway. In my first year I would have put a bit of a cap on what
they could do, but I have learned that they’re just as capable as anybody else at having a go at doing it. It’s kind of that ‘have a go’ philosophy again!

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]

Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) may be deliberately resisting her own prior connection of ‘SEND’ with deficits and low potential, replacing this with capability discourses. The wider data suggests that for Kathryn, adopting a ‘can do’ attitude was important to self-efficacy. Key for her was believing in children’s potential to progress and her own capacity to construct an effective response. It is not clear whether this conceptual transformation arose from this placement, the IAR or from the cumulative impact of her school experiences over the course of her undergraduate programme (signalling a weakness in the research design – see 5.3) but Kathryn’s deliberate operation of a capacity oriented conception of SEND and readiness for SEND is of interest here. She may have wanted to construct a professional identity that would give her a more solid, hopeful footing. She may have been actively resisting the dominant discourses she has heard. Both of these points may reveal the extent to which she was constructing a personal stance in response to the challenges she faced.

On this point, Lorna (PGCE student) also appears to adopt a position that has a positive relationship with self-efficacy. She reports that she had come to believe that inclusive practice was possible for her to achieve because she had learned (and demonstrated) some essential skills for including diverse learners. These skills included assessment (which allowed her to match her teaching to children’s needs), differentiation (she had learned to cater for all stages of development in her lesson planning) and teamwork.
Elaine (her mentor) and Selina (the teaching assistant working with her in the placement class) also believed that Lorna had moved on in this way and that her teaching had developed to include the diversity of learners in her class.

When other students were reflecting on their practice, they also seemed concerned to identify those skills and conceptualisations that were most relevant to securing inclusive outcomes for children. This may be because they wanted to feel positive about their readiness for inclusive practice and were using reflection as a means of actively auditing what skills and insights were developing and what potential these had for improved practice in the future. For example, Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) gives the following account of Betty, noting that the changes she had made to her whole class teaching had a positive impact on this child's level of inclusion, not least because supported by the whole team. She explains that ‘it was nice to see her more socially integrated in the class’ and that as a developing teacher, she had ‘learned to be much more flexible about how to help individual children through changing the way I do things for the whole class and I think this will help me in the future’ [Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]

Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) seems to perceive her own growing insights about inclusive practice, specifically in terms of how to innovate whole class practices in ways that secure inclusion for individuals. There are signs of an emerging positive professional identify for SEND and inclusive practice and this seems to have emerged from systematic reflection on her own effectiveness. This was in evidence for many other students too. The literature reports on the importance of building into field
experiences authentic opportunities for student teachers to better understand the challenges involved in responding to diverse learners, whilst providing opportunities for them to journey toward a sense of mastery and accomplishment. The Personalised Learning Planning process (PLP – Project action 2) and the Lesson Study task seems to have provided an opportunity for this and this is further explored in 4.3.2 since it offers some account of a pedagogic framework that seems to be successful.

However when analysing Abigail’s (PGCE student), reflections on her professional development, a different self-evaluation emerges. In the following, she describes the progress she made in differentiating her teaching and responding to children’s needs with particular reference to Sophie (a pupil in her placement class):

There was no IEP in progress it was a case of sort of, almost making it up as you went along....... um, and I think the mentor learned from, she learned from the facts that I had pinpointed to her and we were trying to drive planning to make it more accessible so that she was included because she physically couldn’t do what the rest of the class were doing. You know, responding to the visual that sort of thing, breaking things down into chunks and getting her to repeat back what I expected her to do yes, she repeated back, she didn’t necessarily do what you asked her (laughs) but that is all part of the process I suppose and it is breaking it right down and its taking a step back and then building on that so she
can, she can contribute something or provide some input um so that, then everything else follows on so you need some input to be able to assess her and to find out, to find out where her development points are and then move it forward so, so yeah, I did develop but it was more common sense and making it up as we went along with Sophie.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]

Abigail (PGCE student) reported that she had learned to differentiate her planning, break things down into smaller steps and reflect with others to find solutions. Though other students regarded these actions as important professional skills that would impact positively on their effectiveness in the future, Abigail seemed to downgrade them to the status of 'common sense' and 'making up as we went along.' She was less certain about their relevance to professional development for SEND and inclusive practices or sure of their 'expert status' or cachet.

In the midst of 'SEND', there were times when Jane and Anna (mentors to 3rd year undergraduate students) had downgraded their professional knowledge in the same way that Abigail seems to have done. Anna and Jane’s original estimation of their professionalism in the area of SEND changed during the course of the IAR since they had not appreciated the complex, principled, skilled, sufficient and efficacious nature of those practices that they had operated tacitly. The data and reflection on it had been important scaffolds in that process (see 4.1.1).
Taking all of this into account, the data suggests that the discourses of expertism were relevant to professional development in the context of this school. Where they dominated they had a negative relationship with self-efficacy. However, there was also some account of the way in which student teachers and more experienced teachers constructed alternative conceptualisations of SEND and reconstructed their professional identities as a consequence of reflection and reflexive work. For example, Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate) adopted a capacity model in evaluating her own professional readiness for SEND; Lorna (PGCE student) reflected on the professional skills she had learned and came to see inclusive practice as something that was possible for her to achieve. Jane and Anna, quite deliberately, put the discourses of expertism into abeyance with positive consequences for their sense of adequacy and professionalism. It will be important to analyse the data to identify the processes, conditions and activities that were relevant. Though it seems reasonable to claim that the IAR (and its reflexive opportunities) supported such deconstruction among school staff, it is currently less clear what supported developments to self-efficacy among student teachers but this is further explored in 4.3. Finally, in the same way as it is unhelpful to underestimate the challenges set for student teachers, it may also be unhelpful to underestimate their self-determining capacity to develop more helpful professional identities and conceptual positions in their pursuit of self-efficacy for inclusive practice. This raises an important question. To what extent did the IAR or the wider programme support student teachers in doing this? This is further explored in 4.2.
4.2: Competing conceptions of SEND, inclusion and inclusive practice

The corpus data exposes the concurrent use of contradictory discourses and competing conceptions of SEND and inclusion by all participants at one time or another. It was noticeable that the medical model was frequently in use despite evidence of the participants’ strong commitment to valuing learners for their uniqueness. The medical model represents the traditional lexes that are critiqued in the literature and identified as dominating influences that ITE should dismantle (Florian, 2010; Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Jordan et al., 2009). Similar contradictions arose around the issue of labels and labelling.

4.2.1: Labels and labelling

Despite the strong commitment to a non-labelling and non-deficit approach as expressed by all participants at various times across the data, the operation of a deficit, medical model did arise as has already been seen in the cases of Anna and Jane (mentors to third year undergraduate students) and Abigail (PGCE student) but was it was also operated by other participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Participants’ belief that labels can be dangerous and misleading.</td>
<td>Mentors&lt;br&gt;Class teachers&lt;br&gt;Teaching assistants&lt;br&gt;Students&lt;br&gt;SENCO/assistant head</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Participants’ belief that labels can bring resource, recognition, a sense of informed practice. | Mentors<br>Class teachers<br>Teaching assistants<br>Students<br>SENCo/assistant head
|                                                                                             | SENCO/assistant head                               |
3. Participants concern that when the resources needed to secure inclusion (additional adults) are not available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mentors</th>
<th>Students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevalence across the corpus data</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>34 single occurrences across 8 research events among 10 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extracts from the data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alison: SENCO/Assistant head</td>
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<tr>
<td>I have twins in the nursery at the moment who are not out of nappies and whose language development is at a really early stage. We are doing our best for them but we have to fund TA support ourselves and that is huge chunk out of our budget. I mean, what am I going to do Debs? We can’t fund the speech therapy they need! We can’t even fund the TA really so that means that other children do not have a resource they would otherwise have had as we divert more and more hours to our twins..............sometimes it is a poisoned chalice being a school that is so good at inclusion because we end up pushing our resource to the limit and it is the effect on staff and other children that worries me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Extract from field work journal, 12th July, 2012]</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Veronica (mentor to Abigail)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I said to Abigail that you know, it’s bad enough labelling them with syndromes and God knows what else........ it shows a lack of care to me that people don’t go out of the way to find out who the children are.</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Extract from transcribed conversation, 24th January 2012]</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abigail (student teacher)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every child is different so just because one child has got a particular condition, it doesn’t mean to say that every child with that condition is the same, you’ve got to still treat them as individuals...... I think with their individual needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Lorna (PGCE student) associated the term SEND with needs that were ‘severe’, or ‘extreme’ and that resulted in the allocation of additional support. In harmony with Abigail (PGCE student), one of her worries for the future was having children in the class with more ‘severe’ needs who did not have this allocated support because they did not have a label.
The issue of resource allocation was troubling Lorna and though she came to see inclusive practice as a manageable project (and one that this placement had prepared her to undertake), she was concerned about the impact of insufficient support on her capacity to reach all children. Lorna (PGCE student) had decided that part of the resolution to this was to operate real respect for the contribution that teaching assistants could make. She believed that their expertise about individual children could compensate for the lack of time busy teachers might have in getting to know the children. She also resolved to prioritise systematic assessment of pupils' needs as early as she could on taking responsibility for a class. This is another example of the way in which a student teacher was deliberately adopting a positive or hopeful perspective on the constraints they experienced (see 4.1).

However, the fieldwork journal contains many accounts of the conversations I had with school staff about the issue of resources. For example, Alison (SENCo and Assistant head) had commented on the problem she faces in keeping her values alive in a context where the wellbeing of staff and children may be compromised by a lack of resources to the extent that developing a reputation as an inclusive school became a bit of a 'poisoned chalice'. On this point, Armstrong et al. (2010) notes that practitioners may come to distrust a system where inclusive education might become the rhetoric that makes the withdrawal of an inclusive (though imperfect) system of welfare permissible.
Lorna’s concerns (PGCE student) about meeting the needs of children who do not have a recognised ‘label’ but whose inclusive educational experience would be enhanced by additional adult support were echoed by many other participants in this school. This may demonstrate how a strong commitment to inclusive practice can be challenged by an unstable and unsupportive policy context. Studies of inclusive schools also illustrate how many challenges are involved in managing resources once the percentage of pupils with exceptional needs reaches a critical mass or goes beyond it (Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; MacBeath et al., 2006). Equally, in those schools that are most effective, careful resource management allows particular attention to how those who are most vulnerable might be best supported through targeted support (Sautner, 2008; Florian et al., 2007; Corbett, 2001).

Related to this was the pragmatic but contradictory stance school staff took on ‘labels’. Their strong belief that student teachers should understand the dangerous and devaluing impact of labels was frequently evidenced in the data and had a strong influence on the design of the project actions. However, at the same time as demoting labels, school staff also promoted them at particular times for particular purposes.

Veronica (Abigail’s mentor) was concerned about the limitations of labelling and explained that she believed that they abdicated people from responsibility for getting to know a child. Simultaneously however, Veronica was also seeking a label for one of the children in her class (despite her dislike of them) which seemed to reflect her concern
to do the best she could for her, since there was a connection between labels and getting recognition and support for a child. Notably, despite the strength of the anti-labelling stance in this school, many participants (Alison - SENCo, Elaine – Mentor, Lorna - PGCE student, Veronica - Mentor) recognised that labels had a function in securing additional resources and sometimes creating a sense of informed practice (a position Abigail had also adopted). For example, during a participant study day, Elaine (mentor) recorded the following:

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I have been very interested in the distinction between a medical model and a social model and this has really helped me today. I feel clearer about the difference in approach and how, as a busy SENCo, I have had to use labels to secure funding for children but I have realised that this is only a tiny part of what we do and isn’t a reflection of my bigger practice and values.

[Extract from personal learning statement, 16th July 2012]
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Elaine may be registering some of the subconscious discomfort she had about using labels but in recognising their purpose and the clear line between her use of labels for this purpose and her wider practices, she operates a much more sophisticated, demarcated understanding of the dilemmas involved in marrying the concept of SEND (and labels) with the concept of inclusive practice. Student teachers may find it difficult to interpret the contradictory discourses used by more experienced teachers or the way
these are used for particular purposes. This seems to have been the case for Abigail (PGCE student).

Abigail believed that professionals with appropriate levels of knowledge and expertise should be the only ones permitted to apply labels. She also questioned whether labels were useful since children varied so much. Abigail is taking a contradictory position since while suggesting that labels are treated 'lightly' and with caution she is also suggesting that labels carry so much weight that they should only be applied by those with a high enough professional standing. In the case of Sophie (a pupil in her class), Abigail believed that the situation would have been helped by some 'proper medical facts' about what was wrong and what should be done from other professionals, perhaps those she had heard about from outside the school. For example, about Sophie (a pupil in her placement class) she comments:

um, obviously, you've got to allow a child to develop anyway because they are still very young you know, you can't sort of label them too young but also, when you are waiting to find out what is actually wrong you don't really know if what you are doing is right or whether it is going to do more harm than good.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]
Her position on this is understandable given the dominant discourses of special pedagogy in the field and the way in which such discourses promote belief in remedies and cures (see 2.9). It is also reasonable and appropriate for Abigail to recognise that there may be others that could offer help and guidance – there is plenty of evidence of Abigail's professional humility. For example, she explains how important it is to respect people who are more experienced and in so doing communicates her commitment to being flexible and open.

However, though Abigail was respectful of more experienced staff, it is important to note that when it came to SENDs that she termed 'severe' or 'huge, extreme needs' (with Sophie fitting into that category in her mind), she tended to place expertise among professionals who had the 'proper, proper, medical facts' and was very worried about being unprepared or under-qualified for such needs. Sascha (a teaching assistant working closely with Abigail) made the following comment when reflecting on Abigail's view of SENDs:

"It is like a jack in a box and something surprising you and comes out it is as though she has put in this special needs in a box and because Sophie hasn't got a label, this jack in a box is going to jump out! This Jack's going to jump out and it could come at her and she's not quite aware of what it's going to be or know what's going to come out of the box."

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th January, 2012]
Sascha’s metaphor of the ‘jack in a box’ is a useful one since it seems to capture the way in which Abigail located the ‘special educational needs’ within Sophie perhaps believing that when the diagnosis ‘jumped out’ it would expose her lack of knowledge and even defy ordinary pedagogic approaches and the ordinary teachers that worked in mainstream schools. Though Abigail believed (perhaps somewhat naively as discussed in 4.1) that a label would put her on more certain professional ground and trigger more reliable forms of practice, she may also have feared its arrival. Whatever the case, there is evidence of Abigail’s trepidation about SEND. Some of this trepidation may arise from misconceptions about the relationship between ‘labels’ and educational responses (see 2.9).

The data illustrates how school staff adopted contradictory positions on labels and labelling in pursuit of particular purposes. Abigail (PGCE student) seems to have absorbed both the anti-labelling discourse and the pro-labelling discourse she has seen modelled but without an understanding of how these are operationalised in pursuit of positive outcomes for children. It will be important for my institution to consider how well it prepares students to recognise and understand the origins and purposes of these contradictory stances. The IAR’s reflective and reflexive opportunities seemed to help school staff understand the position and influence of these conflicts in their working lives. There was further evidence in the data of the way in which student teachers and more experienced staff grappled with contradictions and this is explored in what follows.
4.2.2: Contradictory discourses: Inclusion and SEND

That all participants were operating contradictory discourses is evidenced across the corpus data. Particularly notable was the way in which the concepts ‘SEND’ and ‘inclusion’ when operated drew on discourses that were contradictory or incompatible.

**TABLE 4.2.2: Contradictory discourses: inclusion and SEND**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DISPARITY DISCOURSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. SEND operating alongside deficit discourses</td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. SEND operating alongside medical discourses</td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. SEND operating alongside normative discourses</td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DIVERSITY DISCOURSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Inclusion operating alongside capacity discourses</td>
<td>All participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Inclusion operating alongside participative discourses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Inclusion operating alongside the celebration of uniqueness and the richness of diversity.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevalence across the corpus data**

*Disparity discourses*: 28 single occurrences across 4 research events among 8 participants (all activated when the concept ‘SEND’ was being operated).

*Diversity discourses*: 47 single occurrences across 8 research events among 10 participants inclusive of some whole group discussion (all activated when the concept ‘inclusion’ was being operated).

**Extracts from the data**

**Lorna (PGCE student) talking about the value of the personalised learning planning (PLP) task:**

> It was great that I could see a way you could do that next time so the process has helped me enormously to develop in terms of awareness of different needs and, and... at the other end of the scale, it made me more aware of the needs of other children as well, in that there were children in that class that would always finish first and you are aware that they need stretching more. I know, next they would need a different sort of PLP, in order to grow themselves..........I don’t think I had thought before I started about how difficult it would be to teach so many diverse needs within one class and I was aware, I became more aware of this from knowing the children and thinking about what they needed when I was doing my lesson plans.... but even then, within the six children who would be termed as ‘lower ability’ [gestured speech marks], which included those with special needs there were varying people within that group who I almost needed to do different things for.

[Extracts from transcribed conversation, 6th December, 2011]

**Karina (3rd year undergraduate student)**
Karina: I think inclusion is making all children feel equally valued and cared for within the classroom. SEN I think it’s difficult to define that because all children have personal needs. I think SEN is more sort of, I don’t know how to explain it, outside of the expected needs, greater, more significant needs?

Debs: Yes, so to you, the term of SEN tends to be a child whose needs are greater – have I got that right?

Karina: Yeah or perhaps more severe than other children so to get them to the level of the other children?

Debs: Yeah so they’re at a much earlier developmental stage quite often our anxieties are about trying to get them to catch up, I think, maybe or ……?

Karina: Yeah

Debs: But that’s my view on that, what’s your view on that….might be different?

Karina: No I think that especially in early years they’re still developing at a different stages anyway so I think as long as you make them feel they can achieve and access all areas of learning in the classroom you’re providing the opportunities for them to develop.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December, 2011]

Abigail (student teacher)
Every child is different so just because one child has got a particular condition, it doesn’t mean to say that every child with that condition is the same, you’ve got to still treat them as individuals….. I think with their individual needs.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]

Like other students, Lorna (PGCE student) seemed hesitant about what language to use when describing the range of developmental stages in her class. Talking about the benefit of the PLP process she remarks that it had helped her tune into the needs of those ‘who would be termed ‘lower ability’ (gestured speech marks), those who were in the ‘lower ability’ group who needed even more intensified support and those ‘at the other end of the scale’ who needed stretching and challenging.

There is some indication that Lorna is using the language of fixed ability (‘lower ability’, ‘at the other end of the scale’) but that she feels awkward about it. Arguably, Lorna is working within a ‘community of practice’, where a range of discourses are likely to be operating. Her cautious and uncertain use of language may be a reflection of her critical stance on these discourses. This is reminiscent of the critical position Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) had taken on deficit discourses within SEND because we can see
her taking a particular position in order to manage the constraints and contradictions operating in this workplace.

Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) had some difficulty operating the concepts of ‘SEND’ and ‘inclusion’ together and defined inclusion in terms of ‘making all children feel equally valued and cared for in the classroom.’ Karina explained that SEN was a concept that was more difficult to explain ‘because all children have personal needs. I think SEN is more sort, I don’t know how to explain it, outside the expected needs, greater or more significant needs?’

Karina’s difficulty with forming the words for SEND is interesting – though her final point may have been influenced by a poor interview technique (since in this interchange I revealed my own view – see table 4.2.2), Karina sees the EYFS as a context where all children’s needs can be accommodated consequently reducing the need to consider any child as ‘other’ or to exert pressure to ‘get them to the level of the other children.’ Simultaneously she may have to operate a conception of SEND that is about severity and exception in comparison to an assumed norm (probably because this is how SEND is conceptualised in policy and legislation – see 2.6). Though Karina conceptualised inclusion as a response to all and everyone she seemed to find the concept SEND disruptive to the concept of ‘inclusion’ since one (SEND) was about the ‘other’ and inclusion was about ‘everyone.’ There were other instances where participants were operating competing discourses but the terms inclusion and inclusive practice seemed to be less problematic and more stable.
Prevalent in the data among all participants was a conceptualisation of inclusion as a process that involved valuing children and their uniqueness and that related to all children rather than to SEND exclusively. The term inclusion was commonly associated with the experience of being secure, valued, and having choice and independence. For example, Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) associated inclusive practice with being a member of the classroom community and she also commented on the importance of unconditional valuing whilst returning to the capacity discourses introduced earlier in the conversation:

Um, inclusion - a lot of people say it is about helping everybody achieve I don’t really like that because not everybody will achieve the same thing. I think it is letting everybody have a go and everybody doing what they can get to. I don’t think it’s always about making sure everyone hits the same point. Having a go! I think that’s my motto, have a go!

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]

Kathryn’s concept of inclusion promotes capacity discourses over deficit discourses, and attributes value to all stages of development. However, when asked to consider the contribution that the school placement had made to her development the introduction of the term ‘SEND’ seems to exert some pressure to return to deficit discourses. She makes the following comment:
I think it was the children and the EYFS curriculum most of all. Um, two EAL girls for example, I’ve never had those before. I didn’t have anybody with SEN particularly I had a few who were working behind national level but nothing particularly severe so I think it was more the environment with the curriculum and the children in school.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]

Though Kathryn operates a strong commitment to valuing all learners, SEND seems to trigger deficit orientations relating to severity and a norm (‘working behind national level’). Though the EYFS curriculum seems to have given her an opportunity to demote such normative thinking, this may have been difficult to sustain once the discourses of SEND were at play. This has policy implications since as explored in 2.5 and 2.6, official policy for education and for ITE may promote lexes that run contrary to the development of inclusive practices making the task all the more difficult. For ITE, a challenge lies in supporting student teachers as they tackle the potential incompatibility of ‘SEND’ and ‘inclusion’. Evidence arising from data thus far lends support to the claim that where students and school staff were able to construct a stance or position in the face of contradiction, this had consequences for self-efficacy (for example, in the case of Jane and Anna). If ITE were to expose and hold up for analysis the contradictions, dilemmas, dominant discourses and alternative discourses professionals are likely to encounter in their pursuit of inclusion, this may lend significant support to student teachers. In this way, the argument that ITE must include a critical-theoretical dimension
so strongly present in the literature (Forlin, 2010; Rouse, 2010; Slee, 2010; Moran, 2009; McIntyre, 2009; Florian, 2007; Pearson, 2007a; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Avramidis et al., 2000; Garner, 2000) seems further confirmed as relevant to effective inclusive teacher education.

Returning to the concept of ‘inclusion’ operated by participants, there was frequent mention of the link between inclusive practice and ‘personalisation’ with the latter seen as the strategy for achieving the former. The processes identified by participants as important included being flexible and inventive; understanding all children’s starting points as quickly as possible; building on children’s strengths and interests; making links with home; involving children in the process and changing whole class approaches to include all children. Student teachers reported that inclusive practice depended on being systematic about assessment and planning so that teaching approaches were well matched to individual needs. This was an insight that school based participants wanted to promote among students and the design of PA2 (Personalised Learning Planning) was an attempt to scaffold the development of these skills and was based on the alternative definition of SEND developed by the group:

- Any child who may be finding learning and/or social participation difficult and who needs from us more intense and deliberate efforts to personalise our response.
Any child whose individual needs challenge us to be inventive in our pedagogic response so that all children might benefit from enrichments in our practice.

The data analysed thus far implies that this alternative conception of SEND was hard to sustain in any pure form. Even among a team that were highly committed to inclusive values, deficit models were sometimes in operation. This lends support to the claim that participants were working in a complex context where they had to mediate discourses that were not always compatible. It is interesting to note (referring back to Table 4.2.2) that there was no evidence of teaching assistants operating a deficit or medical model in the data. Their operation of a social model seemed unequivocal. Neither is there evidence to support explanation of this phenomenon. It might be connected to differences in the extent to which teachers and student teachers are accountable for pupil progress compared to teaching assistants. Teachers and student teachers may also be more immersed in the language of 'expected stages of development' as characteristic of a national curriculum and national systems of assessment. This may offer some insight into the value of involving teaching assistants who, as a consequence of a different role and perspective may counter dominating deficit discourses when working with student teachers.

The challenges set for ITE by incompatible discourses are acknowledged by the European Association for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE, 2012) who
recommend that reform to ITE must include clarification of the language that is used when referring to diversity and inclusion. Noting the importance of a clear rationale for what terminologies are to be adopted, the EADSNE (2012) suggest that policy makers (and teacher educators) move away from the lexes of categorisation since these promulgate the separation of learners from inclusive education. The findings reported here provide support for this suggestion since student teachers struggle with uniting the concepts SEND and inclusion in ways that lead them to be ill at ease. In terms of their self-efficacy there are some further insights into the impact of an 'othered' group (those with SEND) on their feelings of preparedness.

Indicative of this is the uncertainty Abigail (PGCE student) and Karina (3rd year undergraduate) held about the transferability of their knowledge to the 'types' of SEND in the future. For example, though Karina reports being more prepared, she does have concerns about particular 'types' of learner:

I feel more prepared now, especially knowing some of the children in the class. I didn’t necessarily need to know that child has got a label or whatever so it was just knowing the children and planning for their needs.

I do think that when I went to a special school I didn’t feel prepared for it.

I don’t feel prepared for a class, maybe, with physical difficulties – I think I would find it hard to cater for their needs because I hadn’t had much
experience whereas dyspraxia and visual impairments and things I feel quite prepared for including children with those needs.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]

On the one hand Karina regards labels or conditions as relatively unimportant in planning a response. On the other, she places priority on experience of particular conditions (physical difficulties, dyspraxia, visual impairments) in evaluating the extent of her preparedness. In this way she operates a ‘general differences’ and a ‘unique differences’ approach (Norwich and Lewis, 2005), simultaneously. This may also be a reflection of Karina’s interpretation of what others (such as employers) conceive as sufficient preparation. Student teachers may have to negotiate with a wider education system that is not as enlightened as them or which runs contrary to their values. In order to sustain their position, they may have to adopt a range of compromises. Her operation of such contradictory discourses may indicate her understanding of the need to satisfy a range of different masters.

Though this thesis has set out to understand the conditions, processes and activities that may be relevant to professional development for SEND and inclusive practices, the data thus far suggests that this must be drawn from the pre-requisite question: what is it that student teachers are actually being prepared for? The evidence arising from this study thus far suggests that it is not an apolitical or stable context in which competencies can be developed and applied in unproblematic form. Rather it is a shifting and dilemmatic
world in which practitioners must manage, operationalize and mediate incompatible discourses in order to find the best way forward.

On this point, school staff valued the opportunity for reflexive work, with Jane, Anna, Elaine, Charlotte, Sascha and Alison (school staff) all reporting some resolution of the conflict between particular discourses and their own values or identities (see 4.1.1).

This poses an important question for ITE within my institution and elsewhere. In what ways can teacher education prepare student teachers for the complex conceptual and contradictory policy context that may be at odds with their own values (or even at odds with itself)? Is there any scope for ITE to influence policy development in ways that make the context for professional development less problematic? In the case of this particular school there is evidence that partnership remodelled as collaborative enquiry may be one response to the first question. However, the second is beyond the scope of this work though relevant for ITE nonetheless. This is explored further in Chapter 5.
4.3: Developing inclusive classroom practices

An important focus for the project was development of more effective inclusive practices among the student teachers participating in it. There is significant evidence of the positive impact of the project actions on students' professional progress in this area. The first source of evidence is in the classroom observation data as is explored below.

4.3.1: Classroom observation

The findings in this section are presented differently since the classroom observation data became an important trigger for the consideration of a range of related phenomenon across the corpus data. Hence, vignettes arising from the classroom observation data are used as a stimulus for analysis and discussion in the same way that they were for the participants during the study.

As explained in Chapter 3, much data was collected through classroom observation and this provided an insight into the inclusive practices applied by students and school staff. The ‘Criteria for inclusive practice’ (Figure 4.1) developed by the group (see 3.8.2) mirror the conceptions of inclusive practice present in the wider literature (for example, in the ‘Framework for Participation’ presented by Black-Hawkins et al., 2007, in the conception of ‘Connective Pedagogy’ put forward by Corbett, and the ‘Index for Inclusion’ developed by Booth et al., 2002) but it is not claimed that they have anything other than internal validity. However, these criteria did provide a useful basis for evaluation and reflection for the participating group.
FIGURE 4.1: The group’s criteria for inclusive classroom practice

ROUTINES
Classroom routines and the physical environment (e.g. Register, class jobs, snack time and displays) are designed to promote security in children, independence and equal opportunities.

PERSONALISED TEACHING
Teaching interactions imply knowledge of children's individual needs.

WARMTH
Warmth, humour, openness and positive interaction between children and adults are features of the learning environment.

MONITORING
Practitioners monitor who is involved and who is not and intervene to promote engagement, a sense of togetherness and equal access

PUPIL INDEPENDENCE
Independence is enabled and promoted

VOICE AND OWNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN
Children are listened to and their choices respected; they are given time and space to make their own unique response; they can self-direct and operate creativity in the learning environment

TEAM WORK
The teaching team work together to enact the inclusive practices described in these categories

COMMUNICATION AND ACCESS
Accessible language and resources are used

ENGAGING ACTIVITIES
Activities are planned in a way that might appeal to children and their stage of development

ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSE
Children are engaged and respond

POSITIVE PEER INTERACTION
There is positive interaction between children who are learning and playing together

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Involvement of parents is evident
The classroom observation data provides an exciting account of practice and enables discussion of related themes which cast more light on the conditions, processes and activities that may be relevant to professional development for SEND.

For this reason vignettes from the classroom observation data are presented and analysed in what follows.
Vignette 1: Personalised responses and collective knowledge

Christopher (a five year old pupil in the reception class) arrives at the ‘creative table’ where the task is to create a card dinosaur with moving parts. On the table there are pieces of white card, blobs of plasticine, laminated pictures of dinosaurs, information books, scissors, split pins, single-hole punchers, pencils and coloured pens.

Christopher is explaining to Claire (a 3rd year undergraduate student teacher) that he wants to do something different. ‘I want to draw the picture out and around like this’ (Christopher gestures with his hands to explain what he means) and after spending some time listening, Claire asks Geraldine (a teaching assistant) ‘Can you help Christopher out a minute? He wants to draw round a template and I need to get back to work with the triangles group.’

Following Claire’s request, Geraldine asks Christopher to come and sit with her and he does so immediately. He has a picture of a dinosaur with him and Geraldine asks, ‘Which dinosaur have you got there?’ and Christopher replies ‘It’s a dinosaur!’ Geraldine says ‘It’s a Tyrannosaurus Rex and he needs a body – can you draw him a body?’ Christopher smiles and draws a body on the card and as he does so he nods. Geraldine sounds impressed when she says ‘You see, you don’t need a template!’
It is quarter past two and Christopher is very focussed on cutting out his dinosaur shapes. He continues cutting and is working without adult help with Geraldine at his side. Anna (the class teacher and mentor to Claire) and Geraldine have a discussion about Christopher and Geraldine gestures towards a file she has with her (which contains assessment records). Geraldine and Anna praise Christopher together and affirm his effort and concentration.

Geraldine turns to Christopher and asks 'How can we attach the straw to make these go together......so we can make a hole in it and then what are we going to do? Christopher replies enthusiastically with 'Thread it!' and Geraldine says 'You are going to thread it through – good boy!' Geraldine speaks to Anna who is nearby and says 'He knows what he's got to do Mrs ____' and Anna says 'Yes he does, well done Christopher!' Geraldine continues to support Christopher and he announces 'I want to do some arms' to which Geraldine replies, 'You want to do some arms! Great, so go on then!'

The participating group identified highly inclusive practice in this vignette because the student teacher and the teaching assistant had a collective understanding of Christopher's needs and collaborated to ensure that they took advantage of this opportunity to develop his creativity and independence. The team knew that Christopher preferred very 'safe' tasks and that he was reluctant to make decisions or take risks. Claire (3rd year undergraduate student) believed that this was why he had asked for a template, he wanted to be sure that it would look right but she asked Geraldine (teaching assistant) to support him so that he could learn that he did not need to rely on a template and that his ideas and decisions were good ones. This collective knowledge and action was also evident in the interaction between Anna (mentor and
class teacher) and Geraldine (teaching assistant) who made a particular point of praising his progress and noting its value. Christopher had a statement of SEND and a diagnosis of Prader-Willi syndrome but the team were uncertain about the influence of this ‘condition’ on Christopher’s reluctance to take risks. For them, it was Christopher’s individual needs that led their planning rather than his ‘condition’. In the participants’ view inclusive practices were strongly in evidence though they recognised that there was some tension between his preference for a template (criterion - voice and ownership) and pushing him to take more risks (criterion – pupil independence) though in this situation, they believed that this tension had been rightly resolved through emphasis of the later.

On reflecting on this full narrative account, Claire (3rd year undergraduate student) commented on the new insights she had gained as a result of being placed in an Early Yeas Foundation Stage (EYFS) setting. It is important to note that other students (Claire, Elizabeth, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn) made similar comments about the EYFS noting the importance of planning from the children’s interests and preferences. Though Lisa (3rd year undergraduate student) was a little more sceptical, students generally believed that this would influence the way they planned for personalised learning in KS1 and KS2. For example, Kathryn noted that working in the EYFS had given her confidence to take a much more flexible approach where children could take more of the lead ‘I think my outlook completely changed before I was very much kind of not ‘tell them what to do’ but it was a lot of my ideas that initiated the learning but now it’s definitely............their ideas that initiated the learning, that worked so much better’ [Extract from transcribed
conversation, 26\textsuperscript{th} March, 2011]. [Extract from transcribed conversation, 26\textsuperscript{th} March, 2011]. Kathryn had come to believe that giving more value to children’s ideas and interests was a route towards more inclusive practice that would continue to influence the way she approached things in the future.

As noted previously in the case of Karina (3\textsuperscript{rd} year undergraduate student) and Abigail (PGCE), students often commented on the importance of experiencing different ‘types’ of learners to their professional development and preparedness for SEND. For example, Lily (4\textsuperscript{th} year undergraduate student) explained that her experience of working with a child from a traveller community had been significant to her. She had done a home visit and gained much more insight than she would have gained in school. Without that experience, she would still have felt unprepared for children from traveller communities. It is possible that Lily’s identification of ‘travellers’ as a ‘type’ of learner for which she needs to be differently prepared emerges from a contradictory policy context where the drive towards more inclusive practice was paradoxically connected to the identification of ‘categories’ of learners who were ‘at risk’ of underachievement. These groups included learners who experience SENDs, learners of English as an Additional Language, children from disadvantaged backgrounds, ‘looked after’ children and white working class boys (DfES, 1998a DfES, 1997). There has been some criticism of this approach since the links made between inclusion and the science of ‘risk assessment’ represents a technical approach where individual responsibility (in terms of the individual pupil, individual teacher and individual school) is promoted above more complex models of educational disadvantage (Armstrong et al., 2010; Mitchell, 2008).
Lily’s position on experiences of ‘types’ of learners may reflect the consequences of this for professional development since, where a group are ‘labelled’ they are ‘othered’ in ways that lead student teachers to feel that their usual pedagogic range is not sufficient. Arguably, it is important for student teachers to gain knowledge of all children’s family lives and home environments.

Earlier analyses included reference to Karina and Kathryn’s (both 3rd year undergraduate students) belief that they would not be fully prepared for diverse learners until they had experienced of all ‘types’ or ‘categories.’ Abigail (PGCE) also took this position and whilst reflecting on her reaction to the news that Sophie was experiencing difficulties and may have the label of SEND she noted:

If you’ve not actually had the experience of working with children with any particular need, it is very difficult, it’s panic - what do I do, where do I start?

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]

Lily (4th year undergraduate student) commented on the impact of the experience she had had in special schools since these had helped her feel more prepared. Karina believed that the alternative placements embedded in her undergraduate programme (in special schools, EAL settings and other key stages) had contributed to her readiness for diversity as had the diverse children she had come across in placements thus far. Sascha (TA) and Elaine (Mentor), when reflecting on the progress of the students placed with them noted that the makeup of the placement class was a factor – where students
worked with classes that were very diverse and challenging, there was a more urgent need to get to know the children’s starting points and preferences and this was likely to help them develop. Elaine (mentor to Lorna) and Sascha and Selina (teaching assistants) believed that Abigail might have struggled more because her class was less diverse (in terms of range and challenge) than other classes:

Debs: So in terms of Lorna who we got to know really well on her placement here, where do you think she got to in her capacity to include and why do you think she developed what she developed?

Elaine: Um, I think she did well, this class has got quite a range of needs and I think initially that was a little bit overwhelming for her just because of the nature of them I think. Um, and it was getting to grips with what the needs were as well as getting to grips with everything else, because of the nature of the needs you couldn’t leave it for a couple of days to work out what they were. So she really had to understand just because it was imperative that she did really. Um, so I think because of the nature of the group she was made to realise that it was very important from the very beginning, possibly more so than a class like Veronica possibly. Um, and the fact we were already making lots of provision so she kind of came into that as a way of working. She was a very um... I think she tried very hard to make sure everything um was accessible to everybody and it was something she thought about.
think having the process of identifying children was good to do
that because that made her think of things she could do for herself
but didn’t rely on me or the team or whoever.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th January 2012]

This data from a wide range of sources suggests that one of the conditions pertinent to
the development of the students is experience of diverse learners in diverse contexts.
There is much support for the idea that extended contact with children who are labelled
as having ‘SEND’ contributes to preparedness for SEND (Nash and Norwich, 2010;
Florian and Rouse, 2009; Ofsted, 2009; Sharma et al., 2008; Vickerman, 2007; Golder et
al., 2009; Avramidis et al., 2000). School staff were also suggesting that the most diverse
classes were the ones that might offer the best opportunity for development. This
seems to be an important challenge to take up. Auditing students’ experiences and
providing bespoke placements in varied settings may support their preparedness for
diverse learners. However, this presents a dilemma since it may reinforce an assumption
that there are identifiable ‘types’ of learners for whom a specialist pedagogy exists who,
if not covered in your ‘training’, are beyond your pedagogic reach. This is an example of
a tension which ITE providers may need to acknowledge and understand in order to
minimise the negative consequences of the approaches they adopt. Handling such
conflicts is an important task for ITE. Best and Kellner (2001) note that a real
understanding of inclusion depends on a postmodern perspective:
a shift towards more multiperspectival theorising that respects a variety of
sometimes conflicting perspectives rather than, as in modern theory, seeking the
one standpoint of objective truth or absolute knowledge.

Best and Kellner, 2001, p.113

Supporting this view, Corker and Shakespeare, (2001, p.5) argue that embracing multiple
perspectives would be of great value to the field of inclusive education since it supports
acceptance of ambiguity and conflict. Thus far, the evidence has prompted me to
consider how I might acknowledge different perspectives in a more balanced way. For
example, though I may wish to demote the discourses of special pedagogy, I may also
need to evaluate these discourses more openly so that student teachers can come to
understand why they continue to influence the practitioners they work with.
Christopher and Kirsty (two children in the reception class) are in the role-play area. This has been set up to look like a dinosaur museum and there are trays of sand filled with bones, magnifying glasses, explorer costumes, a tent, toy dinosaurs and writing equipment. Kirsty has had an argument with another child and Christopher and Kirsty are talking about it. Christopher cuddles Kirsty and says 'why are you crying Kirsty?' and he touches her face in a loving way and seems to be speaking reassuring words to her that I can't quite hear saying 'and then you can......and after that you can.....okay?' He asks her what she is having for her dinner. She smiles and responds to his questions.

Another child is playing with a toy camera and Kirsty exclaims 'I need that!' The girl promptly gives it up. Kirsty uses the toy camera as a hair dryer and commences to play at drying Christopher's hair. They talk while this is happening. Anna (the class teacher) and Michelle (a teaching assistant) are watching Kirsty and Christopher and Anna asks, 'Is she drying your hair? Are you playing hairdressers?' After a while, Michelle comes over and says, 'You are playing ever so nicely with Kirsty and you are playing nicely with Christopher.' The adult explains to Kirsty that Christopher has to go with her 'He has had a nice time playing with you but now he has got to come with me' and Kirsty says, 'Why?' and Michelle explains again. She draws Christopher away and Kirsty follows, seeming reluctant to give him up. Anna helps to separate Kirsty from Christopher and takes her to the role play area, engaging her in play. Later, Michelle explained to me that she had noticed the positive play between Kirsty and Christopher and held off from interrupting them for as long as she could.
Members of the participating group identified the event captured in vignette 2 as highly inclusive practice, since the practitioners (Anna and Michelle) had observed the positive interaction occurring between Christopher and Kirsty and had held back from interrupting or ending the play because they were seeking to encourage more sustained peer interaction for these children. Reflecting on the classroom observation data and this particular instance, Anna wrote:

From this data, I became aware of how sensitive the team is in responding to the needs of the children. I can see many instances where I am affirming and encouraging and where the design of the whole class environment is helping them to progress. This has given me a lot of confidence and this came at just the right time. The day after I had read the data, Christopher’s mum requested a meeting with me and the head because she felt that I was not including Christopher as fully as I should. We did reassure her but reading the data made me aware of something else too. Really, we should have left Christopher and Kirsty to play but because Michelle is his funded TA, she does individual work with him and if that doesn’t happen, his mum complains about it. This is a bit of a tension really, but this data has confirmed that he is having a very inclusive experience.

[Extract from systematic evaluation of PA2, 5th April, 2011]
Anna, Michelle and Christopher’s mother may be operating different definitions of inclusion, with the practitioners considering it in terms of inclusion within the class and Christopher’s mother conceptualising it as individual support. This adds further weight to the claim that dilemmas and tensions were a constant and significant part of the context for student teachers and school staff alike.

The data contains other instances of school staff taking a position on the relevance of a ‘condition’ to a child’s learning. The following is drawn from a meeting with Michelle (teaching assistant referred to above):

Michelle said that for her, the most important thing was getting to know Christopher. She explained that she had done some reading and research on Prader-Willi syndrome but that ‘no child is a text book child’. She also commented that meeting with his mother was the most important thing since it put things into context since ‘she told me exactly how it was for them.’ She explained that the ‘theory’ of the condition had not applied much to Christopher yet. For example, he didn’t forage for food (partly because he had been trained not to at home). She had also pondered on how the list of characteristics for the condition on the one hand didn’t relate to him, but on the other, could have related to lots of other children in the class. She said ‘For me, it was getting to know Christopher and getting to know his mum, meeting his family that was the most useful thing.’ She also said that she thought that knowledge of the ‘theory’
might be relevant though, because behaviours like ‘foraging’ might emerge as he got older and she would know how to interpret that and what to do if it emerged.

[Extract from written up record of a meeting with Michelle, 25th March 2011]

Michelle seems to take a cautious but open view about the relevance of Christopher’s condition, being willing to engage particular criteria (such as foraging) if and when they become relevant. Arguably, Michelle is adopting a position that will enable her to manage one of the dilemmas identified by Allan (2008) - how to understand impairment whilst avoiding disabling attitudes and practices. It will be important for my institution to review how it deals with ‘types’ of SEND or learning difficulties in ways that help student teachers do the same. Arguably, there is also some sense in which Michelle is aware of the potential ‘power’ of labels to impose a homogeneous and ill-fitting identity upon unique learners. She may be deliberately holding the ‘condition’ at bay in order to mediate its potentially oppressive and predictive consequences.

In the field-work journal, I have recorded numerous accounts of school staff reflecting on such mediations. They tended to do this in informal, incidental contexts without my prompting (e.g. over coffee, while we were waiting for the class to come in, in walks along the corridor). For example, the following account arose during a conversation with Caroline who was not a participant in the project but who was a teaching assistant who supported Evie, a child who had the label of ‘Williams Syndrome’:
Caroline and I were chatting about Evie since she had come into the class and introduced herself to me during a classroom observation. Caroline wanted me to know that though Evie ‘had Williams Syndrome’, she was always sceptical about it and its relevance to Evie. For example, the textbooks claimed that children with Evie’s label were likely to deteriorate in their cognitive abilities and go backwards in things like maths. Caroline said that there was no sign of this with Evie. She was making good progress in maths and sometimes she had to be really clear about this with Evie’s parents since they were keen to impress upon the school that the Williams Foundation (a charity that supports children and families) had warned them about the likelihood of this happening in the future. Caroline said that this sometimes created tensions because, though it was important to be aware of a potential future, it was also important to celebrate what Evie could do now and not to make any assumptions. She wanted to teach Evie according to her individual needs and not according to what the Williams Foundation said should or might be happening.

[Extract from fieldwork journal, 4th February, 2011]

There are also similar accounts of mediation as this relates to the curriculum with school staff talking about the pressures created by a content-heavy curriculum and ‘targets’ and how they protected children against the marginalising impact of these but not without making compromises. School staff may feel that they have a professional, even moral duty to mediate the potentially oppressive impact of external pressures on the children. In some way, this may serve to bring some resolution to the dilemmas they
face in serving the interests of competing stakeholders such as policy makers, parents and children.
Vignette 3 – the challenges of diversity

The adults in the room discuss whether the songs for the Christmas play need to be practised. It is decided that they do. Sophie (a child in the class with special educational needs) is sitting at the front, cross legged with her head in her hands. A boy is sitting next to her and he strokes her hair and her back. Sophie pretends to go to sleep and yawns loudly.

Abigail (PGCE student): Sophie!
Sophie: I am tired
Abigail: Well you should go to bed earlier then. Now everyone, you sang these songs beautifully yesterday. (Abigail plays the CD). I hope you are going to sit nicely. I don’t want you to be like the goldfish that just opens and shuts its mouth.

The children begin to sing along to the music playing on the CD. Sophie sings loudly and kicks her legs. She then sits up straight and where she doesn’t know the words, makes up some sounds and ‘laa laa laas’. The song continues:

‘Our work is never ending
There is so much more to do’

Sascha (teaching assistant) takes over the leading of the singing. For one of the songs, the children are asked to ‘just listen’ but Sophie sings. A girl behind her leans over and makes a loud ‘Ssssh!’ noise very close to Sophie’s face. She does this twice. Sascha says ‘There is no need for that.’

The next few songs involve individual children who are characters in the nativity. Molly stands at the front and sways and dances to the music as this is what she has been rehearsing for her part in the nativity play. Sophie is sitting up straight and smiling as she watches Molly. She shuffles back a little so she can see her more clearly and hums along to the music and claps to the rhythm of the dance. Abigail tells her ‘No’ When the song is finished Sophie touches Molly’s leg and says ‘Molly, you are so sweet Molly’ and Molly says, ‘Get off Sophie.’ Sascha says ‘Sophie was being kind wasn’t she?’ An instrumental part follows and Sophie, whilst still sitting cross-legged, moves her body to the rhythm of the music.

The children are singing a song about riding a donkey to Bethlehem and Sophie continues to sit up straight, singingly enthusiastically. At one point she says ‘I think this is the angel song again’ and a girl says ‘Ssssh’ loudly.

All of the songs have gestures which Sophie remembers and enacts enthusiastically. She is engaged for the whole time. Sascha tells the children that their singing has been lovely.
This data had prompted Abigail (PGCE student) to reflect on the challenge of securing peer support and acceptance for Sophie (a child with special educational needs that were not clearly understood by the team). She continued to reflect on this after the completion of her placement noting how the classroom observation data prompted important new insights. Her reflections reveal some discomfort with describing Sophie in terms of her deviation for the class ‘norm’ (‘she wasn’t quite on a level pegging with them’) with some additional discomfort about handling the stigma that goes with being ‘different’. To her credit, she recognised this as an issue that must be addressed. As a University Link Tutor who visits and assesses many students on placement, I was able to see that Abigail’s practice and understanding was not well developed when compared to other students at similar stages in their programme. At the time, I was annoyed with her muddled thinking and medical model orientation. However, as I have engaged more and more with the data I see that she is not the only participant who presents this.

To some extent, Abigail’s reflections reveal the competing discourses and priorities that were troubling for many other participants. For example, her discomfort with the peer group’s impatience with Sophie represents an additional complication that she needs to address. Her difficulty with finding the words to describe how different Sophie was from her peers is more evidence of how challenging it is for students to manage the dilemma of difference (Norwich, 2009; Norwich, 2007) for they must, on the one hand, recognise difference whilst on the other resist the stigmatising consequences of doing so. Whereas Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) had been able to resolve similar tensions in her practice with Betty (noted earlier in 4.1.2) and been proud of that, Abigail does not
report these practical resolutions with any real clarity. She seems to have been conceptually confused in ways that made her practically confused. For me this raised the question ‘To what extent did the IAR provide student teachers opportunities to be reflexive and what was the impact of this?’ My view on this is that the IAR provided this for staff but not for students, where there was more emphasis on practice and reflections on practice. This may have been a shortcoming in the design of the IAR which is further explored in Chapter 5.

The classroom observation data had provided a rich source of evidence about practice and a basis for reflection and evaluation. It was highly valued by participants. For this reason, it can be claimed that though there were reflexive shortfalls in relation to students, the IAR and its related data provided an important basis for professional development, with this form of data being particularly supportive and relevant. It strikes me that this is where HEI tutors have different but relevant skills and can make a significant contribution to professional development in this area as purported by McIntyre (2009). This study has tested this out and provided an insight into one pedagogic framework (IAR) that might support this.

The classroom observation data as a whole evidences the high frequency with which students were expounding the inclusive practices conceived by the group as representative of their values and an enumerated analysis does tend to strengthen this evidence (Appendix B: Table 4.0b). This may illustrate the way in which student teachers
were positioned within a broader culture where ‘cultural tools’ were applied to bring about positive outcomes for children (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Though practitioners were operating multiple discourses, they were regularly securing positive outcomes for children through their practice. Rather than characterising such tensions as undesirable, it may be more propitious to regard them as essential resources for professional development and for agency as an inclusive practitioner. Having becoming more familiar with the data, I am less likely to see such tensions as distractions that must be put aside in favour of solutions focused thinking and more likely to see them as indispensable resources for effective ITE and CPD.
4.3.2: Personalised Planning

The PLP (personalised learning planning) process was one of the actions designed and implemented by the project group since it was felt to be immediately relevant to student teachers' development for inclusive practice (see 3.6.2). There was strong evidence that this process provided an effective scaffold for the development of self-efficacy and mastery in responding to diverse learners and that it holds promise and value for effective inclusive teacher education.

**TABLE 4.3.2: Impact of the PLP process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence from the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact of the PLP process on professional development which</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- was important scaffold for learning how to respond to diverse learners</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- helped students to meet the needs of the whole class through the process of knowing some children deeply from an early stage</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- was a basis for evaluating the impact of instructional techniques on learners and hence improving them</td>
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<tr>
<td>- enabled experience of mastery and a feeling of accomplishment</td>
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<tr>
<td>- enabled students to learn problem-solving skills and that failure was part of success</td>
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<tr>
<td>- helped students to see inclusion within the class as a manageable project</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- prompted students to access the collective knowledge and support of the teaching team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In phase one of the project was not effective or well designed enough and needed improvement given that it did not allow goals and instructional techniques to evolve and did not emphasise the importance of within class pedagogic approaches</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant head/SENCO</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevalence across the corpus data**
155 single occurrences across 6 research events among 17 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

**Extracts from the data**

*Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) talking about the impact of the PLP*

Debs ....so let's play devil's advocate for a minute and you must say what you like and whatever you if the PLP process hadn't existed and you weren't asked to do it, that might be quite nice not to have another job off us, but if it hadn't happened what do you think might have been the
consequences of that, would you have carried, would you still be......

Karina  Um, I feel that with the children - I think teachers would become quite closed in their opinions and in their minds as to right I need to focus on middle ability and outside of that can’t be catered for because I just need to aim for the majority

Debs  Ok

Karina  Um and I think that would have consequences for the children really

Debs  But say we hadn’t given you the PLP as a school task and it hadn’t existed what do you think may or may not have happened?

Karina  I think it would be difficult to plan for differentiation um, and I think that the children would have continued in the same ways so some of the children would have carried on working alone and they wouldn’t have even thought about associating with others in the class – they would have become outsiders more and more.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March, 2012]

With reference to table 4.3.2 (above), all school-based participants made direct reference to the PLP process as an important scaffold for learning to practise inclusively. Though Abigail (PGCE student) was not sure that the processes used were transferable to children experiencing ‘severe’ SENDs, two students (Lily and Karina) believed they were. Lily (4th year undergraduate student) saw the PLP process as a useful tool for her NQT year since it offered more than an IEP being holistic, focussed on how to change your teaching approach (rather than the child’s deficits) and applicable to all children without a narrow focus on ‘SEND’. All participants believed that it supported professional development in positive ways. Jane and Anna (mentors to third year undergraduate students) noticed that it had helped students to tune into the needs of the whole class at an earlier point in the placement than may otherwise have happened.

The students Elizabeth, Abigail, Lorna, Lily, Karina and Lisa also raised this point, noting that the personalised approaches they had put in place for the PLP focus children or groups impacted positively on the inclusion of other children in the class. Abigail, Lorna, Lisa Karina and Kathryn believed that the PLP process had kick-started their journey towards inclusive practice because it had forced them to look beyond their natural or
‘panic’ initial focus, which would have been the majority, ‘middle’ group. This wider view made their teaching more accessible to the full range of learners more quickly. Lorna (PGCE student) believed this to be particularly important because, without this, her teaching would have taken longer to be in tune with those children at the earliest stages of development and they would have missed out while they were waiting for her to catch up. Karina (3rd year undergraduate student) perceived that without the PLP process, some of the children she worked with may have been more vulnerable to exclusion.

Jane and Anna (mentors to 3rd year undergraduate students) had seen that the PLP process enabled students to gain a tangible and objective view of the positive impact of their practice. Lorna, Lisa, Karina, Lily and Kathryn (students) also believed this. Lorna (PGCE student) when reflecting on the positive impact that the PLP process had had on her capacity to respond to the diverse learners in her class commented that without it ‘I think it would have taken a lot longer to get there, and perhaps been a lot more demotivating’ [Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March, 2012] and she also perceived that the PLP process created a system for her to see the impact of her instructional strategies more clearly with the result that she experienced a sense of accomplishment.

A common view among students and mentors was that the structure of the PLP process (with its emphasis on evolving goals, targets and differentiation) was beneficial since it
provided a framework for students to reflect on their practice, evaluate its impact, and find better ways forward in planning next steps. For Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student), it had been a prop for keeping her going when she was losing hope - it helped her to know when to give up and try something else. Lorna (PGCE student) became more confident in her judgement as the PLP process provided affirming evidence of impact.

Other students (Lorna, Lily, Karina and Lisa) reported that the PLP process had prompted them to access the collective knowledge of the team and that this had been particularly valuable. All students and school-based participants had experienced this as an important basis for development. Since the PLP process seemed to have been valued by students and school staff it is important to consider how and why it may have become a relevant process supportive of development.

The PLP process was designed to counter traditional conceptions of SEND and pedagogic responses in the following way. It was not a process that students were told to apply to children labelled with ‘SEND’, in part because not all classes contain children identified as such and in part because this might promote a conception of these children as ‘other’ and ‘outside’ the pedagogic range of usual classroom practices. It was also designed to move the focus from what was the difficulty to one that was more holistic (for example, in noting unique gifts and strengths, in capturing the child’s voice, in focusing on pedagogic adoptions). Hence, the trigger was not find a child or group of children with
problems but find a child or group of children who need more innovative teaching in order to access, participate and achieve. It sought to shift the gaze from pathology to solution in terms of teaching within the class and among the whole class.

Watkins (2007) gives particular consideration to how assessment processes within education might be made more inclusive recommending that ITE should prepare student teachers to use inclusive assessment through:

- Facilitating on-going assessment as a tool for setting clear and concrete learning goals and using the results of assessment for planning effective, personalised learning experiences and thereafter evaluating the impact of these toward future improvement.
- Developing holistic approaches to assessment that inform classroom practice and shift focus from identification of pupils' weaknesses or impairments but include parents, pupils and other staff in the assessment process.
- Moving from deficit focussed and medical models of diagnosis to a learning needs based approach where the mainstream teacher is more responsible for initial and then on-going assessment
- Considering and accounting within the context of the whole class and in relation to all children.
The rationale for the PLP is positioned within wider theories about what inclusive assessment involves and what student teachers need to learn about it (Watkins, 2007). This may validate its status as a useful pedagogic tool for inclusive teacher education.

However, it is important to note that the task was designed in collaboration with the school staff as part of the IAR. However, the subtleties and nuances of this task (in terms of their countering of dominant discourses) were not understood or adopted by everyone. Abigail (PGCE student) and her mentor’s approach to the PLP process was different in character and involved withdrawing children from the class for separate work. Abigail’s PLP records also included vague deficit language such as ‘Sophie is a bit of an enigma and has difficulty being appropriate’. This may have been due to the fact that Veronica, as a new member of the project team in its second phase (see 1.4), was unclear about the nuances and wider purposes. Notably, Veronica and Cerys (mentors who was also new to the project in Phase 2) said that their own inexperience and misunderstanding of the task may have impacted on its implementation but Karina (who was placed with Cerys as her mentor) seems to have implemented it successfully in keeping with its principles. This may suggest that it is not activity in itself or of itself that was a factor in the development of students. It is the way in which the student and mentors adopted, understood and mediated its more nuanced features.

This may signal the need for ITE providers to ensure that there is some consistency in the way school based tasks are enacted in schools and that mentors understand its
rationale and purpose. In my own institution this means prioritising such tasks in mentor training.

The positive impact of the PLP task can be explained with reference to contemporary and influential theories of effectual teacher development that promote enquiry oriented approaches to designing and evaluating instructional techniques in the authentic classroom context as focussed on outcomes for learners (Burn and Mutton, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2012; Darling Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2006; McLeskey and Ross, 2004; Stenhouse, 1975). When combined with broader conceptions of inclusive assessment (Watkins, 2007) the PLP task can draw on a strong evidence base to claim its relevance to effective, inclusive teacher education.
4.3.3: Lesson Study

Similarly, the lesson study task (project action 1) brought a positive impact to professional development for those participants who engaged in it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive impact of the lesson study activity on professional development which:</td>
<td>Participating class teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Supported student and participating teacher in developing new instructional techniques that led to enhanced inclusion for a focus pupil/group.</td>
<td>Participating students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Had a positive impact on the focus pupil/group’s level of participation in learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The activity has particular value when it is carried outside student’s own placement class since it provides a broader and more diverse experience.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prevalence across the corpus data**
This activity was enacted by one participant (class teacher) and 3 student teachers
16 single occurrences across 3 research events among 4 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

**Extracts from the data:**

**Systematic evaluation of PA1 (by class teacher – Charlotte and Debs)**

- The opportunity for collaborative reflection was significantly supportive to our professional development. We believe that collaborative reflection is key to the processes through which we may come to practise more inclusively.
- Rebecca had come to understand how important it was to enable children to work collaboratively with others. Charlotte came to value even more deeply the value of collaborative learning.
- Charlotte noticed that Paul (a focus pupil) needed opportunities to develop his literacy and numeracy skills through playful activities that demanded less in terms of written recording. He needed to learn in ways that matched his level of maturity.
- However, the group participating in this action also recognised how the demands of the National Curriculum created tensions for them in this area.
- At the point of writing this report, Charlotte was seeing more justification for designing learning activities that included earlier developmental starting points since this would allow pedagogic responses to reach all children. Charlotte also expressed allegiance with a unique differences position explaining that though children’s needs may be described in terms like ‘Down’s Syndrome’ the label was not always helpful since every child was different. For Charlotte, inclusion was a process of problem solving with every child being a new conundrum to work out.

[Extract from systematic evaluation for PA1, 1st July 2011]
There is evidence that the lesson study task scaffolded collaborative reflection, planning, teaching and evaluating between a student teacher and a more experienced teacher outside of the context of the student's placement class. Participants drew on observation data as a basis for improving the inclusive impact of their teaching. Having selected a focus group or pupil who might particularly gain from this, the student and teacher analysed the observation data (gathered in a lesson where the experienced teacher taught the class) and then co-planned and co-taught a follow up lesson designed to enhance the participation, success and progress of this group or individual. Thereafter, observation data was used to evaluate the impact of this practice on this focus group or pupil in order to inform continuing improvements (or simply to maintain good practice). The group developed their own criteria for inclusive practice (see 4.3.1) and used these as a basis for analysing the observation data and reflecting on its impact.

In the first phase, Charlotte (NQT and class teacher), and Rebecca and Jenny (students on the graduate teacher programme who wanted to participate only in this task but not in the wider project) believed that engaging in the lesson study activity had enhanced the development of their pedagogic range and this view was shared by Lily during phase 2 (final year undergraduate student) who also engaged in this task. For example, Charlotte (NQT) and Rebecca (student on the graduate teacher programme) had learned about the value of peer tutoring in supporting a child who was finding it harder to focus on literacy based tasks. Participants believed that the collaboratively planned and taught lessons had had a positive impact on the focus child/group's level of participation and engagement. Supporting evidence arose from analysis of classroom observation
data (see Appendix B: Table 4.3.3). Participants reported on the development of new
teaching strategies that could be applied to bring about positive outcomes for children,
including increased participation, engagement and success. The task also provided a
forum for reflecting critically on practice and seemed to have confirmed for Charlotte,
the importance of a play-based curriculum.

The effectiveness of this task may derive from its critical, collaborative and reflective
quality and the way in which this culture was a significant and continuing feature of the
IAR and the school itself (see 4.4). As noted in 2.9 there is much support for the value of
collective and collaborative approaches as a means of securing more inclusive practice in
the literature (Argyropoulos and Nikolaraizi, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; McIntyre,
2009; Nind et al., 2005; Nind et al., 2004; O’Hanlon, 2003) and the lesson study task
seems to have made a positive contribution to professional development. This supports
the argument that where student teachers are supported by collaborators within the
context of synchronous critical enquiry, there are positive outcomes (Darling Hammond,
2012; Beauchamp et al., 2013). It also suggests that where students could see the
positive impact of their practice, they developed self-efficacy. It would seem that in the
face of the unsettled and uncertain nature of inclusive practice, the structure and lexes
of the PLP process and lesson study activity provided a place in which student teachers
could find some footing and move forward in a more systematic way. In this way it
might manifest the recommendations of Hopper and Stogre (2004) given that the
collaborative, supported nature of this task enabled the student teachers to gain a sense
of accomplishment and mastery, not least because they had contributed to the professional development of a more experienced teacher.

4.3.4: Having a positive impact

Seven participants (Veronica - mentor, Elaine – mentor and assistant head, Lily, Karina, Lisa, Kathryn and Elizabeth – third year undergraduate students) expressed the view that where students could see tangible evidence that their practice brought positive impact for children, it helped them to trust their judgement and develop a clear sense of self-efficacy. This section explores the evidence for this in more detail.

TABLE 4.3.4: The relationship between the tangible experience of having a positive impact on learners and self-efficacy for inclusive practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing tangible progress boosts student teachers’ confidence and sense of professional competence.</td>
<td>Mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spending time gaining a clear view of children’s starting points and planning measurable targets (that are then evaluated) builds confidence and professional self-belief</td>
<td>Teaching assistants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prevalence across the corpus data
30 single occurrences across 3 research events among 9 participants.

Extracts from the data:

**Lorna is reflecting on the progress made by one of the children for whom she developed a PLP**

Lorna: When we got you know, having supported Danny with his phonics having had him do guided writing and then him writing some words, writing the word ‘robot’ that might be in his Christmas present and it was like ‘Oh my life that says robot!’ You know robot but ‘r’ ‘o’ ‘b’ ‘t’ and he’s going ‘Mrs. Payne, look at this,

You know I’ve written’…. and it did, it looked like the actual word. B……before at the beginning that lad was writing a string of ‘c’s and he was telling me that that said words and it wasn’t even in w…….

in little groups of ‘c’s it was just a line and now he could actually show you words and know what they meant every time……and that was just massive progress….and then you have got to leave, you know (laughs)

Debs: But you’ve left something behind…….have you?

Lorna: (sighs) I feel like, yes, and he was…… his pride as well at having produced something that looked like something that he felt was right was just brilliant, so, yeah.

[Extract from systematic evaluation for PA1, 1st July 2011]
Lorna (PGCE student), Kathryn (third year undergraduate student) Sascha and Selina (teaching assistants) perceived that knowing children’s starting points from the outset could build confidence and self-belief since it was possible to plan well-matched activities whilst also seeing the fruits of one’s labour. As reported in 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 PA1 (Personalised Learning Planning) and PA2 (Lesson Study) offered structures and systems for seeing the impact of practices on children’s participation, engagement and learning and brought a positive experience of mastery to students. Notably, Abigail (PGCE student) was distinct in not being able to articulate in any clear way how her practice impacted on pupils aside from general references to relationships:

I mean I would say I had very good relationship with her and she was a very expressive child, um, and lots of hugs.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2011]

In contrast, Lorna (PGCE) and other students had a clearer view of what progress had been made and how this had linked with what she had wished for and this was the case for other students. She communicated some pride and pleasure in seeing clear evidence of children’s progress and regrets having to leave. She chooses the word ‘brilliant’ to describe the way she felt about having this positive impact.
Hence, seeing tangible evidence of positive impact seems to have been another scaffold for helping students to move forward in the confusing and difficult context of inclusive practice. Supporting this is the data related to other students; Lorna, Kathryn, Karina and Lily presented earlier. This had demonstrated that students had gained a positive professional identity for inclusive practice from seeing this positive impact and understanding how their increasing skill had secured it (see 4.1).

In terms of the activities that might be relevant to professional development, the lesson study task and PLP process provided an effective pedagogic scaffold as a consequence of their reflective, collaborative and enquiring character and because they provided students with evidence of positive impact. They were also designed to counter dominant, medical discourses about diversity. This leads me to reflect on whether the school-based tasks designed for students across the ITE programmes within my own institution provide sufficient scope for collaborative enquiry among students and more experienced staff. These findings also lead me to reflect on the relevance of generic skills (such as systematic assessment and reflection) to inclusive practice. This is a point which we may need to make more and more emphatically as students progress towards qualified teacher status. Finally, the PLP process and lesson study task were based on evidence and hypotheses arising in the literature about effective teacher education and effective inclusive teacher education (see 2.13) and claims about their value and potential efficacy as scaffolds for learning to be inclusive can be made more confidently as a result.
4.4: Team membership and collaboration

Taking all of the findings reported in 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 into account there is strong evidence that teamwork and collaboration were relevant conditions for professional development. The analysis presented below offers more support for this claim.

4.4.1: Working with teaching assistants

There was strong evidence across the corpus data of the significant contribution that involving teaching assistants in ITE could make to inclusive teacher education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The workshop delivered to students by teaching assistants, brought valuable new insights about how to meet individual needs.</td>
<td>All students reported on the positive impact of working with TAs on their confidence and capability to teach inclusively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students reporting that teaching assistants’ knowledge of individual children was a valuable resource to draw on.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students reporting that they could establish with teaching assistants meant that they brought opportunities for supportive interaction that they might not have otherwise have.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students reporting that they had a positive working relationship with teaching assistants that involved advice and feedback from which they benefited</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Students noting that they had learned to respect the expertise and contribution that teaching assistants could make to inclusive practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prevalence across the corpus data
85 single occurrences across 7 research events among 11 participants.

Extracts from the data:
Abigail
They put on a session for us in the afternoon which was hugely useful and absolutely invaluable and the several workshops - we spoke to Selina about the emotional aspects as well about the nurture room. That was quite enlightening because there were issues there that you wouldn’t think would apply to primary school children.

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 6th December 2012]
From the outset of the IAR project there was strong commitment to involving teaching assistants more fully in student placements, not least because of their expertise and commitment to supporting student teachers. Hence, there was a deliberate attempt to form closer working relationships between teaching assistants and students. The potential for this was strengthened given that teaching assistants were members of the participating group.

Students reported that the support they had received from teaching assistants aided their professional development. For example the students, Elizabeth, Abigail, Lorna, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn reported that these colleagues had an in depth knowledge of individual children and how to engage them in their learning. Lorna (PGCE student) believed that this might compensate for teachers' lack of time in getting to know children in the context of a large and busy class. Lisa and Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate students) reported that they had learned important things from observing teaching assistants (for example, in making language accessible) and Lily (4th year undergraduate student) was disappointed that she did not have opportunities to work with teaching assistants whom she knew had expertise in particular areas. Abigail, Lorna, Karina and Lisa (students) believed that the less formal relationship that they had with teaching assistants enabled them to ask questions they might not otherwise have asked. Kathryn, Karina, Lorna (students) and Abigail (PGCE student) all commented on the usefulness of the workshop provided by the teaching assistants.
The teaching assistants communicated a desire to work more closely with students and to support them, in part because it would establish them as professionals to be valued. There was a general acknowledgement among the school-based participants that more time should be carved out for teachers and teaching assistants to reflect and plan collaboratively since this could bring deeper positive outcomes to children.

The data supports the claim that, in this particular context, teaching assistants did make an important contribution to the development of the student teachers placed within this school. They provided practical support, reassurance and encouragement. They also provided important information about individual children that the students could make use of. There is no direct reference to the role of teaching assistants in ITE during school placements in the literature but these findings suggest that involving them more fully may have had positive consequences. Theories of effective teacher education may have to embrace a broader view of professional collaboration and include reference to those professionals who work alongside teachers and student teachers in the pursuit of inclusive practice. Arguably, this signals a policy issue given evidence that where professional development for teaching assistants is not enabled, the contribution they might make to inclusion is limited (Blatchford et al., 2012; Devecchi et al., 2012; Alborz, 2009). Within my institution, it might be possible to make a contribution through encouraging schools to involve them in ITE and providing professional development through partnership. This is something I am very keen to pursue and represents a significantly original contribution that this study could make to reform in inclusive teacher education.
4.4.2: Teamwork and collaboration

There is strong evidence in the data that students came to understand that teamwork and collaboration was a key strategy for inclusion as a consequence of their placement in this school. They also learned important skills in collaboration.

TABLE 4.4.2: Learning about the importance of teamwork and collaboration in securing inclusive outcomes for learners and professional development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence arising in the data</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students developed:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confidence in team-working skills</td>
<td>All students reported on the positive impact of team working and team membership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding of the value of teamwork as a means of securing inclusion and continuity for children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding that the support of colleagues is essential for meeting children’s needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A sense of professional accomplishment and contribution as a result of being part of a support network where their suggestions were valued. This was a confidence boost.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IAR brought opportunities for collaborative enquiry that supported mutual development for all participants.

All participants reported on the value of collaboration in supporting their learning and development.

Prevalence across the corpus data
108 single occurrences across 8 research events among all participants.

Extracts from the data:
Kathryn is talking about her experience of working more closely with a teaching team

*It scared me to begin with - it terrified me! But the children, it was as if they always have somebody to go to and I think that was nice and everyone knew what they were doing so it wasn’t like the classroom was fragmented like it can be sometimes. All the adults knew what they were doing, all the children knew what adults where doing. I think it may have helped to make their learning more, maybe, continuous in a way, I don’t know if that makes sense? It made me more organised with what I wanted the children to learn, having to tell another adult and having to kind of, I also talked to them a lot how do you think I could get the best for this child or what’s the best way to do that and Mrs R and Mrs B really helped me with that. They did.*

[Extract from transcribed conversation, 26th March 2012]
Student teachers (Karina, Lisa and Kathryn) reported that they had worked with other colleagues to find ways forward for individual children. Lisa, Kathryn and Elizabeth had come to understand that teamwork brought continuity of support to children in ways that made school a positive experience. Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) relates that the experience of having to work closely with a teaching team had at first ‘terrified’ her since it added a new layer of complexity and professional expectation. However, she also explained how her confidence had grown through the process and how she had learned about the vital importance of collaboration to inclusion and continuity for children.

For Kathryn, the team environment was not only supportive to children but also to the development of her professionalism. Lorna, Lisa, Kathryn and Karina all felt that team membership had boosted their confidence because their professional judgement was valued within a supportive environment. Sascha and Selina believed that it was particularly important to offer the support of the wider teaching team to students since they would progress more positively in this environment.

All participants noted that engagement in the IAR had facilitated collaborative reflection and this was highly valued. The impact of this has been reported in 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. Sasha (teaching assistant), Veronica. Elaine and Jane (mentors) also believed that it had brought benefits to children. This gives further weight to the suggestion that among the most significant conditions present in this school was its team ethos and the students'
experience of the wider support of the teaching team. It also gives weight to the claim
that collaborative enquiry and reflection were promoted by the IAR in ways that
supported professional development. This theory that effective models of inclusive
teacher education (and more general teacher education) are built upon collaborative
models of professional learning enacted within the context of systematic enquiry
(Naukkarinen, 2010; Wang and Fitch, 2010; Darling Hammond, 2006; Korthagen, 2006;
Hammerness, 2005; Smith and Leonard, 2005)(see 2.13) is strongly supported by the
evidence presented in this study.

Students remarked that, compared to other schools they had experienced, this one
demonstrated a high level of respect for teaching assistants – they were more
independent and confident in this school than elsewhere and they were treated more
like equals. Abigail, Karina, Lily and Kathryn (students) also reported that the school’s
commitment to supporting them was notably strong and that this was an important
factor in their development as inclusive practitioners. All students believed that the
school had helped them develop new perceptions and awareness about inclusion, SEND
and differentiation. Lorna, Abigail, Lily, Karina and Lisa (students) believed that if the
school had not been so interested in developing their expertise in this area (and sharing
it), their development might not have been so great. It is important to note that though
it is likely that such conditions are not entirely exclusive to this school, it did already
have in place some of the conditions likely to promulgate development– a strong team
ethos, a strong commitment to inclusive practice, a strong commitment to securing the
wellbeing and welfare of all children, a willingness and desire to enter into a critical
collaborative enquiry and a sustained commitment to ITE.
4.5: Summary and Conclusion

The analysis has provided an account of the complex and interconnected conditions, processes and activities that were relevant to the development of student teachers (and their more experienced colleagues) in this particular partnership school as this was enacted through the IAR and more widely in the placement context. Most relevant among these conditions was the collaborative and supportive ethos. This was significantly enhanced by the IAR and the structured opportunities for reflective and reflexive work that it offered. Processes and activities that adopted a collaborative research orientation and collective action were also relevant, particularly where these were focused on developing pedagogy for diverse learners, evaluated and improved in terms of its impact. This echoes claims made in the wider literature about the value of such pedagogic frameworks for ITE and for CPD.

A claim can also be made about the relationship between the discourses of expertism and professional identity. Where these discourses were demoted, participants were able to identify within themselves the professional capacity for inclusive practice. Again, the wider literature offers strong evidence in support of this claim and confirms it as a relevant condition to teacher development for inclusive education.

The data illustrates, in colourful detail, the ever-present nature of contending priorities and values in the professional lives of student teachers and school staff. Student teachers and their more experienced counterparts are tasked with working in a
professional space that is fraught with tensions, some of which arise inevitably from the
dilemmatic nature of meeting diverse needs and from the wider discourses and policies
that surround them. Though the findings illustrate the very challenging and complex
nature of inclusive practice, they also demonstrate some promising ways forward for
inclusive teacher education.

In particular, this pertains to the remodelling of partnership as collaborative enquiry.
The findings lend significant support to the position taken by McIntyre on this issue
(McIntyre 2005; 2006; 2009) and signal that revolutionising the traditions of partnership
is essential if we are to move forward. The data also provides an insight into what it is
that ITE is preparing students for in terms of the unsettled and ambiguous character of
inclusive policy and practice. Chapter 6 considers the implications for my own institution
and for ITE more widely whilst Chapter 5 will evaluate the study and its related research
process with reference to the changing landscape of ITE.
Chapter 5: Evaluation

Introduction

Before consideration of the implications of the findings, it is important to review the extent to which the study and its research process had achieved its internal and external aims. What is the extent of the contribution it has made to the advancement of knowledge, policy and practice within my own institution and among the participants? What is the extent of the contribution it makes to existing theory and practice in the area of inclusive teacher education more widely? This will also be considered in relation to the significant policy changes for ITE which have occurred during the course of my doctoral study since to make a contribution, this study must be applicable to this changing policy context. The strengths and weaknesses of the research process will also be reviewed.

5.1: Evaluation of the internal dimension of the study

Personal Contribution

At the outset of the thesis, I explained how this study had emerged from my own professional biography. My career began with an experience of feeling unprepared and ill equipped to teach children labelled with ‘SEND’. However, I moved from being resentful to being passionate about inclusive education and an advocate for it. Later in my career, I joined ITE as a lecturer in SEND with the intention of securing among NQTs a better level of preparedness than I had experienced. When I found that this could not
be achieved through developing the university-based programme, I moved to a partnership post to exploit the spaces *between* and *across* school-based and university-based learning as sites for development. In personal ways, the process of engaging in this study and the collaboration it has enabled has deepened my understanding of the pedagogic practices I must adopt if I am to encourage forward movement in my own institution. Most notably, I have learned that development can emerge for *everyone* (children, students, practitioners, me) when it is situated in collaborative, collective and democratic forums. I have also learned that such forums can be mutually supportive and, in so being, challenge negative evaluations of adequacy and efficacy, not least my own. I have also learned about the deep level of commitment to inclusive practice existing among many practitioners and students - respecting the perspective, skill, knowledge and capacity for learning among these professionals is a disposition that I must carry forward in my wider work. As a partnership manager, this study has deepened my commitment to collaborative work and provided me with the practical skills and attitudes that will help me to be more effective. In this way, it has made a significant contribution to my development and to my understanding of how professional development (ITE and CPD) might be moved forward in this area, most notably in the nature of ‘learning to be inclusive’ as co-constructed rather than emerging from a privileged place (Spendlove et al., 2010; Edwards and Mutton, 2007; Dadds, 2005; Argyris and Schön, 1983; Stenhouse, 1975). Implications of this are further explored in Chapter 6. It has led me to support the recommendation made by Korthagen et al. (2006) that teacher education should be structured around the students rather than a pre-determined institutional curriculum or set of requirements. Adopting a *practice into theory* model (rather than the more traditional and fragmented *theory into*
I have also come to appreciate the very complex task that all teachers face in navigating the ambiguous and dilemmatic landscape of current policies and practices. During this research process, I became ashamedly aware of my tendency to suppress negative, problems based thinking. In working with students I realised that I had been aggressive in my attempts to replace their ‘buts’ with ‘yes you can and yes you will’ thinking without fully embracing the importance of understanding these dilemmas. This pedagogic approach now seems to me to be grounded in an acquisition model rather than one in which learning happens through participation in social practices. In this way, my theoretical position has shifted substantially. This has already had a profound impact on the way in which I design lectures, assignments and workshops and on the way I discuss these issues with students in school.

The aims of the internal dimension

To reiterate, the internal aims of the inclusive action research project were as follows:

- To develop the skill and confidence of school-based participants in the area of SEND and inclusive practices.
- To develop the skill and confidence of student teachers on placement in the school for SEND and inclusive practices
- To enhance the inclusive educational experience of children in the school
The findings analysed in Chapter 4 provide an account of how the project impacted on the professional development of student teachers and school staff. In various ways, all school-based participants had developed a deeper understanding of their values and had a better understanding of the dilemmas they faced and how they were responding to them. They had also come to appraise their skill and effectiveness in more positive ways and to understand how their day-to-day, tacit practices formed an inclusive learning experience for children. All of the student teachers participating in the project reported the development of new insights about SEND and inclusive practices. Some were deliberately operating discourses that ran contrary to the deficit conceptions of SEND that they may have heard. With the exception of one student (Abigail), they reported greater levels of preparedness for SEND and inclusive practice. There was internally valid evidence of the positive impact students and school-based practitioners were having on children. Though these outcomes are very likely to have emerged from the pre-existing conditions and processes in the school (team ethos, collaboration and commitment to all learners) and from students' prior experiences, there is evidence that the research project amplified these in significant ways. Students also reported that engagement with the project had enabled them to reflect on their practice in ways that supported their development and there was evidence to confirm the specific nature of this in the data (Chapter 4).

In summary, for students and school-based participants, the research process made a contribution to professional development in the area of SEND and inclusive practices.
Classroom observation data presented evidence of the positive outcomes experienced by children in the students’ placement classrooms.

5.2: Evaluation of the potentially transferable dimension of the study

To reiterate, the potentially transferable, externally facing aim of the study was to pursue the following:

During school placements, what conditions, processes and activities support the development of skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers?

There is evidence that the study has cast light on the complex factors that might come together to support development (or otherwise) among this group of students and their more experienced colleagues. Since this study is firmly positioned with the wider evidence base for effective teacher education (and inclusive teacher education) claims can be made about the implications of its findings for ITE (see Chapter 6).

However, the contribution of this study also lies in its methodological construction. McIntyre (2009) has been a strong influence on the development of this work. Though there is much emphasis on bridging the gap between university and school in the literature and on the value of critical collaboration as a vehicle for professional development in the area of SEND and inclusive practice, McIntyre is distinctive in giving
explicit emphasis to the value of HEI academic tutors, students and teachers working synchronously to tackle the theoretical and practical challenges of inclusion in the context of partnership. Though there is not much account of the students' reflexive work in the data (due to some shortcomings in the research as reported below), the IAR enabled a critical and collaborative culture that seemed to have had a significant impact on professional development. In this way, the study has taken McIntyre's hypothesis forward and confirmed it as valid in the context of this particular partnership school. It has also tested out a pedagogic framework for this. The study (and its methodology) have been very firmly situated in the theories and evidence currently available in the national and international literature. This provides a firmer evidence base for making claims and exploring implications that may have generalisable potential.

Further, the picture of change and development presented by this study contrasts with more traditional models which may take a more clinical approach in emphasising singular shifts in behaviour or skill. Such behavioural approaches may fail to account for the holistic, social and complex nature of professional development in this area. It could be argued that the individuated and competence based approach to professional development promulgated by official policy for ITE offers an account of learning that is of little use to the development of inclusive practice. This signals a potential area for further research.
As explained in Chapter 2, holistic accounts of the developmental journeys made by students during school placements (and explanations for these) are absent from the literature. In providing a detailed and rich account of student teachers’ experiences and reflections, this study does cast new light on those factors that are potentially relevant to other contexts. In this way it makes a theoretical contribution to existing literature and knowledge. However, there is a dimension missing from this account. Though the data captures the story of school based participants from the beginning of the IAR to its end (providing a useful basis for exploring what influenced this development), this was not in place for student teachers since data collection for this group occurred in the middle of the placement and after it. Neither did the study capture an account of the influence of prior experience or the university-based programme, an aspect of teacher development which is well reported in the literature (Trussler, 2011; Pearson, 2007; Avramidis et al., 2000). This is explored further below.

5.3: Strengths and weaknesses of the study

Chapter 3 provided an account of the careful measures taken to secure a valid research process and the preceding section reported on the extent to which the study achieved its aims. However, there were some shortcomings that are reviewed below.

*The influence of university based learning*

Though the findings did cast light on the discourses being operated by students during the placement, there was little account of the impact of the students’ university-based
programme on this development aside from the alternative experiences and placements they had mentioned. This poses problems. Firstly it diminishes the extent to which the account is holistic. Secondly it sheds little light on how the university-based programme contributes or does not contribute. Though there is an opportunity to infer this (for example through evidence of students' deliberate operation of alternative discourses), a clearer and evidenced account would have been more useful in the light of the changing policy context explored in Section 5.4. However, looking at all dimensions would have been beyond the scope of one EdD and may have detracted from the IAR. This signals another area for future research activity.

Theoretical sampling

Though chapter 3 provides an account of the measures used to bring a large and diverse data set under control, the complexity of this data set sometimes made theoretical sampling difficult to achieve. If the absence of data relating to the influence of the university-based aspect had been noted earlier (as an indication of the wood among the trees), theoretical sampling could have been used to gain some insight into this. Alternatively, the research process could have been designed to capture both aspects. This highlights a theme for further research – to explore the interconnected nature of school and university-based learning and to add to the methodological framework ways of capturing this. Additionally, the study did not capture an account of the way in which students' personal biographies may have influenced their development. What unfolds as a result of the school placement and the university-based programme is only part of the picture. Though this study has embraced the idea that influences beyond the school are
likely to be relevant (i.e. dominating discourses), it has not explored the wider biographical influences involved, such as prior experience.

_Sustained development for SEND and inclusive practice_

Though this study has provided a useful account of professional development among a small group of student teachers within one school, it cannot be assumed that this is sustained into the NQT year. Claims can be made about the conditions, processes and activities likely to be supportive to development but as yet the sustained impact of these factors is not yet proven or understood. Hence, a longitudinal dimension might enrich the findings. Though this has been outside the scope of this thesis, it will be followed up during 2014.

_Funding and competence_

The positive outcomes achieved for participants would have been at risk if funding had not been found to support participant study days and time out of the classroom. I came across this funding more as a consequence of luck than good management. Additionally, there were times when I was at the very limits of my competence as a researcher.

Though I have explained how critical friendship and the reflective journal minimised the impact of my inexperience on the participants and on the success of the research process (see 3.9.3) it is of ethical concern that my naivety about competence and the challenges of insider-outsider research (see 3.7.5) added some risk that it would have been better to avoid.
5.4: Contribution in relation to the current policy context

Before the implications of this study are explored, it is important to foreground this exploration with a consideration of the very significant changes to government policy for ITE currently underway.

In 2011, the Secretary of State for Education published the implementation plan for sweeping changes to initial teacher training (ITT – the term used in policy) in England (DfE, 2011). These changes included significant shifts in the emphasis given to school-based training. For example, primary PGCE students were to spend 24 weeks in school-based training rather than 19 with a consequent reduction in time at the university.

Policy changes also involved the significant expansion of school-centred routes such as Teach First and the replacement of the Graduate Teacher Programme (GTP) with the School Direct route (www.education.gov.uk, 2013). An increasing number of schools were to have the status of Teaching Schools with their remit being to provide CPD and ITE across a cluster or region and to accredit qualified teacher status. Though all providers offering these routes must work with a HEI partner, there is increasing emphasis on time in school rather than time in university and increased ownership of teacher training by schools over universities. Where providers of ITE are HEIs, evaluation criteria (Ofsted, 2012) demand that HEIs limit their own influence and promote the leadership of their programmes by schools.
Though there have been widespread concerns about these changes and debates about the dominance of the discourses of 'learning on the job', the changes are being progressed very rapidly. For example, in my own institution 180 new teachers are to be trained via the new School Direct route from September 2013 and we have already formed partnerships with 6 Teaching Schools in our region.

The findings of this study may be relevant in this new context since the processes and emphases of its operation have been school-centred and school-led. Once disseminated, the findings may offer new providers an opportunity to consider how they might structure school-based experiences as opportunities for CPD and ITE in the area of inclusive practice. They might also see what value a HEI academic tutor can add in deepening the learning that takes place. Though national policies for ITT make no reference to the role of reflexive work in the promotion of inclusive education systems, it will be important to find ways to secure opportunities for this in an ITT landscape in which universities have a diminishing role. At the current time, there is no indication that the working conditions of teachers and student teachers will be changed in ways that prioritise professional development. There are also some signs that a competence discourse will continue to dominate over the critical-theoretical nature of professional practice in the area of inclusive education.
5.5: Summary and Conclusion

Though there have been some shortcomings in the research process, overall it has achieved its aims and has worked within an ethical and valid framework. The most important outcome of the study for me is its impact on my personal understanding of how inclusive thinking and action might come to be. Given the span of the project, I have already been making practical responses to the implications emerging from this study and reference to these is made in Chapter 6.
Chapter 6: Summary of findings and implications

6.1: Introduction

This chapter will summarise the main findings of the study and consider the implications for programme development within my own institution in ways that may be of interest to other providers of ITE. All of this will be in relation to the potentially transferable question:

- During school placements, what conditions, processes and activities support the development of understanding, skills, confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices among student teachers?

6.2: What are student teachers being prepared for?

This study has cast light on the way in which student teachers must manage multiple discourses, conceptual contradictions and competing interests in their journey towards becoming inclusive practitioners. Student teachers achieved this by taking particular positions in a resolute way. For example Kathryn (3rd year undergraduate student) had determined to operate capacity discourses over deficit discourses in relation to SEND and her own professional skill and this seemed to be a strategy for embracing the challenges of inclusive practice less fearfully. Lorna (final year undergraduate student) had resolved to define ‘inclusion’ as a project that she could succeed at as a consequence of reflecting on her successes during the placement. Lily (3rd year
undergraduate student) had decided to pursue experiences of diverse learners as a means of securing self-efficacy during the remainder of her undergraduate programme.

This represents an important new insight about the capacity of student teachers to manage and mediate their own self-efficacy that is not presented in the wider literature. The students involved in this study wanted to feel prepared for all learners and were actively developing the conceptual and practical tools that might help them to achieve this. Though there was evidence in the data that the IAR had a positive impact on self-efficacy and confidence (since students had noted the positive impact of the greater involvement of teaching assistants, the PLP process, the lesson study activity, engaging with classroom observation data and reflective discussions with other participants on their professional development) it is difficult to draw any clear conclusions on what aspects of our ITE programmes, this school placement and the IAR were implicated in adopting personal stances. Since this study highlights the significance of ‘taking a stance’ to self-efficacy for inclusive practice the need for a clearer understanding of how this can be supported is needed. This is a potential focus for further research.

This study has also cast light on the way in which student teachers operated opposing discourses simultaneously to maintain their position in a political context where there were multiple stakeholders with contending interests and perspectives. Though there is evidence that student teachers (and their more experienced counterparts) were able to operationalize these discourses for particular purposes (for example in using labels as a
means of gaining resources), Abigail (PGCE student) was left conceptually and practically confused by them and this seemed to have a negative impact on her self-efficacy. All of this implies that the professional environment for which student teachers are being prepared is complex. It is not one where competencies are developed and applied in politically neutral contexts as is implied in official policy for ITE. It is one in which student teachers must understand and negotiate the dilemmatic nature of their professional setting and this is likely to extend beyond inclusive practice into other aspects of their work. Furthermore, this school was known for its inclusiveness but nonetheless, for school staff, this practice was not unproblematic or without contradiction. The IAR had a significant role in helping them to understand these tensions and their political nature. For many, this had brought about a greater sense of cohesion between values and their practice. For example, Elaine (mentor, class teacher and assistant head) had come to understand how her use of ‘deficit’ language in seeking additional resources was not a reflection of her general philosophy but a way of making the ‘system’ work for her school and pupils. Jane and Anna (mentors and class teachers) had learned to demote the discourses of expertism and to re-evaluate themselves as professionally adequate and well prepared for the challenges of inclusion.

Implications

Rouse (2010) considers preparation for inclusive practice as a matter of the hands (practice), heart (values) and head (conceptualisations). The data offers an insight into how these dimensions were operating within the professional learning and professional action of the participants. In the new world of ITE where school-based ‘on the job
training’ is likely to grow in prominence, it will be important to promote reflective and reflexive professional learning in pursuit of skill and confidence among teachers. Reducing teacher education to performance targets and behavioural objectives is unlikely to prepare new teachers for the conflicted professional context that they are charged with mediating toward positive outcomes for learners. There are suggestions in the literature that a culture of reflexion may be difficult achieve in the context of a competence culture (Cain, 2009; Pitfield and Morrison, 2009; Hurd et al., 2007; Christie, 2004; Moore, 2004). Hence, ‘on the job training’ can only be fully effective when reflexive work is enabled and not de-prioritised in favour of pragmatic concerns. It is also inappropriate to consider ITE as an end point for professional development. Rather, it is an initiation into career long learning with the implication that ITE must create pedagogic frameworks that network into CPD. The findings of this study support the assertion that the move towards a more inclusive education system is dependent on a systematic approach to CPD and ITE (OECD, 2014; OECD, 2010; Commission of the European Communities, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2007). The OECD (2010) notes large gaps in our knowledge of how to link ITE and CPD to bring lasting change and to mobilise the knowledge generation capacities of classroom teachers so that they might pursue equal opportunities for diverse learners. This study can provide evidence for the value of IAR as a model of effective teacher education and one which economically and productively networks ITE into CPD. Whether this IAR has had a long lasting impact is a claim that cannot be made but further research is planned to evaluate this.
As an ITE tutor I have also learned how important it is to avoid being too purist. For example, when students seem to operate a medical discourse, this does not always mean that they are naive. Nor does it mean that the programme has failed. I am now more likely to embrace the uncertainties associated with inclusion than to impose a 'get on with it' or a 'you can do it' stance. My hope is that this will deepen the quality of my teaching and its impact since it has moved me from an acquisition model of learning to be inclusive to one that recognises the complex, socially situated and unsettled nature of professional development in this field. It will also be important to avoid promoting one set of discourses without full acknowledgement of another and to explore the ambiguous nature of inclusive practice embracing the idea that preparation demands knowing about how the world is as well as how it should be.

6.3: Professional identity for SEND and inclusive practice

The study presents strong evidence of the negative relationship between the discourses of expertism and self-efficacy for SEND and inclusive practices among the participants in this particular school. Where school staff and student teachers were identifying within themselves the professional skills needed to teach all children (including those with the label of SEND), they were able to adopt a more positive view of their capacity to respond to diverse learners. There is evidence in the data that the IAR supported the demotion of expertism with positive consequences.
The literature also provides convincing evidence of the impact of expertism on self-efficacy and professional identity (Forlin, 2010; Florian, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Pearson, 2009; Lambe and Bones, 2006; Nind et al., 2004; Jones, 2004; Campbell et al., 2003; Jordan and Stanovich, 2003; Marshall et al., 2002; Weiss, 2002; Avramidis et al.; 2000; Lyser et al., 1994).

Among the participants in this study, the discourses of expertism were often activated by the presence of the concept ‘SEND’. This disrupted capacity discourses and triggered normative or deficit conceptions of diversity.

Implications

The evidence arising from this study contributes to existing evidence in the literature and may affirm the claim that ITE and CPD should deconstruct the dominant concepts of ‘SEND’ and ‘expertism’ in pursuit of self-efficacy for practitioners. However as noted above, this may best be achieved by adopting a multi-perspectival approach. For example, in relation to the phenomenon of labelling, though I might want to promote anti-labelling stances among student teachers, I must explore the contemporary function of labels and explain why experienced teachers may simultaneously spurn and sanction them.
There are also wider implications. It will be important for policy makers to consider whether ‘SEND’ as a concept is countering efforts to develop the inclusive capacities of practitioners. Since the findings of this study tend to confirm the value of offering and promulgating alternative discourses (within the context of practice), the PSSG within my current institution have developed an alternative definition of SEND which is promoted across the partnership and positions capacity discourses over ‘normative’ or ‘pathologising’ ones with the hope that this will provide a more stable footing for student teachers. The impact of this is yet to be evaluated and is a potential focus for further research. The study provides evidence to support the EADSNE’s call for a review of language and terminology (EADSNE, 2012).

6.4: Team membership and collaboration as a condition for development

There is evidence of the strong collaborative culture already established in the placement school and that this was among the most important conditions supportive of development. The data demonstrated that student teachers were professionally valued within this school. They were regarded as responsible members of the team who could make a contribution to enhancing the inclusiveness of children’s experience. This seems to have had two important consequences for their development. Firstly, when the team adopted their practices and ideas they developed more faith in their professional judgement. Secondly, they came to understand that the collective knowledge and action of the team was an important conduit for inclusion. Black-Hawkins et al. (2007) provide rich and useful accounts of the place of such participatory and collaborative cultures in schools noting that where these are present (and where there is a collective
commitment to valuing all learners) inclusion is forwarded. The findings from this study echo many assertions in the literature about the value of collaborative action and enquiry (Avigitidou, 2009; Florian and Rouse, 2009; McIntyre, 2009; Taylor, 2008; Abbott, 2007; Black-Hawkins et al., 2007; Ainscow et al., 2006; Osler 2002; Nind et al., 2005; O’Hanlon, 2003; McNiff, 2002). However, new light has been cast on the way in which such conditions can be relevant to student teachers in the context of their school placement. The IAR seems to have deepened and amplified the developmental impact of this existing culture for student teachers and more experienced practitioners in important ways:

- It created a forum within which school-based participants could clarify, articulate and understand their values and beliefs. They reported that this had been important to them. The relationship between shared beliefs and the promulgation of inclusive outcomes for learners is well established in the literature. (Rouse, 2010; Allan, 2008; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2007; Sindelar et al., 2006) but in this case, the more important consequence was positive self-evaluations about adequacy for SEND.

- It created a framework through which the HEI and a partnership school could deliberately construct school placements in ways that might enable the development in the area of SEND and inclusive practices and evaluate the impact of this. This had been a challenge set by the literature as reported in Chapter 3.

- It had helped them to deconstruct traditional practices and conceptualisations.
Implications

The findings relating to teamwork and collaboration casts a question over the validity of individuated competence standards for inclusive practice since so much may depend on the context in which student teachers and NQTs work. Hence, when NQTs report being underprepared for SEND, this may be a reflection of the lack of team support they experience in their current workplace rather than of the quality of their ITE programme. This may have policy implications on a wider scale since it demands some re-evaluation of current approaches to assessing the preparedness of student teachers and NQTs. My institution is reviewing its competence criteria for those professional standards most strongly related to inclusion in response to this finding.

Though these collaborative conditions have particular significance for the development of inclusive practice, Usher (2010, p.38) argues for their wider relevance to ITE, finding that where the school acted as the ‘village of learning’ (meaning that there was support from the wider school community), student teachers learned to teach through a developed sense of accomplishment, belonging and inclusion. He argues that this has implications for ITE providers who should make greater effort to locate such ‘villages’ for student placements. My institution is well placed to do this since it knows schools well in terms of their strengths, weaknesses, and special characteristics. I am already gathering a group of schools together as ‘leading partners in inclusive practice’ with the intention of securing bespoke placements for students who may be struggling to make conceptual or practical sense of how to respond positively to diversity. The intention is
to involve this group in professional development across the partnership in pursuit of a deeper, enquiry oriented form of partnership in ways promoted by McIntyre (2009).

It also important to note that the student teachers involved in this study were sustained in their efforts to be more inclusive when supported by collaborators who were pursuing the same goal. In support of McIntyre (2009), evidence of the potential value of such synchronous forms of research oriented teacher education is strongly present in the literature Beauchamp et al., 2013; Tatto, 2013; Winch, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012).

In the light of this evidence, it will be essential for teacher educators and policy makers to resist moves towards 'on the job' training and sustain across their programmes a systematically planned approach to building research oriented teacher education and continuing professional development. Additionally, where teacher educators are moving into a more collaborative role in working with partnership schools, this is likely to bring significant challenges to their identity and role management. Though the model of partnership purported by McIntyre (2009) has been shown to hold promise for effective teacher education, it is important not to underestimate the challenges that the insider-outsider role might bring (Kidd, 2009; Humphrey, 2007; Vilenas, 2003) and this raises an important question. If reform to teacher education is to proceed, how can teacher educators be prepared for and supported in their new roles? This would be a valuable focus for further research.
6.5: The contribution that teaching assistants make to conditions and processes for development

Students gained significantly from the support and expertise of teaching assistants and they also learned about processes of teamwork that promulgate inclusion. Though such supportive relationships were likely to unfold from the existing ethos within this school, the IAR deepened and strengthened these relationships in deliberate ways (for example through enabling TAs to observe student teachers and give feedback; through arranging workshops about inclusive practice for students delivered by TAs).

There is strong evidence to support the claim that teaching assistants were an important resource for development and that it was worth deepening their involvement. The literature makes no mention of the potential role that teaching assistants might have in ITE but in my own institution we have been providing training and development for those teaching assistants across our partnership who wish to take up this role and who have been nominated by their schools. Other providers may wish to consider how they could draw on this overlooked resource as a conduit for development. This seems particularly pertinent in the light of recent evidence about poor practice in use of support staff for inclusion and the need to promote more collaborative and collective forms of working (Devecchi et al., 2012; Webster, et al., 2010; Groom et al., 2006).

Theories of effective inclusive teacher education may need to take account of the importance of support professionals as members of an enquiring professional community who can and should have a place in ITE.
Implications

Teaching assistants made an important contribution in this case in three ways. Firstly, they contributed to the supportive, collaborative conditions in which students seemed to thrive. Secondly, they modelled the teamwork processes through which inclusion can be deepened and involved students in those processes. Thirdly, students benefited from their expertise and knowledge of individual children. Hence, deepening their level of engagement in ITE seems to be a valid and promising way forward. I am pursuing this across the partnership and have designed and implemented professional development events for teaching assistants that will enable this. This is another important and potentially very productive area for further research.

6.6: The PLP and Lesson Study as processes and activities supportive of development.

The Personalised Learning Planning (PLP) process was designed by the participating group and was an effective scaffold for inclusive practice. There is evidence that this was because:

- It had deliberately shifted students' gaze from the majority of learners (who may have been their natural first focus) to those who needed more innovative or flexible pedagogic responses in order to secure their inclusion. This meant that students were considering the needs of this minority from the outset. They were reshaping whole class teaching to include these children and enriching their
practice to accommodate everyone rather than focussing on the majority as a starting point.

• It had encouraged personalised, holistic assessments that informed pedagogic responses

• It had demonstrated that differentiation designed to include the focus pupils/groups were also relevant to other learners

• It had allowed them to develop systematic processes of assessment to help them plan next steps

• It provided tangible evidence of positive impact

• It involved collaboration and communication between members of the teaching team.

The lesson study activity had a positive impact on the development of student teachers (and the more experienced teacher working with them on this task) for the following reasons:

• It provided participants with an opportunity to use evidence as a basis for evaluating and improving practice

• It provided an opportunity for collaborative critical action and reflection

• It extended participants' pedagogies for inclusion

• It provided tangible evidence of positive impact.
For student teachers (and their more experienced counterparts), seeing evidence of the positive impact was important in developing their sense of efficacy and both of these approaches seemed to secure this. Hence, among this group of students, evidence of the progress made by children was an important boost to self-confidence. Further, both the PLP process and the lesson study activity were designed to counter a focus on what was wrong with a child with SENDs towards a focus on how innovations in teaching could include all learners whether they had SENDs or not. The way in which these conceptualisations offered an alternative to dominant, normative discourses seems to have been important in supporting professional development. They also mirrored the theories about effective teacher education present in the literature given their emphasis on instructional techniques, authentic contexts and a focus on impact on learners (Darling-Hammond, 2012; EADSNE, 2010; Darling-Hammond and Richardson, 2009; Korthagen et al., 2006; Brownell et al., 2005). As a consequence of this support in the literature, it is possible to claim that the practices and principles underpinning these tasks offer relevant and potentially efficacious pedagogic frameworks for inclusive teacher education. However, there was also evidence that not all participants understood the nuances of these tasks. This implies that though the tasks had the potential to be powerful scaffolds for development, they were less effective when participants (either students or mentors) did not fully understand their theoretical or conceptual underpinnings.
Implications

In my own institution, this insight has had some important consequences. We are in the process of rolling out the PLP process and lesson study activity across the wider partnership but in university based sessions with students and in mentor development sessions we are promoting clarity about their nuances and principles. Other providers may wish to consider how they might design school based tasks in ways that may maximise development, with a particular focus on enabling collaborative critical enquiry by teachers and students since this seems to offer much positive potential for professional development. However, there is no guarantee that such tasks will work in every school and in my institution, we will need to take a more careful approach to trialling and evaluating such tasks in collaboration with our partners.

More broadly, these tasks are shown to be potentially effective as pedagogic scaffolds for inclusive ITE since they systematically support students in managing the challenges of responding to infinitely diverse learners (Darling-Hammond, 2006) in an authentic, supported context and in ways that secure an experience of mastery and professional accomplishment among student teachers.

6.7: Experience of diverse learners

There was evidence that student teachers' development was supported by experience of diverse learners in diverse contexts. For example, students placed in the EYFS came to understand how the collective knowledge and action of a team is an important conduit
for inclusion. Undergraduate students reported that this placement had added to previous ones and that experience of diverse learners in special schools and other alternative contexts had been important. Though the literature is supportive of extended field experiences and contact with learners with disabilities as a way of developing ITE (Chapter 2), evidence in this case suggests that it was a wider experience of diverse learners that was important.

Implications

Within my institution we have been working on improving the quality and impact of enrichment placements in collaboration with our partner schools. We also audit students' readiness for diverse learners and provide bespoke placements in contexts where they have little experience. This may explain why we have seen improvements in the outcomes for SEND in our institution (Tables. 1.1 and 1.2). This is an example of the way in which this study has stimulated developments across the programme in response to the findings and new insights that were emerging.

Other providers may wish to consider how they might secure diverse experiences for students and whether current arrangements are sufficiently quality assured and managed to maximise outcomes. However, this must be considered carefully since it may be unhelpful to promote a belief that there are ‘types’ of learners and that such learners require different forms of preparation.
It is also important to note that many of the positive outcomes arising from this project were a consequence of choosing the right kind of school, one which was both committed to ITE and to inclusion. It is fair to assume that such schools are not in abundance and ITE is charged with finding a solution to this. It may be that an IAR of this nature could make an even greater contribution to a school that is not as far progressed in its inclusive practice and outlook and this would be another productive and valuable focus for future research. This would reflect McIntyre’s conception of transformative ITE (McIntyre, 2009), since teacher educators must at once contribute to the development of a more inclusive school system through networking ITE and CPD.

6.8: Summary and Conclusion

This study has provided one account of the complex and multi-modal nature of learning to be inclusive and a summary of its wider implications are presented in 6.9. When combined with the evidence provided in the literature, it contributes a rich and useful account of the conditions, processes and activities that may be relevant to the professional development for SEND and inclusive practices and hence to the design of appropriate pedagogic frameworks for ITE and CPD. This applicability of this account is not exclusive to an IAR but potentially, can be used as a basis for designing other pedagogic frameworks within ITE and/or CPD (e.g. school based tasks, field work experiences, assessment criteria, mentor training). This is explored in what follows in response to the study’s central question: How can Initial Teacher Education (ITE) be developed to enhance the skills, confidence and preparedness of student teachers for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and for inclusive practice? However, the
findings take this question further since they also capture an account of how teacher education more broadly (CPD) might be advanced.

6.9: Developing effective inclusive teacher education

Though this is a singular study, from the outset its methodological design (and the pedagogic framework that it built, applied, evaluated and critiqued) has been deliberately and firmly positioned within the broader theory and evidence base for effective teacher education and more specifically, effective inclusive teacher education. For this reason, there is some justification for presenting to the teacher education community, a clear account of the principles and characteristics supportive to effective inclusive teacher education that emerge from it.

In summary, effective models are likely to be underpinned by the following principles. All of these principles are networked into the sustaining framework of a collaborating professional community.

Principles underpinning effective inclusive teacher education

1. Synchronous critical enquiry among collaborating school staff, teacher educators and student teachers can create the forum for effective professional development and improved inclusive practices. This study has confirmed the validity of wider claims in the literature about the value of remodelling partnership as collaborative
research and development (McIntyre, 2009). Participants in the project made significant progress in their level of confidence, skill and feeling of preparedness for inclusive education. The HEI learned much about how to structure school placements and university based learning so that it might have more impact. There was evidence that children were benefiting from collaborative efforts. In this way, as proposed by McIntyre (2009), teacher education should be modelled to support transformational professional development. The prospect of remodelling partnership in this way brings substantial challenges to teacher education departments and teacher educators since it involves changes in structure, resource allocation, roles and identity. These changes centre on the position of teacher educators as insider-outsider researchers charged with managing the dualities and contradictions arising from collaborative forms of enquiry and development. As noted in 3.7.5, these challenges can be painful and personal, demanding considerable reflexive skill. Institutions that are leading reform will need to consider how they might create support networks for teacher educators as they increase their occupation of such shared, challenging places.

However, the principles of such an approach acknowledge the limitations of the theory into practice model as a vehicle for innovation and transformation (Darling-Hammond, 2012).

2. Using a practice into theory approach and resisting a theory into practice model offers scope for teacher educators and collaborating communities to centre their development on improvements to instructional techniques and outcomes for learners whilst sustaining opportunities for drawing on wider theory as a means of
countering insider bias. There is widespread support for the practice into theory model across the literature given that it situates learning to teach within the authentic context of schools and classrooms. It is also the model used by high performing jurisdictions such as Singapore, Finland and Canada (Beauchamp et al., 2013; Tato, 2013; Sahlberg, 2012). It requires of teacher educators a more discursive approach and one built on the principles of situated learning and social constructivism (Barrett and Green, 2009; Gudjonsdottir et al., 2007). As Korthagen et al. (2006) note, it demands focus on the students rather than on the established curriculum. In the context of England, where regulations governing the content of the ITE curriculum are tight, this may present particular challenges.

3. A critical theoretical dimension in teacher education is an important and significant means of preparing students to teach inclusively. The study illustrated the unsettled, contradictory and political context for inclusive education. Practitioners are charged with mediating the potentially negative impact of external cultures. They are also tasked with operating contradictory discourses (sometimes at odds with their own values) in order to secure positive outcomes for their learners. If teacher educators (and policymakers) conceptualise inclusive education as a simple, linear, neutral, stable and apolitical project, student teachers are likely to experience the reality shock, returning quickly to the safety of tradition (Stoddard, 2006) and withdrawing from the battle for a more inclusive and socially just system. Effective inclusive teacher education will need to expose these complexities to student teachers at the same time as building scaffolds that will help support a journey
towards mastery and accomplishment. This study has demonstrated that the methods and principles associated with inclusive action research conceived a pedagogic framework that supported this. It enabled carefully designed social scaffolds (in the form of collaborators) and developmental scaffolds (in the form of carefully nuanced tasks and activities) to be put into place.

4. A values and beliefs dimension in teacher education is an important and significant means of preparing students to teach inclusively. Participants in the study called on their values as a way of steadying themselves in the challenging, complex and equivocal forum of inclusive practice. Student teachers adopted a positively inclusive stance in order to manage their own self-efficacy (e.g. in focusing on learners' capacities and their own capacities) and to sustain their commitment. It will be important to resist a pull towards pragmatic and technical concerns such that beliefs and values become deprioritised. As Rouse (2010) argues, preparing for inclusive education is a matter of the head, the hands and the heart.

5. Dominant discourses can be disruptive to professional development and need to be deconstructed and exposed as part of an effective teacher education programme. There has been widespread concern about the constraining impact of disparity discourses on teacher preparedness for inclusive education (Florian, 2007; EADSNE, 2010; OECD, 2010) on the grounds that such discourses 'other' groups of learners and hence promote their marginalisation. Further, that they promote among teachers a belief that they are not equipped (or even required) to teach all
learners. In support of this position, this study exposed the constraining impact of the discourses of expertism. When active, these discourses were accompanied by deficit discourses and negative professional self-evaluations. When in abeyance, professionals were more likely to use capacity discourses in relation to themselves and their pupils. The inclusive action research project provided a forum for deconstructing these discourses either through specific tasks and activities, or in the reflective and reflexive opportunities offered. Inclusive teacher education must take on the challenge of exposing and deconstructing these discourses. There was evidence that the research orientation modelled by the project promoted positive professional identities for inclusive education.

6. A research orientation can promote positive professional identities for inclusive education. Since the project enabled evidenced based reflection, there were opportunities for teachers to draw on this as a means of evaluating their efficacy. This helped them to quieten the disembodied, external and critical voice that was ever present when they were talking about their professional life and work, giving them confidence in themselves and their capacity to practice inclusively. Given that the position of a research orientation in teacher education is precarious in England (BERA RSA, 2013; Beauchamp et al., 2013) it will be important for teacher educators to resist a move towards de-intellectualised ‘training’ and sustain commitment to engaging teachers in research as well as with research for the sake of self-efficacy and capacity building. Whether the policy context in England will support a move towards higher status and professional autonomy for teachers remains to be seen.
7. Field experiences are the most significant sites for development but their impact depends on careful attention to their structure, location and evaluation. Pedagogic design for school placements should expose student teachers to the significant challenges involved in responding to diverse learners at the same time as scaffolding their journey towards a sense of mastery and accomplishment. There was evidence in the study that student teachers gained much from experiencing diverse learners in diverse learning contexts. It will be important for teacher educators to consider how they might secure these high quality field experiences in ways that do not perpetuate an assumption that there are qualitatively different types of learners who require qualitatively different forms of pedagogy and preparation. In the design of the lesson study task and the personalised learning planning (PLP) activity, this study also modelled effective scaffolds, positioning these within a supportive, collegiate and collaborative culture and ethos. In this way they demonstrate how important it is to enable a sense of mastery and accomplishment resulting in stronger self-efficacy and feelings of preparedness for diverse learners. It is important to build processes that enable student teachers to see the positive impact of their practice in ways that are tangible and supportive to planning next steps.

8. Collegiality and collaboration. Across the literature there is much support for the central importance of collegiality and collaboration to inclusive practice. This was also a significant factor in supporting the professional development of student teachers and helping them to understand that inclusion depends on individual and
collective responsibility and action. Building collegiate and collaborative ways of working can be seen as an essential element in effective inclusive teacher education. The evidence arising from this study raises questions about the validity or helpfulness of individuated competence standards for inclusive practice.

9. Teaching assistants can make an important contribution to the professional development of student teachers in terms of their wellbeing and in terms of their learning. They should not be overlooked in this sense nor marginalised from the research and enquiry community of a partnership. Providers of teacher education may need to expand their understanding of who is relevant to teacher development and professional preparation across a partnership.

In summary, there is no ‘magic bullet’ or singular task, activity or development that can lead to effective teacher education for inclusion. This study has demonstrated that it is perilous to reduce it to a list of behavioural standards or disparate competencies. It would also be a mistake to assume that a single placement, piece of coursework, module or move to ‘on the job training’ might be the answer. It is clear that moving forward in this area will require significant reform and remodelling with attention to how ITE can be networked into CPD in ways that enable practitioners to resist, critique and deconstruct a historically promulgated and ‘traditional’ focus on what is different or outside the norm. For this to happen, teachers and teacher educators need to be generators of new ways of thinking and practising. Hence teacher education is charged
with building a confident, assertive, reflective and reflexive professional learning community that student teachers can gain from and contribute to from the outset of their career.

This study takes the position that inclusive teacher education must adopt a complex, multi-modal, collective, critical-theoretical, socially situated, research-oriented and partnership-oriented pedagogic model if it is to advance. It has provided an account of the principles that could inform the design effective pedagogic frameworks. Within my own institution rising levels of confidence and preparedness among student teachers have been secured (as evidenced in surveys of NQTs for example) through drawing on these principles. Their relevance and value is also endorsed by the wider evidence base in the literature.

6.10: Final Reflections

Personal reflections on this study, extensive engagement with the literature and experiences arising from my professional biography have led me to believe that it is essential to acknowledge that professional development for SEND and inclusive practices must not be simplified or reduced to a set of stable competence standards conceived to unfold in politically neutral contexts. Rather, the process of learning to be inclusive is deeply challenging and requires of professionals moral, conceptual and practical reasoning that must be resolutely applied in unpredictable, contradictory and unsettled contexts. In my view, it is not apolitical since it engages a number of
oppressions; the oppression arising from dominating discourses such as those of
expertism and their impact on professional identity; the oppression arising from
individuated competence standards; the oppression arising from an ambiguous policy
context and the oppression arising from discourses and policies that pathologise
individual schools, teachers and learners.

If reforms to ITE result in a culture of 'on the job' training that demotes critical enquiry
and reflexive work, practitioners may be neglected as they struggle to understand and
resolve the dilemmas that arise in securing inclusive education for all. The result of this
may be professional disengagement from the battle for a fairer system and a sustaining
failure to serve the rights of those learners most vulnerable to exclusion. However, if
reforms to ITE prioritise professional learning and create a culture in which student
teachers and experienced practitioners can engage in systematic, reflexive and critical
enquiry, then the status of the profession could be enhanced in ways that impact on
social justice in positive ways. My own institution must consider how it can lead
developments in ways that enable such collaborations to proliferate. As a consequence
of the EdD, I feel able to assert my belief that universities and academic staff have an
important role to play in teacher education for SEND and inclusive practices. The model
of partnership promoted by McIntyre (2009) offers one valuable basis for securing this in
the future since it acknowledges the potential value of bringing school staff, student
teachers and academic tutors together. It will be important to resist any policy
developments for ITE that threaten to marginalise academics and universities. It will also
be important to recognise that the belief that ITE can preload student teachers with the
conceptualisations and practices needed to reform the system are naïve. They need to be supported by collaborators pursuing the same task. This study has provided an account of a pedagogic approach that can scaffold professional development without simplifying the project of learning to be inclusive to an acquisitionist model.

The study has also helped me to understand why this has been such a difficult area for me and my colleagues to develop since ITE is not solely responsible for student teachers’ relatively low level of confidence and preparedness for SEND and inclusive practices and ITE cannot solely resolve this problem. Policy makers also need to take responsibility for the impact of the lexes and practices they promote and in so doing, embrace a more complex model of teacher education for inclusion. Finally, it is essential to recognise that student teachers are not being prepared for a ‘job’ in which mundane and technical tasks can be routinely operated. Rather they are being prepared for a profession tasked with the ethical project of social justice. This requires intense professional engagement with the ambiguities, dilemmas and uncertainties that inevitably arise in pursuing inclusive education for all.
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APPENDICES A

Chapter 3

A3.1: Chronological summary of research process
A3.2: Website extract
A3.3: Sample extract from meeting minutes
A3.4: Sample poster
A3.5: Sample systematic evaluation of a project action (extract)
A3.6: Vignette A: Abigail’s development
A3.7: Vignette B: Kathryn’s development
A3.8: Letters of consent
A3.9: Priorities for the group
A3.10: Extract from researcher’s reflective journal
A3.11: Classroom observation data
A3.12: Respondent validation
A3.13: Developing the criteria for inclusive practice
A3.14: Sample transcript
A3.15: Sample analysis of transcript
### A3.1: Chronological Summary of Research Process

#### PHASE ONE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Data Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24th September 2010</td>
<td>Meeting at school to describe project and introduce conditions of consent</td>
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<tr>
<td>4th November 2010</td>
<td>Meeting at university with students to describe projects and conditions of consent</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9th and 23rd November 2010</td>
<td>Initial Meeting of the participants (2 undergraduate students, 1 GTP student, 5 teachers, 3 teaching Assistants)</td>
<td>Formulation of aspirations and actions, Collection of letters of consent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10th January 2011</td>
<td>Block placement begins for 2 undergraduate students. 2nd GTP student joins project as her 1 term alternative placement is in the school. 1st GTP student leaves school to carry out her alternative placement in another school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11th January 2011</td>
<td>2nd meeting of all participants</td>
<td>Confirmation of aspirations and Actions, Planning next steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st January 2011</td>
<td>Conversations with 2 mentors and then the 2 undergraduate students placed with them</td>
<td>Discussion of Project Action 2, Implementation (personalised learning plans), Planning for classroom observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd and 4th February 2011</td>
<td>Classroom observation in 2 undergraduate students' classrooms - involving students and all other practitioners working with them</td>
<td>Focus on Project Action 2, Classroom observations written up as rich narrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th February 2011</td>
<td>Meeting with 2 mentors and then the 2 undergraduate students placed with them</td>
<td>Discussion of Project Action 2, data arising including reflection and validation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th February 2011</td>
<td>Researcher's extensive writing in reflective journal (in response to the challenges presented in the meeting on 17th February)</td>
<td>Focus on how to manage researcher role to move the project forward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th February 2011</td>
<td>Block placement ends for 2 undergraduate students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st March 2011</td>
<td>3rd meeting of all participants</td>
<td>Focus on data arising from Project Action 2 — deepening understanding of group's own conception of inclusive practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st March 2011</td>
<td>Meeting between researcher, class teacher and GTP student involved in Project Action 1 (Lesson Study)</td>
<td>Planning process and data collection for Project Action 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th March 2011</td>
<td>Meeting between researcher and Teaching Assistant who worked with one of the undergraduate students during the placement. Planning process and data collection for Project Action 1. Data: Transcribed conversation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th March 2011</td>
<td>Classroom observation of class teacher and 2nd GTP student. Focus on Project Action 1. Data: Classroom observation data written up as rich narrative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25th March 2011</td>
<td>Meeting between student, researcher and class teacher to reflect on the processes and outcomes for Project Action 1 and discuss initial data emerging. (Full data &amp; analysis sent for validation on 1st April). Data: Notes in fieldwork journal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15th April 2011</td>
<td>Classroom observation of class teacher and 1st GTP student. Focus on Project Action 1. Data: Classroom observation data written up as rich narrative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st June 2011</td>
<td>Classroom observation of class teacher and 1st GTP student. Focus on Project Action 1. Data: Classroom observation data written up as rich narrative.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8th July 2013</td>
<td>Training event for 3 Teaching Assistants who were participants in the project. Evaluation, discussion and next steps for Project Action 3. Data: Written reflections and evaluations written by Teaching Assistants. Notes in fieldwork journal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8th July 2013</td>
<td>Meeting between teacher (SENCO and Assistant Head). Planning pilot training for Teaching Assistants (Project Action 3). Data: Notes in fieldwork journal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>13th September 2011</td>
<td>5th Meeting of the full participant group (school participants only during phase 2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Preparations for Phase 2</td>
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<td>Preparation for staff meeting in which participants would brief other school staff on the project</td>
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<td>aims and outcomes</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Data: Meeting minutes and artifacts</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>19th September 2011</td>
<td>Researcher and participants leading staff meeting with all school staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Recruitment of new participants</td>
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<td>Critical friendship with wider staff</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reflection on Project Actions</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Data: Fieldwork journal, posters produced by participants</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>27th September 2011</td>
<td>6th Meeting of the full participant group</td>
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<td>Welcoming of new participants (1 TA and 1 class teacher)</td>
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<td>Launch of phase 2</td>
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<td>Planning action research</td>
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<td>Timetable and calendar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collection of letters of consent</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Data: Minutes and artifacts arising from meeting</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>21st September 2011</td>
<td>Meeting with PGCE students placed in the school to discuss project and letters of consent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3 students become participants</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Data: Notes in fieldwork journal</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd October 2011</td>
<td>PGCE students begin placement in school</td>
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<tr>
<td>24th October 2011</td>
<td>Meeting with students at university to discuss the collection of classroom observation data for</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Project Action 2</td>
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<td>*Data: Written reflections and evaluations written by Teaching Assistants, artifacts (flipcharts, post-</td>
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<td>It notes*</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th and 18th November</td>
<td>Classroom observation involving 2 PGCE students and practitioners working alongside them in their classes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focus on Project Action 2 and 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Data: Classroom observation written up as rich narrative</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd December 2011</td>
<td>Researcher attends nativity play (by invitation)</td>
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<td>Extensive written reflections in journal</td>
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<td><em>Data: Researcher's reflective journal</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>24th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Conversations with 2 teaching assistants and 2 mentors (who worked with the postgraduate students) Reflection on full data set arising for both students Focus on Project Action 1 and 2 and the transferable aims of the study Data: transcribed conversations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2nd December 2011</strong></td>
<td>Conversations with 2 PGCE students Focus on Project Action 2 and 3 and the transferable aims of the study Data: Transcribed conversation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6th December 2011</strong></td>
<td>Meeting with 2 PGCE students to reflect on data &amp; analysis arising from the conversations on 6th December Validation process carried out Data: Students' written reflections, fieldwork journal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>7th Meeting of the participants group Reflection on data arising so far in phase 2 Focus on Project Action 2 and 3 Data: Minutes and artifacts (post - its, poster, comments on website)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>17th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>7th Meeting of the participants group Reflection on data arising so far in phase 2 Focus on Project Action 2 and 3 Data: Minutes and artifacts (post - its, poster, comments on website)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>24th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Conversations with 2 teaching assistants and 2 mentors (who worked with the postgraduate students) Reflection on full data set arising for both students Focus on Project Action 1 and 2 and the transferable aims of the study Data: transcribed conversations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>23rd January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Meetings with students in school to discuss plan collection for Project Action 1, 2 and 3 Data: transcribed conversations</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>30th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Classroom observation involving class teacher and 4th year undergraduate student Focus on Project Action 1 Data: classroom observation written up as rich narrative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>30th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Classroom observation involving class teacher and 1 undergraduate student Focus on Project Action 1 Data: classroom observation written up as rich narrative</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>30th January 2012</strong></td>
<td>Meeting between student, researcher and class teacher to reflect on the processes and outcomes for Project Action 1 and discuss initial data emerging. (Full data &amp; analysis sent for evaluation and validation on 17th June) Data: Notes in fieldwork journal</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>9th and 10th February</strong></td>
<td>Classroom observation involving 3 3rd year undergraduate students and practitioners working alongside them in their classes Focus on Project Action 2 and 3 Data: Classroom observation written up as rich narrative</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
21st February 2012
Classroom observation data (for Project Action 1 and 2) delivered to all students and practitioners named in the observation (inclusive of format for validation and reflection feedback). Reflection and validation for Project Action 1, 2 and 3
Data: written reflections of participants

1st March 2012
Placement ends for 3rd and 4th year undergraduate students

26th March 2012
Conversations with 3rd year undergraduate students (focus on Project Actions 2, 3 and transferable aims) and 4th year undergraduate student (focus on Project Action 1, 2, 3 and the transferable aims)
Data: Transcribed conversations

26th March – 29th May 2012
During this period, the project was suspended in the school in response to the pressures of an impending Ofsted inspection

18th May 2012
Researcher meeting with undergraduate students to reflect on the data and its analysis
Validation process
Reflection
Data: fieldwork journal

29th May 2012
Conversations with 2 mentors and 3 teaching assistants
Focus on Project Actions 1, 2 and 3 and transferable aims
Data: Transcribed conversations

15th June, 22nd June, 16th July
Participant study days
Reflective and reflexive review of project
Systematic evaluation of project actions
Data: Personal learning statements and reflections written by participants, full reports on project actions

18th July 2012
Validation group meeting
Focus on reporting process and findings to a group external to the project.
Data: Evaluations written by validators, fieldwork journal

END OF PROJECT
PARTICIPANTS’ COMMENTS PAGE

Hello everyone.

You can use this page to post comments and communicate with each other. I would encourage you to write your reflections in these comments boxes so that other participants can share in your thinking. Every member of the participant group has valid and valuable points to make and it is important that everyone has a voice. Your comment does not have to be there permanently – I can quickly remove it at your request. All of our research pages are password protected which I hope helps you feel additionally secure.

You can also contact me directly on XXXXXX or XXXXXXXXXXX if you want to talk or share ideas.

You can also access other resources (including notes, data, articles, minutes of meetings) via the links on the right.

Edit

14 responses to ‘Protected Participants’ Comments Page’

1. Alison says

November 3rd, 2010 at 10.40 pm  e

First bullet point, WHY do we want to develop more inclusive practices?

Because I want children to get a better deal! As teachers we are meeting increasing numbers of children with special and additional needs and we need the knowledge, skills and competencies to meet these needs. This is so children can access their learning and school but for me, more importantly, they can flourish, grow and develop in order to become, confident, happy and balanced individuals.............

13. Laura says

January 15th, 2010 at 9.18pm  e

Hi Deb

I have been on the website, though our last meeting isn’t up yet (this may become clearer when the latest notes are available. It seems to me that the student can only sample SEND from the year group that they work in or where they can exchange a student in another year group due to time constraints. Whilst I appreciate this I am aware that this may be reducing their experiences. There may be different encounters of SEN in other year groups that would offer a great capacity of SEN experiences.
Sorry to sound a bit negative about it, and I know that their training is not solely about SEN. Any comments about this would be great

14. Debs says

January 17th, 2011 at 11.02 pm

HI Laura – I have now updated the site with the notes arising from the meeting on 11th January.

Your point is a valid one and something we should continue to reflect on – we need to look at how students can access the wealth of experience that is on offer within a school. I think that one of our project actions will give the GTP students a chance to work with children outside their placement class and we can evaluate this as we progress.

We will follow this point up as we progress because it is an important point.

Leave a reply

Logged in as debs. Logout >>
A3.3: Sample meeting minutes (extract)

Developing Student Teachers' confidence as inclusive teachers of children with SENs - Action Research Project

Primary School and the

Tuesday 11th January 2010 at

AGENDA

3.45-4pm
Reviewing the outcomes of the two discussion groups - Points of agreement - A final statement of shared aims

4pm 4.30pm
What specific actions shall we take over the coming weeks?

4.45-5.30
Debs and Alison to meet to plan out the research schedule.
This will be circulated to all participants for feedback and agreement.

ITEM ONE: Reviewing the outcomes of the project launch meetings: a final statement of shared aims. It had been necessary for the larger group to meet in two separate groups (Group 1 – Charlotte, Debs, Harriett, Laura, Alison, Jenny - 9th November; Group 2: Debs, Sascha, Karen, Jane, Anna, Elizabeth, Claire – 23rd November). Each group considered the following key questions...........................

ITEM 2 – Selecting the actions for the project

The group spent the next part of the meeting, selecting the actions that they would like to take over the coming months as part of phase one of the project. We used the following criteria to guide our choices and agreed that these would continue to inform the processes we applied in carrying them out;

CRITERIA – the action should:

✓ hold promise in terms of having a positive impact on the Inclusion of our children with SENs and on the development of our practice and our students’ practice
✓ be manageable in terms of our workload and the length of the project
✓ be linked to the core purpose of our project enhancing students’ skill and confidence in including pupils with SENs
✓ be something that all or most of us can believe in
✓ be something that all or most participants can be involved in
✓ be something that we can investigate through data collection
✓ be something that will not overwhelm student teachers or limit their progress.

PROJECT ACTION 1: Collaborative evaluation, planning, teaching and review – to take place in second half of Spring Term

This action was suggested by Charlotte and Alison at the first meeting of the research group. It was felt that this approach would enable the development of both teacher and student since it enabled collaborative action and reflection. It was also felt that it met our selection/ethics criteria.

Suggested process; discussed and agreed in principle during meeting

- The student and teacher draw up a list of criteria together that would describe ‘inclusive’ teaching and learning for a focus pupil with SENs with reference to the criteria drawn up by the full participant group (available via the website). The process can also be planned in a way to take account of the particular interests of the student and teacher.
- The teacher plans and teaches a lesson/learning experience that seeks to meet those criteria
- The student observes the lesson focussing particularly on those criteria and discusses the outcomes of the observation with the teacher in the capacity of ‘critical friend’
- The teacher and student then co-plan and co-teach a subsequent lesson/learning experience which is observed by the research facilitator with related data collection. The method of data collection and style of observation is agreed beforehand.

The teacher, student and research facilitator meet to discuss the outcomes of the observation and to develop an action plan reflecting the findings which will seek to enhance the inclusiveness of teaching and learning within the classroom.
**A3.4: Sample poster**

Poster developed using nominal group technique in first meetings of participant group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP 1</th>
<th>GROUP 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What are our values, aims and aspirations?</strong></td>
<td>For the children!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our children with Special Educational Needs really matter to us.</td>
<td>Students — making us think more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We want to improve our own practice through working with student</td>
<td>To explore whether 'I'm doing the best I can' and to be sure that 'I'm not failing the children'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teachers on this area: it will sharpen our awareness and help us</td>
<td>A two way thing — training teachers helps us to develop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reflect</td>
<td>A chance to reflect and to bring SEN and inclusion to the centre of our thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We want to validate reflection — to prioritise it and make space</td>
<td>A way forward in impossible/difficulty/perplexing situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for it</td>
<td>Sometimes there is no answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We want to promote the QUALITIES of being an inclusive teacher</td>
<td>Dealing with increasing pressure and frustration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. responsiveness, seeing the WHOLE child, the individual child)</td>
<td>Collaborative reflection to achieve the above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We want to 'exploit' the experience of teaching assistants through</td>
<td>Making a contribution to children while we are on teaching practice — having permission to make</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deepening their involvement in Initial Teacher Training at our school.</td>
<td>suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• We want to affirm the truth of the statement 'Every Child is Special'</td>
<td>TAs making a contribution to ITE</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **What does it mean when we describe practice or a practitioner as      | Accept all children for who they are                                                               |
| inclusive?                                                             | A culture where difficulties are managed within a 'no-blame', 'colleague culture'                   |
| • Passion and Commitment                                               | Staff deployment                                                                                   |
| • Open-mindedness                                                      | Willingness to learn and to develop practice.                                                     |
| • Flexible                                                             | A SENCO with time and understanding who forges good relationships with parents and outside agencies|
| • Collaboration                                                       | Other children come to value difference — we recognise it can change attitudes, understanding and  |
| • Adaptable                                                           | tolerance. We’ll do everything we can — know when we need more help - judgement                   |
| • Communicative, communication                                         | Reflectiveness                                                                                     |
| • Personalising                                                        | Listening                                                                                         |
| • Can do – positive                                                    | Commitment                                                                                        |
| • Commitment to helping children feel accepted and to leading          | We will do our best                                                                                |
|   fulfilling and meaningful lives                                     |                                                                                                   |
| • Everybody’s special and has a unique gift                           |                                                                                                   |
| • Constantly thinking and reflecting                                  |                                                                                                   |
| • A commitment to needs lead provision                                |                                                                                                   |
| • Labels as a reasoning tool, not an excuse                           |                                                                                                   |
| • Realistic and resilient                                              |                                                                                                   |
| • It’s the way you are                                                 |                                                                                                   |
| • Pupil voice                                                          |                                                                                                   |
| • Empathy and love of children                                        |                                                                                                   |
| • Acceptance, willingness to adapt                                    |                                                                                                   |
| • Developing an accepting school culture — children’s attitudes are    |                                                                                                   |
|   positive                                                            |                                                                                                   |

| **How could we help student teachers to develop confidence in the     | Helping student teachers to feel okay about being unsure                                           |
| area of inclusion and SEN whilst they are on placement in our school? | Before and after reflective discussions — shared evaluation and making time                       |
|                                                                      | Induction — more time                                                                              |
|                                                                      | Class handover                                                                                     |
|                                                                      | Observing other classes and seeing how children with specific needs are handled                    |
|                                                                      | Reviewing IEPs                                                                                     |
|                                                                      | Personalised planning, target setting and individual needs.                                        |
|                                                                      | Group 2’s favourite actions                                                                        |

**Group 1’s favourite actions:**
- Shared reflection and action between teacher and pupil based on a focus pupil with SENs
- Some form of personalised planning
- Experiencing working with and as a TA

**Group 2’s favourite actions:**
- Personalised planning
- Experiencing working with a TA
**Participant Evaluation/Interpretation of Data arising from Project Action 1 – Collaborative evaluation, planning, teaching and review**

**Evaluation and interpretation: 25\(^{th}\) May 2011**

**FULL REPORT**

Charlotte and Debs met to discuss and interpret the following data relevant to Project Action 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Notes and Minutes (with respondent validation)</th>
<th>Agreed minutes arising from meetings of the whole participant group (9/11/10; 23/11/10; 11/01/10; 01/03/10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observations (with respondent validation)</td>
<td>Rebecca’s structured observation of Paul and of target behaviours (e.g. self-initiated interaction with peers) during whole class phonics lesson.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research facilitators’ non-participant unstructured observation of Charlotte (KS1 teacher), Rebecca (GTP student) and Leanne (TA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analysis and enumeration of above.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Extract from meeting of full participant group on 11\(^{th}\) January**

Charlotte and Alison suggested this project action during the first meeting of the research group. It was felt that this approach would enable the development of both teacher and student since it enabled collaborative action and reflection. It was also felt that it met our selection/ethics criteria.

**Suggested process; discussed and agreed in principle during meeting**

The student and teacher draw up a list of criteria together that would describe 'inclusive' teaching and learning for a focus pupil with SENs with reference to the criteria drawn up by the full participant group (available via the website). The process can also be planned in a way to take account of the particular interests of the student and teacher.

The teacher plans and teaches a lesson/learning experience that seeks to meet those criteria.

Using those particular criteria the teacher and student use observation data as a way of evaluating how strongly the criteria are in evidence.

The teacher and student then co-plan and co-teach a subsequent lesson/learning experience which is observed by the research facilitator with related data collection. The method of data collection and style of observation is agreed beforehand.
The teacher, student and research facilitator meet to discuss the outcomes of the observation and to develop an action plan reflecting the findings that will seek to enhance the inclusiveness of teaching and learning within the classroom.

During the meeting of 11th January we agreed to take implement action 1 with the following people involved:

**ACTION 1.1** (Debs, Charlotte and Rebecca): Charlotte would work with Rebecca, the GTP student (with her permission) in the way outlined above, and involve a TA in the process in order to honour our aspiration to include teaching assistants in ITE (we will ask whether any of our participants or other colleagues in the school would like to support this.) DR would come into school to support Charlotte and Rebecca's planning. Thereafter, Charlotte and Rebecca would enact the process.

**ACTION 1.2** (Elaine): Following the process carried out by Charlotte and Rebecca, Elaine (as Rebecca’s mentor) would carry this action forward in supporting Rebecca's continuing development by:

1) Reflecting with Rebecca on the process and what she had learned from it carrying this forward into target setting and professional development towards QTS
2) Using the criteria developed by Charlotte and Rebecca as a basis for observation and feedback for Rebecca’s practice in the classroom.

**ACTION 1.3** (Debs, Rebecca, Charlotte and Karen): Participants involved in Action 1 will support an evaluation through interviews and/or conversations and/or discussions with Debs (with data arising from Debs observation)

**How fully was the action implemented?**

The action was implemented in the way described above.

Rebecca and Charlotte designed the following criteria as a way of evaluating how inclusive the experiences of one pupil with Special Educational Needs had been.

- Engagement with group discussion/activity
- Engagement with class discussion/activity
- Engagement in 1:1 interaction with adult
- Engaging independently with discussion/activity
- Following instructions
- Initiating verbal interaction with adult
- Initiating verbal interaction with peer.

Rebecca also wrote the lesson plan for the team taught session; this was also relevant to her emerging professional development targets.
A3.6: Vignette A: Abigail's development

ABIGAIL

1. All PGCE students are required to complete two school placements during their training year and Abigail was undertaking her first placement in this school. Her mentor, Veronica was an experienced teacher, was newly trained as a mentor for the University and was a participant in the project, joining at the beginning of Phase two. Abigail was placed in a class of 30, five and six year old children who were described by Veronica and Jane (their previous teacher) as a 'good class' who were not particularly challenging in terms of behaviour and diversity. This was with the exception of one child, Sophie, who was at an earlier stage of development than her peers and whom Jane and Veronica was likely to have Special Educational Needs.

2. At the end of her placement, Abigail conceptualised the term inclusion to mean educating everyone together within the same class. As a pupil in school herself, she did not see inclusion in practice since those children who may have had learning difficulties or special needs were taught in different classes or even in different buildings. She believed that things have moved forward in positive ways but that the move towards greater inclusion has brought challenges.

3. Abigail came to understand that meeting diverse needs within one class is very challenging. It was much more challenging than she thought it would be because differentiation had to be provided for all children, not just those with special needs.

4. For Abigail, the term SEND carried a lot of weight. In her view, SEND was a term applied to those children who are developmentally behind to a severe or extreme degree. SEND also brought to mind conditions that have associated medical facts and follow a diagnosis. Abigail knew that some of these conditions were things she had never heard of and had long names. She was daunted by the prospect of them.
5. Abigail’s believed that the most difficult needs to meet were those that seemed extreme but were not yet diagnosed or confirmed as SEND. This was the case for Sophie who was introduced to Abigail as ‘an enigma’ by Veronica since she and her previous teachers had not been able to get to the bottom of what the problem was though they had been informed that it was something to do with language processing. Four participants in the project (Veronica, Elaine, Jane and Sascha, had perceived in Sophie, a spiky profile meaning that she seemed competent in some areas (like number work) but struggling in others (such as receptive comprehension). Generally, Abigail found Sophie perplexing and she was not alone. Veronica and Anna confirmed that they had developed a strong affection for Sophie but had been similarly perplexed on occasion. Working with Sophie had not been without its intermittent frustrations for that reason and both teachers believed that it was important to understand this before making any judgements about Abigial’s competence.

6. Abigail explained that knowing that Sophie had undiagnosed SENDs did trigger feelings of panic about where to start and about what she should be doing. No one could provide clear guidance on this since there had been no confirmed diagnosis. It felt like a waiting game for everyone. Abigail believed that the situation would have been helped by some ‘proper medical facts’ about what was wrong and what should be done from other professionals, perhaps those she had heard about from outside the school:

“You’ve got to know as much as you can about them, you’ve got to get to know the facts, you know, not an assumption, not an ‘I think this is this’ and ‘I think this is wrong with her.’ You need to know if there is a problem there and if it’s been diagnosed or whatever you’ve got, you need to know the facts and you need to know that from a professional that not just a hearsay or a word of mouth like ‘I think this is this’ or ‘so and so thinks that because she knows a child that was very similar’. You can’t make those assumptions, you can’t label them like that you’ve got to get proper, proper medical facts and then you can build on that.”
Reflecting further on her placement experience, Abigail believed that she did learn some solutions to the challenges of meeting diverse needs and to responding to Sophie. She says that these solutions were based on common sense. She used some small adaptions and these helped Sophie to stay engaged (such as using visual prompts). She also learned that it was important to find children’s starting points by assessing them and observing them every day to get a sense of where they were. During her placement she came to realise that using day-to-day observation and discussing ideas with the teaching team was a useful approach. Making things up as they went along seemed to get them somewhere with Sophie in the end.

Her mentor, Veronica also believed that common sense is a key resource for responding to children’s needs. Though it got her into trouble sometimes, Veronica felt that it was important to put the children before the paperwork. Though she did have records on Sophie, reams and reams of writing were not necessary since she could respond to children’s needs instinctively. Further, in terms of writing an IEP, this was difficult given the perplexing and confusing picture that was the case for Sophie. There were also added complexities given Sophie’s family situation and all this added to the challenge of finding the next best step. Veronica suspected that Abigail would be just like her in her relationship with paperwork. She would put working with the children first.

Working alongside Abigail in the placement class was Sascha, a teaching assistant who has been a participant in the project from its beginning. Abigail noted that Sascha had a useful insight into Sophie as an individual and that this insight helped her to find ways forward. Abigail felt that she did make progress in including Sophie and that this was demonstrated in the warm and close relationship that had developed between them. She reported that Sascha, Veronica and herself worked on this together. She hoped that the things they had put in place would continue to benefit Sophie after her placement had finished.

In relation to this team approach, Abigail strongly believed that it is important to operate with diplomacy in the school environment. Things should not be changed too dramatically because this could upset the child and the adults in the class. As a student
and as someone relatively inexperienced she would avoid making any changes that would risk the child going backwards since this was something she really feared.

11. In separate forums, both Abigail and Veronica communicated a strong dislike of labels. Abigail’s stance was that it is important not to label children too young or to assume that all children with particular conditions experience them in exactly the same way. Abigail believed that it is the teacher’s job to get to know the child as an individual and not to build practice on assumptions. However, she also believed that once a condition or syndrome is known or suspected that it is essential to know its specific characteristics and how these might look in the classroom (e.g. through a net search, talking to other professionals).

12. Veronica expressed a strong belief that labels are dangerous because they abdicate practitioners from responsibility for getting to know their children. Veronica reported that she has been doing this with Sophie and that she had been making progress in understanding her needs. Slowly, slowly, it was becoming clearer. For example, she noted improvements in Sophie’s ability to make context appropriate responses in class discussions and that Sophie’s engagement has deepened lately. However, the ups and downs continued to be a feature of her development:

13. ‘...so at the moment Sophie is answering questions in context a lot better than she was and that is from I think using a lot of closed questioning now it’s open questions now just to test her a little bit and we’re doing castles and she absolutely adores things about castles, you know she’ll tell you! But the moats not a nice place to go! But we had a fire drill in the last um, and she went into hysterics because she was scared so I had to take her round to the office to show her where the fire box is, where they set it off and introduced her to Mary and said oh Mary is the lady who sets the fire alarm off, then every time she sees her now she fixates her, ‘you’re not going to set that alarm off are you I don’t like it do I, but I’m to hold my teachers hand and I’ll be alright wont I?’
However, with regard to labels Veronica believed that they could secure recognition of a child's need for additional help. Further, labels could create a sense of informed practice. Veronica did try to get others to recognise Sophie's needs in this way since she has the child's future in mind. For example, she commented:

'Ve've been told is that she's got a processing problem. So we've sort of slowed down the questioning and a lot of closed questioning and stuff like that um, but like today I called Elaine through because she has a lot of SEN experience, Sophie had written something it was totally legible. Okay it wasn't correctly spelt but it was correctly orientated, correctly legible - it's about Shrek and Princess Fiona being beautiful and Shrek had green ears and Princess Fiona is very beautiful she's very pretty. I said that to me, the writing standard of a little child of Sophie's age doesn't present a problem. She said no it doesn't, but I know that she cannot process it, she shouts out all the time. I'm bearing on the other side of ADD but until you've got a diagnosis you can't work with it.

Abigail felt very well supported in the school. She said that she counted herself lucky to have been there and that it had been an important placement for developing her understanding of inclusion, SEND and differentiation. In Abigail's view, particular to this school, was the respect accorded to teaching assistants and to the high regard given to their expertise. She felt this was less likely to be the case in other schools. During the placement, all students placed in the school and several TAs were freed for one afternoon. The TAs provided workshop sessions for students around themes of specialist interest. Abigail said that these were invaluable and that they opened her eyes to needs that she may previously assumed did not exist in primary schools.

She was also grateful for the fact that the school took students' development very seriously. She felt like her learning and development as a teacher was a priority. This was further helped by the fact that she was fully welcomed and included in the team. There was real expertise for SEND in this team and she appreciated that a great deal.
Abigail also explained that she had had a close working relationship with teaching assistants during the placement. They provided formal and informal advice and feedback and she benefited from this. Abigail believed that it is important to be humble and to value feedback from all colleagues since teaching is a job in which you will never stop learning. She will always regard TAs as equals.

In considering her own professional future, Abigail does have some worries about SEN. One of these is that in her class there may be children with extreme or undiagnosed needs who are not getting extra support and for whom there is little clear guidance about what is wrong and where to start. Another worry is that there might be children with extreme behavioural needs. Both of these occurrences could be professionally and personally exposing. However, Abigail’s experience on placement has left her reassured that there are others within and outside the school team who can advise and support. She is disposed to work in a team in this way and believes that this disposition will help her.

At the conclusion of her placement, Abigail judged that her development in SEND and inclusion had moved forward in terms of her awareness and perception. She learned some important things. However, she did not yet feel confident and she was not completely sure that what she had learned was transferable to another placement where the needs and context might be different. She would need more experience before she could make that judgement.

Like all other students and with her consent, Abigail was the subject of a classroom observation. On reading the narrative account of the observed lesson, Abigail noticed that other children in the class had been impatient and critical of Sophie. She worked on this and reported some improvement at the end of the placement. From this she had come to understand how important the peer group are to the inclusion of a child.
22. The narrative account mentioned above was also analysed and the frequency of inclusive practices calculated. These practices had been identified as criteria that could be used to evaluate practice. The analysis suggested that Abigail applied the following inclusive practices less frequently than the other students:

- Making personalised interventions that implied knowledge of children's needs
- Using classroom routines to promote security, independence and equal opportunities
- Securing engagement in learning and response from children
- Providing voice and ownership for children where children were listened to and their choices respected
- Securing positive interactions between children and adults as a feature of the learning environment

However, compared to other students she applied the following with a similar frequency:

- Using positive interactions, affirmation and rewards to promote progress and engagement
- Monitoring children's participation and intervening to secure equal access
- Planning engaging activities that would appeal to children

23. Like other students, Abigail had also engaged in a process called personalised learning planning (PLP). This involved recording a holistic assessment of the child, setting weekly learning goals and planning pedagogic adaptions and innovations that would support movement towards those goals. Abigail wrote one of these for Sophie. At the point when the classroom observation data was collected, this PLP made reference to Sophie as an 'enigma' and did not include any goals or progress targets. However, Abigail had listed teaching targets in terms of strategies she must employ and had given weekly thought to this.

24. Veronica had noted that Abigail had difficulty with forming clear learning objectives more generally in her whole class planning and they had been working on this during the placement. Veronica had also spent time showing Abigail evidence of Sophie's progress (through looking through her work with her) and this seemed to have boosted her confidence since Abigail was quite down on herself when in fact there was evidence that she had had a positive impact.
25. Looking back, Veronica felt that Abigail’s progress could have been accelerated if she had been able to set small, clear, measurable goals for Sophie. An early start to knowing Sophie’s starting points and seeing tangible progress would have boosted Abigail’s confidence further and she may have felt more satisfied and confident about her abilities. Though Veronica had found this a difficult process herself given Sophie’s spiky profile, she felt it was key to moving on - setting clear and measurable targets provides a gage for success amidst the complexity of a busy class.

26. Selina, Sascha (teaching assistants) and Elaine (mentor to Lorna, the other PGCE students), also suggested that the make of the class might have been a factor in Abigail’s relative lack of confidence. Where students had been placed in classes with more diverse and challenging needs, there was a more urgent need to know children’s starting points and this seemed to have accelerated their development. Elaine was relatively certain that this was part of the reason why Lorna had progressed so well in this area. She needed to get to know the children very quickly in order to survive since they were such a diverse bunch.

27. While Selina and Sascha both commended Abigail for her progress and for her easy going approach, both perceived that Abigail’s was quite fearful of SENDs. Sascha felt that Abigail was seeing SENDs as a ‘Jack in the Box’ which in a threatening way might jump out at any point, throwing out all sorts of unexpected and potentially unmanageable challenges.

‘It is like a jack in a box and something surprising you and comes out it is as though she has put in this special needs in a box and because Sophie hasn’t got a label, this jack in a box is going to jump out, this Jack’s going to jump out and it could come at her and she’s not quite aware of what it’s going to be or know what’s going to come out of the box.’

28. Sascha and Selina believed that if Abigail were to see all children and their variety as ‘normal’ she might develop more quickly. Sascha commented:
‘...because I think it would just help her to not have that fear and to realise that all children are the same but they all have different needs and that she can go into schools and not think well oh dear who's this and who's that, she'd be confident enough to go in and accept the children as who they are.’

29. In conclusion, Veronica confirmed that Abigail made much progress. Though she was not the most confident of people and had had a shaky start, Abigail was reflective, easy going and willing to take advice on board. At the start, Abigail had struggled with the basics of behaviour management and of planning but had moved forward in both of these areas by the end. It had been a steep learning curve for Abigail but although she had felt a little reluctant to take a student at first, Veronica had found the mentoring process to be very rewarding.

30. Though she emerged with relatively low confidence in the area of SEND, differentiation and inclusive practice, Abigail had valued the placement greatly and her awareness of these issues had been developed. The support network provided by the teaching team had been a big positive for her and she was glad to have been placed there.
1. Kathryn is a student teacher on a four-year undergraduate teaching route to Qualified Teacher Status. She is in her third year and though she is on a course focusing on the primary phase, she chose to undertake her placement in an EYFS setting since this was one of the options available. Prior to this placement, Kathryn did not have much experience of this key stage and age group. She was placed with a class of 30 children, aged 4-5. She worked with an experienced mentor (Anna) who had been a participant in the project since phase 1. She also worked with Geraldine who was an experienced Teaching Assistant and who had been involved in providing workshop sessions for the students placed in the school. Geraldine's session was on behaviour management since she had been providing a course for parents on this issue within the school and had attended several courses on positive parenting.

2. During the early part of her placement, Kathryn was struggling to make satisfactory progress and it had been a difficult time for her. Particularly debilitating was what she reported as 'a fear of failure'. However, through the close support of Geraldine and Anna, Kathryn made strong progress and was successful. Kathryn communicates a genuine appreciation for the support she received from both colleagues. Their willingness to support her and 'never give up on me' was something she said she would never forget.

3. Both Geraldine and Anna had found the situation challenging to manage because Kathryn had so much to learn and needed so much support – time was pressing and these challenges did sometimes create tensions and pressures for everyone. Anna was aware that Kathryn was at a very early starting point and that the new age group were, initially, hard for her to connect with. There were basics that she needed to work on in relation to managing behaviour and getting organised and there was a point when it looked like she might not pass. However, an intensive approach to advising her and supporting her had brought about Kathryn's progress and success. Geraldine and Anna had seen her grow in skill and confidence over a relatively short time. Anna had mentored a number of students over the years but Kathryn's was one she described as 'her favourite placement so far' because of the transformation she had seen and the
rewards that this had brought to everyone. Anna believed that Kathryn’s determination to succeed and intelligence had been an important factor in her success. Kathryn seemed to learn a great deal about how to make the learning environment responsive to children’s needs and interests. In Anna’s view, once Kathryn had realised that team communication and organisation were key to success, she had turned a corner. She had also turned a corner when she had worked out how to plan in response to children’s needs and interests whilst understanding how this enabled the EYFS curriculum to be delivered. Kathryn seemed to share this view too.

In relation to teaching assistants, Kathryn felt much supported by Geraldine. Geraldine was able to tell her what she needed to know about the children. She also provided support with locating resources in the classroom and saved Kathryn a lot of work in that respect. Geraldine’s interest in circle time was something that Kathryn had also learned from and Kathryn came to trust in Geraldine’s judgement and knowledge of effective teaching and learning. She had learned a great deal from her:

Debs Did you find Geraldine did she give you advice and?
Kathryn Yeah
Debs What kind of advice and support did she give and what impact did that have?
Kathryn She was really good, oh these resources for this, like the role play area. We did fruit printing I know it sounds silly but she would say ‘oh we need to have big ones’ and this one bunches up so it is no good for printing’ and everything like that. The resources that she’d suggested and she’d gathered were so good for the children that I wouldn’t have thought of by myself - so that was good and also - ways of teaching lessons that might be good. She loves circle time - I didn’t really see why to start off with but then her ideas I really valued, they were really good. She was very knowledgeable about the children and we were discussing and talking and working together a lot.

A significant realisation for Kathryn was that teaching assistants knew the children really well and that this expertise was very important and something that students should draw on:

‘.........the TAs were probably the most important part of the class just because they know the children so well, they’re outside with them while
they’re playing, they’re always doing group work with them, um, yeah teamwork was another thing I learned this year, totally!'

6. Working in an EYFS setting for the first time had brought new insights that Kathryn valued highly. Among these was the teamwork mentioned above:

‘.......It scared me to begin with .... It terrified me! But the children...it was as if they always had someone to go to. I think that was nice. Everyone knew what they were doing so it wasn’t like the classroom was fragmented like it can be sometimes. All the adults knew what they were doing - all the children knew what adults were doing. I think this may have helped make their learning more continuous in a way, I don’t know if that makes sense?’

7. Kathryn explained that she had come to realise how central this continuity was for the children. It brought them security and it meant that all of the adults in the learning environment could use their collective knowledge to provide the right kind of responses for individual children in all sorts of ways. Kathryn explained that though the teamwork added an additional layer of challenge and complexity, it sharpened her teaching because she had to communicate with others about what the children were to learn and in doing so, clarified this for herself. Kathryn had felt very well supported and buoyed up by this team environment but she had come to realise that the most important beneficiaries were the children. She had learned that teamwork was a key tool for inclusive practice.

8. At the conclusion of her placement, Kathryn describes other aspects of her development as an inclusive teacher. Very significant among these is the opportunities offered by the EYFS in helping her seen an alternative way to approach personalisation. She had learned that it was possible to use children’s starting points and interests as a basis for personalisation whereas in KS1 and KS2 the curriculum had dominated. In the EYFS there was a new way of working revealed to her:
'I think my outlook completely changed. Before I was very much kind of not tell them what to do but it was a lot of my ideas that initiated the learning'

However working in the EYFS had revealed a different approach:

'We went for the farm, just an example.....I asked them questions of what they'd like to find out about the farm. When we got there they asked everything that they asked but my ideas were completely forgotten about...obviously you still hit the curriculum but they are valued in it.'

Kathryn felt that this was something she wanted to take into KS1 and KS2 since children felt more included when they had a voice. In relation to the special characteristics of the school that accelerated her progress in SEND and inclusive practices, she felt that the EYFS approach and the team work were the most significant sources of learning. Though there were diverse needs, the placement class did not manifest SENDs to a severe degree. Hence, she had learned more about inclusive practices than about SEND as such though she didn't appear to be worried about the children she might met in the future.

In relation to personalised planning Kathryn reported that the PLP process had kick started her journey to personalising for the children. Without it, she would not have focussed on those children's needs as early and would not have been able to see some order in the chaos:

'I think it with it being so personalised having those targets, I know it was just three children but it did make you think a lot more about 'Oh how am I making this accessible?' even though sometimes it was a bit formal it was useful for them and for me in making sure that it happened.'

For two of the three children chosen as the focus for the PLP process, she was able to see clear progress. For another, she had not set the right kinds of goals early enough to have an impact but some positive things were happening at the end. She felt some regret about that but she had learned that it was essential to adapt learning goals, to scrap approaches that were not working and to engage in continual problem solving. Her view
was that if you didn’t give up you would get there in the end. For children and for her, failing was part of learning. Kathryn felt that it was important to embrace this idea and to have faith in yourself and your children’s ability to progress. She had also learned that being an expert in your children was an essential resource for teaching inclusively. When asked how her placement experience might help her to meet the needs of children she might meet in the future she said:

‘Um, really know them, absolutely, really know them. I set targets for one of them (David) but they just didn’t work because it wasn’t until the last two or three weeks of placement I thought ‘Oh this is why it is not working’ and just really get to know how they think and they work, what they respond to and what they don’t. So, it’s getting to talk to them, getting to play with them that would really help.’

14. Kathryn reported that she had developed an improved ability to respond to children’s individual needs and stages of development during this placement. She had come to trust her judgement more and gained improved confidence. She had also learned that personalisation must embrace social aspects as well as curriculum ones (for example, for one of her pupils who was a learner of EAL).

15. In relation to the meaning of inclusion, Kathryn believed that this is a term that is about valuing every child’s starting point. Children must be allowed to make progress at their own pace and in their own way because not everyone would achieve the same thing. As a result of working in the EYFS, she had also learned to value learning outcomes that were not intended. For Kathryn, inclusion is about valuing all steps in progress and all starting points whether they were planned for or not and whether they were what was considered ‘normal’ or not.

16. Ensuring that the child had voice and ownership in their learning was very important. Where this had happened for the PLP children and in the class more generally, she had seen a direct benefit to their progress and engagement. The EYFS also demanded that approaches were personalised. Kathryn had learned that for children of this age, if you don’t tune in to what they like and where they are at, they simply will not engage. In this way, Kathryn had learned about the importance of listening and responding to children and giving them choices.
When asked what her understanding of the term SEND was, Kathryn made the following response:

‘Um, I don’t know really... when I’ve got a child with SEN I don’t particularly see them as any different, anyway. I prepare different work for them but perhaps in my first year I would have put a bit of a cap on what they could do, but I have learned that they’re just as capable as anybody else at having a go at doing it. It’s kind of that ‘have a go’ philosophy again.’

Kathryn is worried about whether she can adapt to being in year 6 again given her EYFS experience. This adaption will be a challenge. However, she does want to take the philosophies and practices she has developed with her though and believes this is possible. Essentially this relates from starting from the child and giving the child ownership of their own learning.

As noted earlier, Anna and Geraldine were proud of Kathryn’s progress. They felt great affection for Kathryn and would have liked to give her even more of their time and attention but this was constrained by other pressures at times. Anna was not able to say much about Kathryn’s engagement with the PLP process because the pressures of other things pushed time to discuss this out of the picture somewhat
A3.8: Letters of consent

Learning to Teach Inclusively: Enhancing initial teacher education for Special Educational Needs

From:
Debs Robinson

-learning to teach inclusively: enhancing initial teacher education for special educational needs

What conditions, processes and activities lead to the development of ITE for SEN and Inclusion during periods of school based training?

Date: September 2011

This statement of consent and the attached letter describes the focus and purpose of the project. It also describes your rights and responsibilities of those who may participate in the project.

If you choose not to participate at this stage you need do nothing more. You will not be negatively judged if you choose not to participate at all.

If you do choose to participate, please complete both copies of the Consent Statement and bring one of these to our first meeting on 27th September 2011, 3.30-5.30, retaining the other copy for your own reference

Name:
Role within the School:
Contact Telephone:
Contact E-mail:
I have read and understand the nature of my involvement in the project and I will take part in the second phase during 2011-12
Signed:
Date:

CONSENT INFORMATION

I understand that:
- This project has two phases and that I am signing up to participate in the second phase. I will be asked whether I want to participate in any further phases before they begin – it will not be assumed that in signing up for the second phase, I will want to participate in the further phases.
- This is a collaborative action research project and I will be fully involved in making decisions about the focus and direction of the work. The facilitator will make sure that everyone’s voice is heard and will ensure a democratic approach to the greatest possible extent.
- There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research. If I choose not to take part this will not affect my standing within the partnership, the university or within my school in any way.
- If I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation. If I choose to withdraw, this will not affect my standing within the partnership, the university or within my school in any way.
- I can request to have any data or information collected about me from the beginning of the project to the point I make the request, destroyed. I know that this request will be honoured.
- The data that is collected will be shared and discussed among all the participants in the project but the facilitator of the project (Debs Robinson) will check that this is okay before the sharing takes place. The facilitator of the project will store all of the data and reports and will be responsible for its safe-keeping.
- I understand that as a participant in the project I will be expected to record my thoughts and reflections in a journal of some kind (even if these reflections are brief). This journal and its contents will be my property and I will decide whether or not to share its contents.
- I understand that as a participant in the project I will be expected to have engage in interviews, conversations and discussions with the research facilitator about my experiences during it and to enable other forms of data collection (e.g. observations of students’ practice)
As a participant, I will meet with other participants and the research facilitator (Debs Robinson) to reflect, discuss findings and plan next steps. Over the course of the project, there will be four planned meetings, each lasting about 2 hours. Participants and the facilitator may also meet informally and intermittently over the course of the project.

Confidentiality will be respected by the facilitator and by the other participants with regard to the information I give and the data and findings that emerge in order to preserve the anonymity of any participants or subjects to the greatest possible extent.
I am writing to invite you to take part in a research project which focuses on how to develop Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in the area of inclusion and Special Educational Needs. The project will be collaborative and will focus on your work with student teachers as this occurs during student teachers’ teaching practices within your school. Anyone in the school who wants to participate can do so.

I want you to be as informed about the project as possible to help you make your decision about whether or not to participate, but I very much hope that you will feel able to take part. It is also important for me to tell you that the project will inform my thesis for a Doctorate in Education.

The project is in two stages and running over a period of two years. Stage one has been the first cycle of an inclusive action research project took place during 2010-11. Stage two will be the second cycle of our action research project and will take place during 2011-12.

What is the project about?

You are probably aware that developing the ability to teach learners who may have different needs and backgrounds is an important part of qualifying to teach. The professional standards for Qualified Teacher Status\(^1\) include the following references to this aspect of practice:

- Q18 Understand how children and young people develop and that the progress and well-being of learners are affected by a range of developmental, social, religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic influences.
- Q19 Know how to make effective personalised provision for those they teach, including those for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs or disabilities, and how to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in their teaching.
- Q20 Know and understand the roles of colleagues with specific responsibilities, including those with responsibility for learners with special educational needs and disabilities and other individual learning needs.
- Q21 (a) Be aware of the current legal requirements, national policies and guidance on the safeguarding and promotion of the well-being of children and young people. (b) Know how to identify and support children and young people whose progress, development or well-being is

\(^1\) The professional standards for QTS have been developed by the Government organisation responsible for Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD). This organisation is the ‘Training and Development Agency’ or TDA. There are 33 Professional Standards for QTS in all and student teachers must achieve all of these to at least a satisfactory level in order to achieve qualified teacher status.
affected by changes or difficulties in their personal circumstances, and when to refer them to colleagues for specialist support.

Whilst in their first year in post, newly qualified teachers report that they feel less well prepared for this aspect of their role than they do about other aspects such as assessment, planning, teaching and subject knowledge\(^2\). This is the case nationally, but is also true of PGCE students who qualified within our partnership. We have also analysed our students’ progress against the professional standards listed above and we find that their achievements here are not as high as in other areas.

Research into Initial Teacher Education suggests that for most student teachers, the training that they receive in school has the most significant impact on their development and on their confidence. This suggests that the most important place to improve Initial Teacher Education (ITE) for SEN is in schools during students’ teaching practice. There has been no research into how partnership schools do (or do not do) develop the inclusive practice of their students. There has also been very little research into what helps student teachers to develop the ability to teach pupils with Special Educational Needs during their teaching practices. This project aims to fill that gap.

The project’s central question is ‘What conditions, processes and activities might develop ITE for SEN and Inclusion during periods of School Based Training?’

The existing participants and I want to collaborate with you and other people in your school to design and implement practices that will help students to become more confident and effective when working with children who have Special educational Needs and when working inclusively right from the beginning of their career. We also want to work together to improve our own practices so that this will benefit pupils in the school.

The research process draws on the methodology of Inclusive Action Research.

If you agree to take part what will you be asked to do?

This project aims to be collaborative and democratic from beginning to end. As a participant you will have a say in the focus and direction of our project.

At the start of the project we will meet to reflect on the findings of Phase 1 and to plan our next steps for Phase 2 of the project. We will also consider when, where and how we want to collect data. The voice of existing and new participants will be equally valued; this is part of the modus operandi of our study. **Our first meeting is at the school on Tuesday 27th September, 3.30-5.30pm. Our focus and action at each step will be collaboratively planned.**

As you may be aware, this process will require us to meet regularly during the course of the project and to stay in communication with each other. **During 2011-12 we will meet four times with the meetings lasting about two hours. You will also be invited to join two additional meetings of a ‘validation group’ (which will include critical friends external to our project) should you wish to deepen your engagement with the research data and methodology more generally.**

You will also be expected to keep a journal in which you record your thoughts and reflections as the project progresses; it would be helpful if you could begin writing some thoughts in the journal before our first meeting – these reflections can be as brief or as lengthy as you wish and in any form. You will not be expected to write up any data or reports or to gather data unless you wish to. The research facilitator carries the load in terms of paper work, data collection and analysis.

\(^2\) This information is collected annually through a questionnaire that is sent to all newly qualified teachers. The TDA manage this process and publish their analysis. The **SEN providers** can access data about how well they have performed in comparison to other providers. Looking at our figures for 2009 we know that 97% of our students described the quality of their overall training as good or very good but in the area of SEN, 60% of trainees rated their training as good or very good.
Finally, you should be willing to take part interviews and conversations about your experiences with the research facilitator and to help enable the collection of other forms of data.

What's in It for you if you take part in this project?

The project offers an opportunity for professional development and is likely to improve your ability to work with students effectively and to reflect on your practice as this relates to Special Educational Needs and inclusion. In this way ITE and CPD are potentially connected.

I will also support your professional development by gathering and presenting data to help you reflect on your own practice; you will have full access to the data gathered about you and you will be able to respond to it and interpret its meaning. I will also introduce themes arising in the literature where relevant.

You may also want to use the project as a focus for assignments within accredited courses. For example, writing up the project as part of a Masters Degree or a Higher Level Teaching Assistant award.

Perhaps most importantly, you can make a contribution to securing a better educational experience or pupils with Special Educational Needs through helping our partnership to develop its practice – new teachers who qualify with us will be better prepared to include children with Special Educational Needs and that will benefit the pupils and families that they work with.

Suppose you drop out of the project before the end?

This is an entirely voluntary project. You may withdraw from it at any time without giving reasons and will be able to request the destruction of any data that has been collected about you up to that point. You will not be judged negatively if you make this decision. However, I really hope that you will continue participating with the project until the end and I will do my best to create the circumstances where that is possible and desirable for you.

What happens if I choose not to be involved in the project?

You will not be judged negatively because you choose not to be involved. As a research facilitator it is my job to ensure that non-engagement in the project does not lead to victimisation.

What do I need to do now?

Please read through the consent information in the preceding consent statements. If you choose not to participate at this stage you need do nothing more. If on the other hand, you do choose to participate in phase 2 of the project please sign both complete both copies of the consent form and bring copy with you to our first meeting on 27th September, 3.30-5.30pm, retaining one copy for your own reference.

Yours Sincerely

Debs Robinson
Senior Lecturer (Inclusion, SEN and Professional Studies)
Research Facilitator
A3.9: Priorities for the group

Statement of aims and values (developed 11th January 2011)

1. We believe that reflection and more particularly, COLLABORATIVE REFLECTION was something that we wanted and needed to do in order to develop ourselves and our students as confident inclusive practitioners. This theme was paralleled in both meeting groups. Carving out and prioritising time to reflect with others was seen as an essential element of inclusive practice.

2. That 'attitudes' and 'dispositions' seemed so important to us in the way we saw inclusive practice: flexibility, a team approach, valuing children, a 'no-blame' culture and collegiate working were key – it was important that students experienced that.

3. Particularly important was valuing each child as an individual, being positive and seeing the unique gifts that all children had to offer.

4. A key theme that emerged in the discussions was the need to think of inclusion as a process that related to ALL CHILDREN, it wasn't just about SEN.

5. We shared recognition that where children experience inclusive education, they learn to accept difference – we were building a better world.

6. That teaching assistants were central to the process of training student teachers in the area of SEN; their experience and insight are valuable resources; the development of positive ways of working between students and TAs were seen as important; securing an experience of being 'part of a team' for students were seen to be important in developing their confidence as inclusive practitioners – collaboration was going to be key.

7. That the processes of personalisation and personalised planning (particularly in relation to holistic approaches and careful target setting) were important for students to learn and to observe; more specifically, we all tended to believe that looking beyond labels was important and that understanding of every child's needs holistically (strengths, weaknesses, idiosyncrasies, family context, likes, dislikes) was part of that.

8. That student' needed to learn about the impact of familial contexts and gain experience of working with other agencies

9. A 'no-blame' and collegiate culture where we were honest about those aspects of our practice that were troubling us were aspects of ethos that also seemed important to us. The second group were also concerned to evaluate whether they were doing enough for their children and to acknowledge the difficult and challenging nature of inclusive practice.

10. The group felt that the children were absolutely central and that they should be the beneficiaries of our work; the student participants expressed a wish to leave a positive legacy and to make a contribution.

11. That in modelling our practice and in helping student teachers to reflect on theirs, we would enlighten our own practice.

12. Experience of working with children with Special Educational Needs during teaching practices was seen as essential – particularly where the students' placement class did not offer this opportunity.

Essentially, a statement of our shared aspirations is proposed as follows:

That we will work together to improve the school based training that students receive in the area of inclusion and SEN.

That in doing so, we will improve our practice and enhance the benefits experienced by our children.
Journal Entry—28th February. Arising from an informal meeting of the participant group involved in Project Action 2: Personalised Learning Plans on 17th February 2011

Anna had been challenged and criticised by the parent of a child with SEN who had accused her of putting barriers in the way of her child’s inclusion in the class and of being defensive. This child had a statement of SEN and had Prader-Willi syndrome.

The participant was feeling disheartened and undermined despite the fact that our recent data seemed to demonstrate that the situation was not as the parent saw it. I had seen evidence of Anna’s skill and commitment in including this child. In an intuitive way, she seemed to be able to secure an inclusive and happy learning environment for all of the children in her class. This was my interpretation of the data anyway. At this point though, the evidence seemed to have little impact; Anna and her colleague were still in a state of distress and wanting to reflect on the event.

Jane was reflecting on the parent’s criticism and she seemed to be speaking in defence of her colleague when she made the following comment:

‘Well, the problem here is that for medical conditions we just do not have the training. Like Prader-Willi—we are not doctors but equally, with say Kirsty [a child with very challenging behaviour in Anna’s class] we don’t even know what she has got so we can’t even look that up in a book!’

When I heard this, my emotional reaction was one of shock. I was worried about the effect of such comments on students—how would they ever feel self-efficacious when it came to children with exceptional needs if their mentors were operating with such medical discourses? If I am honest, I was angry with her blatant use of the medical model here but I also remembered McNiff’s message about the process of Action Research; ‘beware of happy endings.’ She’s right; it’s the troubled and troubling times that seem to bring the deepest learning.
On reflection (and following some reading on the issue and some supervisory dialogue), I have come to recognise that Jane was communicating the sense of vulnerability and defencelessness that might come from being framed by others (and inevitably by herself) as inexpert. In comparing teachers to Doctors, Jane may be communicating her experience of feeling like an amateur when it comes to being responsible for children with exceptional needs.

I think this might be the discourse of 'expertism' at work – it seems to be operating very powerfully even when the evidence before us suggests that our expertise as teachers is securing very inclusive outcomes for the our learners.

As our brief meeting progressed and we entered into some rather rough and ready evaluations of Project Action 2 (which I know we are going to have to revisit at some point), the following seemingly disparate arguments were being put forward by both participants. Below, I quote Jane on the left and on the right I paraphrase the argument being put forward by Anna and Jane as they were explaining why the PLPs were difficult to implement in their Early Years Setting. The theory captured on the left represents a general differences position (Lewis and Norwich, 2005) and the other on the right, a unique differences position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Differences</th>
<th>Unique Differences</th>
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<td>‘Well, the problem here is that for medical conditions we just do not have the training. Like with Prader-Willi – we are not Doctor’s but equally, with say K...’ (K is a child who exhibits very challenging behaviour and who is at a significantly earlier stage of development in communication and language than her peers) ‘.....we don’t know what she’s got so we can’t even look this up in a book.’</td>
<td>In our setting, because it’s early years, we just don’t have ability groups. So, really, this means that we don’t think ‘well that child is SEN so they need something different’ but what happens is, the adults know what particular children needs and work on these things all the time. So what we can’t do with students really, is show them good SEN practice because we don’t do that. We try to make sure the learning environment is inclusive for everyone and that every child has their needs met that way.</td>
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As mentioned above, the discourses of expertism seem strongly present and I wonder if Anna and Jane know that they are operating contradicting theories in the way they frame...
themselves as professionals and in the way they might conceptualise inclusive practice (the unique and the general differences position).

It seems to me that their anxieties about SEN centre on feeling inexpert: the discourses of expertism also seem strongly represented and when I look back at the data arising from the early meetings, I realise how these anxieties and feelings of inadequacy have been there from the very beginning. I want to bring these themes to the next meeting of the participant group.

I had bypassed this theme in the meeting on 11th January - actually I ignored it. I think I was trying to force Project Action 2 because of my time scales. I needed an action to implement and evaluate for the sake of my own deadlines. I may have seen this 'negativity' (though I now see it as more than that) as dangerous to the forward movement of the project. However, I think I also had faith in the modus operandi of the project. If these issues were prevalent, we would work with them and get something productive from them. I didn’t fear their present in the operation of Project Action 1, more I feared them as a brake on our implementation of an action we might really learn something from.

I have learned that you should avoid rushing things and be continually conscious of the voice or message that you might be repressing for the sake of your project – it may turn out to be the most relevant and pertinent phenomenon of all!

I am likely to reflect on this in more depth through PRO3, particularly in terms of the discourses I have seen in action, particularly as these are lived out by these participants.
A3.11: Classroom observation data

CODES KEY
Where the inclusive event seems to be largely initiated by students the suffix S is used
Where the inclusive event seems to be largely initiated by other practitioners in the setting the suffix P is used
Where the inclusive event seems to arise as a consequence of the design of the learning environment the suffix L is used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Routines</th>
<th>Personalised Interventions</th>
<th>Affirmation and Positivity</th>
<th>Warmth</th>
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<tr>
<td>RS/RP/RL</td>
<td>PS/PP/PL</td>
<td>AS/AP/AL</td>
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<td>Monitoring children's participation</td>
<td>IS/IP/IL</td>
<td>Voice and ownership for children</td>
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<td>Team work</td>
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<td>Communication and Access</td>
<td>Engaging Activities</td>
<td>Engagement and Response</td>
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<td>Positive Peer Interaction</td>
<td>Parental Involvement</td>
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<td>PeerS/PeerP/PeerL</td>
<td>ParentS/ParentP/ParentL</td>
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Observation notes written up as narrative account (with codes)

Friday 18th November 2011

The class are arriving for the start of the school day. Selina, Holly and Lorna are greeting them and helping them to put their coats, bags, lunchboxes and water bottles in the right place in readiness for the day ahead. *RL WP WS TeamL*

Christopher is drinking water from his water bottle. Selina notices and says ‘Why don’t you save some of that for later? You don’t want to drink it all at once, you want to save some for later don’t you?’ *PP IP WP*

Christopher nods.

One of the children: (to Selina) Do my coat?

Selina: Now, how can you ask me that a bit differently? *WP*

Child: Please can you help me with my coat?

Selina: Of course I can. *WP*

Alice shows Holly a piece of writing she has done and begins to put it away in her tray but Holly calls her back and says ‘Just a minute, come here and tell me all about this story.’ *AP VP* They talk about the story and Holly says ‘So this is a story that you have written out in your best and your
neatest writing. That will really help you with your writing won’t it? Now, look at how neatly this writing is done. I think you definitely deserve a sticker don’t you?’ AP IP VP

Christopher is sitting at a table reading a book that has a title something like ‘Dirty Bertie’ and Selina asks him ‘Ooh, you are reading about Dirty Bertie. Tell me what he is doing?’ PA

Christopher and Selina talk about the book for a while. PA PW

A little later Selina is talking with another child about a book he has been reading. She says ‘Show me if you can read this?’ The boy reads many of the words and Selina says ‘Well done, you’ve read lots of them.’ AP WP

Christopher is talking to Lorna about something that seems to be on his mind and Lorna says ‘Okay, okey, dokey’ and he moves off seeming to be satisfied with what he has heard. WP

A group of girls are by the role-play corner. This is designed to be a dark place with its title being ‘Step into the dark.’ There are some pictures of owls in this area and two girls are talking about these and pointing to the pictures. IL

Selina reminds the children that if they need the toilet, it is best to go now so that they can start the day properly together. RP

Lorna and Lucy are talking about the writing she has done at home and Lorna says ‘Wow, you have done all that already!’ AS IS VS

Christopher complains that Georgie has taken his book. Selina says ‘Well, let’s see if we can share it shall we?’ PeerP. Georgie says that is okay but Christopher decides to go and get another book anyway. Selina says ‘Okay Christopher, you want another book so that is fine. Well done.’ PeerP AP PP

Lorna is getting the whiteboards ready for the phonics session she is about to lead and Holly asks her if she would like her to do the register to which Lorna replies ‘Yes please’ Lorna continues to get some materials ready as Holly leads the register. TW TeamS

Holly addresses the class

Holly: Okay everyone, please come and sit on the carpet and put all of those books away so that we can have register. That’s it, carry those books carefully because that is one of our light and dark books. RP

Harrison: Can I go to the toilet?

Holly: Yes but please hurry up Harrison because we are just about to start our register. Okay....Jo....please turn around and sit on your bottom. MP

Selina: Do you remember all that lovely sitting we did yesterday? Ellie May, do you remember? (The children sit up straight) MP AP

Holly takes the register and also makes a note of the children have made their journey to school this morning and home last night. So Ellie May, that’s walk car, walk car. Lucy, that’s walk walk,
walk walk for you. Holly accepts any corrections that the children make on her understanding of the journey. WP

Lesley arrives in the class and Selina and Angela talk to her about a task she has been asked to do this morning. Angela and Selina agree that Selina will help her to get started with it. TeamL

Holly counts how many children are having hot dinners and Dominic is chosen to take the dinner numbers and envelope to the office. He looks pleased.

At this point, Lorna leads the class:

Lorna: Okay everyone, if you can get your whiteboards and pens please.'

The children do this quickly, gathering the materials from some plastic boxes. They seem to know the routine and they gather on the carpet facing the IWB. RL

Lorna: Okay, when you are sitting down I would like you to have a go at writing those tricky words was and you. Remember that was has no o s'

Taylor: It is an ‘a’ EnS

Lorna: Yes it is, well done Taylor, well done AS

Sam: Mrs Payne – I have found a piece of paper on the floor IL

Lorna: Okay Sam, please put it away. WS

Some of the children are sitting at a table with Holly whilst the others (the majority) are sitting on the carpet. Dominic is in the group sitting at the table.

Lorna: Mrs Love, I think that Ellie May can actually sit on the carpet so Dominic, you can sit where Ellie May normally sits, okay? PS

While all of the children have a go at the tricky words was and you, Holly helps the children in her group. There are four children in this group at this point. They have their whiteboards and pens.

Holly: Okay, so you have got the w-a-s (she sounds each letter) so it is a w-a-s with an ‘ssss’ on the end. It is a tricky word because it does not sound how it is spelt. So write it down for me. CP

Dominic is writing a ‘w’ while Holly is supporting another child. She looks at Dominic and sounds out w-a-s and he writes the word successfully. PP EnP

Holly: Okay Dominic, you can have a go at writing ‘come’ and that is a word that you will just have to remember because it is not spelt how it sounds. I want you to try and write that down. CP

Meanwhile, Lorna is welcoming some late arrivals and one of these is Sam. WS Lorna asks her to come and sit with the group and ‘sit just like Christopher is sitting.’ RS

Dominic has written ‘com’ on his board. This word is now displayed on the IWB. He notices that his e is missing and adds it so he has now written ‘come.’ EnS
The word 'some' is also displayed and Lorna asks 'So what is this one here?' and everyone including Dominic says 'some' EnS

Holly: Sam, please get yourself a board and sit with me, bring it round and sit with me. MP

As Sam is joining her Holly says 'Christopher, you are doing ever so well. Good boy!' AP

Lorna begins to clap in rhythm and this is the sign for the class to stop, look and listen. RS

Lorna: Okay, put your pens down everyone.

Holly: Christopher, can you see okay? (Christopher Nods) Right, everyone look at the board. MP PP

The class are all looking at the IWB and it is clear that they are about to play an interactive game called 'buried treasure.' The children must identify where words are real words and where they are nonsense words.

The first word is 'from' and Lorna asks the class whether this is or is not a word? Everyone says yes and puts their thumbs up. EnS

The next word is 'snill' and Lorna says 'Is snill a word — Charlie doesn't think so'

The next word is 'sted' and everyone in Holly's group thinks that sted is a word. Sam says that it means you sted. EnS There seems to be a similar debate among the other children EnS and Lorna says 'Instead is a word but sted on its own is not' CS

The next word is 'trab' and Dominic immediately responds with a 'No' but Sam thinks it is a word. EnS Holly discusses this with her to help her understand. PP

The next word is 'plub' and Dominic can't decide and eventually goes for a thumbs down although he seems to look for clues from Holly to help him decide. EnS

The next word is 'frog' and Sam and Dominic are confident as they say 'Yes, it is a word. EnS For 'Frob' Dominic puts his thumb down straight away. EnS

Lorna: Right, now we are going to write some sentences. Quiet please. I would like quiet please Ellie May. Quiet please.....thank you. WS Right, let us look at the board together.

On the IWB the sentence displayed is 'We put the tent next to the pond'. Dominic reads it mouthing loosely but Sam seems to be struggling with it. EnS

Dominic thinks for a minute and then says 'Well, why would you put a tent next to a pond when you know it might fall over and in it?' EnS VL

Holly: Christopher, can you write 'We' now Christopher?

Dominic writes 'We' but his 'e' looks more like a 'Y'. He looks and listens and EnS. Holly moves Christopher to sit a bit closer to her. MP PP 'Come and sit here Christopher because it's a bit awkward for you where you are.' WP
Dominic is looking at another boy’s writing and then writes himself. After a while he has written ‘We put the pyte’ EnS

Sam has written ‘Wee a’ EnS

Lorna: Is everyone now looking at the board? Everyone should stop what they are doing and let’s look at the board for the next one. CS

Everyone is looking at the IWB EnS but Sam says she can’t see so Holly reads it with her. PP. The class read the sentence ‘He put the milk in the sink’ and Dominic also mouths it loosely. EnS

Holly: So, we start with ‘He’ and we can all write ‘he’ on this table. Christopher, you write ‘He’ CP

Dominic writes ‘He’ EnP

Holly: Now, Sam, I want you to try to write this word from your own mind so don’t copy, have a good think about it.’ IP

Dominic has written ‘He’ and he looks at Holly and then writes ‘u’ EnS

Holly: Well done Charlie. AP

After looking at some other children’s work, Dominic adds a ‘t’ to make ‘He put’ and then he mouths ‘he put the milk in the sink’ to himself. EnP

One boy in the group says ‘I can’t do it.’ Meanwhile, Sam has written ‘He p’ EnS

Dominic hears the instruction from Lorna ‘Lids on pens’ and wipes his board clean. EnS He wraps his pen up neatly in the cloth and puts the boards in the box along with the other children. RL

Lorna: Okay, let’s sit down. CS

Holly: Oliver, Max and Tia, sit down please. MS

Lorna: Everyone needs to see the board so you all need to be facing it over there? MS

Lorna notices that Kasim can’t see the board and that Ethan is squashed so she moves them. MS She reminds the children of the story they have been reading ‘The owl who was afraid of the dark’

One of the children: Are we going to do some writing? EnS

Lorna: Yes we are. So, what was the little owl called?

The children all remember it was Plop. EnS

Lorna recounts the beginning of the story and asks the children to recall what the little boy told Plop about the dark: that it was exciting. Sam puts her hand up and says that she is going to her Nanna and Grandad’s EnS.

Lorna: That is lovely Sam but let’s have a look at this book. WS, Can anyone remember? Why was the dark kind?

Sam: Because it doesn’t do nothing to you and it won’t hurt you. EnS.
Lorna: Yes, but the old lady said it was because she could forget that she was old.

Sam: I am scared about the dark too. EnS

Lorna: Oh, and we can talk all about that later. Do you remember that the little girl said that the dark was necessary? Why was the dark necessary?

Sam: It is because it cannot do nothing to you and it can’t hurt you and there are no monsters and it is kind.

Lorna: Yes, you are right but that is not what the little girl said

Lorna and the children explore why dark is necessary for a while. While they are looking at pictures one of the children says ‘I can see a moon in that picture.’ EnS

Lorna: So why was the dark wonderful according to the man? CS

Georgia: Because you could see all the fireworks and that is good EnS

Lorna: But what is the man doing?

Class: It is a telescope. EnS

Lorna: Yes, and he is looking at the stars. Now one more, what does the cat say? CS

Sam: I can’t see

Lorna: Okay, so we are going to look at the board and talk about WALT and WILF

On the whiteboard the following is presented

WALT: To retell a story in the correct order by writing a diary in our own words

WILF: Children who can write independently to communicate meaning.

Another IWB slide is shared and it records Plop’s week as follows:

Plop met the small boy who said that dark is exciting

Plop met the lady who said that dark is kind

Plop met the boy who said dark was fun.

Dominic is mouthing the words as he reads them. EnS Sam is following her friend’s mouthing. EnS

Sam begins to complain that she is thirsty but Lorna explains that she cannot have a drink now because it is work time.

Lorna explains that they are going to think about the story from Plop’s point of view. Holly takes the part of Plop as follows: ES Team CS

Lorna: Hello Plop

Holly: Hello:
Lorna: What did you do on Monday?

Plop: I told my mummy that I was a little bit scared of the dark and to go and talk to other people about it and then I met a little boy.

Lorna: What did he say?

Holly: It was exciting and he told me why. It was because of the pretty and magical fireworks.

And so on......

Following this demonstration, Lorna introduces a pair talk task. The children are asked to think of the story from Plop's point of view. One of the pair must take the part of Plop and tell the other about the things that have happened on Monday, Tuesday and so on. The other must ask Plop questions. ES CS

Sam: Can I have a drink after this bit?

Lorna: No

Dominic is rubbing his eyes during the explanation of the task and he yawns.

The children engage in the task. EnS VS They swap partners three times, swapping roles too. Holly and Lorna make sure that everyone has a partner and at one point, Team MP Lorna notices Dominic on his own and says 'Dominic, you can talk to me.' MS The process takes about 5 minutes. Sam and her first partner have a disagreement about who is going to be Plop but this is resolved by Lorna and Sam PeerTeam and Dominic appear to engage in the task actively throughout. EnS VS

Lorna: Okay, everyone sit down please. Lorna explains that we could have written all this in a diary and an example of Plop's diary is on the IWB. CS Sam complains that she can't see so Holly instructs her to go and sit behind Kirsty. When she has done this, Holly says 'Good Girl' MP AP

Lorna: Okay, so what would Plop say on Monday? He would say 'I met the boy who said......' (the class are being noisy at this point so Lorna waits for quiet). MS Sam says the word 'wonderful' several times with her hand up. EnS

Lorna: Now, Sam says he met the boy who said that dark was wonderful. So, I want you to write some diary entries now. Some people are going to write a diary entry about what they did this morning and some are going to write Plop's diary so you are pretending you are Plop. CS ES

Sam, Dominic, Ethan, Charlie, Christopher and Natasha are asked to join Holly. Holly notices that Christopher is gulping down his water and asks him to save some for later. PP

At 9.20, the group are gathered with Holly.

Holly: Now, everyone listening to me because I need to explain. MP

Each child has a set of picture cards that represent things people do in the morning (e.g. brushing teeth). The children must sequence these in the order they do them each morning. CS ES
Christopher is finding it a bit difficult to sort so Holly helps out but Sam and Dominic both have those in order. She says ‘Well done Sam’.

Holly shows the children some sentences that Mrs Payne has written. These are sentences that describe what happens in the picture such as ‘I woke up and got out of bed.’

Holly and the children read the first sentence through and Holly explains that this might be the first sentence that they would write in their literacy book. She says ‘If you wanted more detail you might write ‘I woke up at half past seven.’

The children are successful in reading all of the other sentences. Holly gives out the literacy books and pencils.

At this point Nicola (the TA supporting Christopher) arrives and Holly explains where they are up to in the task.

Dominic turns to the first page in his book. Sam and Dominic write the date. Holly helps Sam to get started with her first sentence.

Dominic, with regular support from Holly completes the task and at the end has written:

- I got up.
- I had choc wit fu n mi p. (I had chocolate Weetabix for my breakfast)
- I got dresed.
- I vs mi tf. (I washed my teeth)
- I gt red pr ue gfs (I got ready for school)

Holly helped him to sound out each word and keep going. He seemed to need a lot of time to think and watch and work out how to write what he wanted to write. He seemed to be able to pick a lot up from watching and listening to the other children as they worked alone or with adults.

Sam had written:

- I wt wt (I woke up)
- I a shgrpufs (I had sugar puffs)
I got dressed.

EnP x 4 (see fieldwork journal)

VP

Holly helped Sam to sound out the words and encouraged her to keep going by asking questions like ‘Okay Sam, where are we up to, what sentence do we need to write. PP x 6 (notes in field journal)

Lorna claps to signal that it is time for everyone to listen. RS

**Lorna:** I would like you to know that I have been so pleased today by the work I have seen. AS Charlie Powell, you have done so much work today. AS

While Lorna is giving this feedback, Hannah helps Dominic and Sam to finish their final sentences. PP Sam shows Lorna her work and Lorna responds with ‘Well done Sam, that is brilliant’ AS WS

Dominic spends a few last minutes writing. EnP IL

**Lorna:** Right, I want you to (Natalie is showing Lorna her work or trying to tell her something) Good girl Natalie AP, but I was talking. I am really pleased with your work today so if you could put your books down on the table and make sure that your names are on your work. AP RS WP

As the children are dismissed, Selina, Holly and Lorna give them positive feedback. AP Dominic is showing Selina his work and she praises him. AP Sam is showing Lorna her sticker chart and how well she is doing with it. AP WP

Sam is complaining about being thirsty and Selina makes sure she has a cup she can borrow so she can have a drink. PP WP

**End of observation:** 10.40
A3.12: Example of respondent validation

Participant Feedback and Reflection: Focus on Personalised Learning Plans (PLPs)

Research Facilitator

9th February

NAME: Anna

Are you happy for the data to be shared with the rest of the participant group and posted on the website (which is heavily password protected)? YES/NO

(NB: all names will be replaced with pseudonyms at the sharing stage)

Our key questions were:

- To what extent does the PLP process bring positive outcomes for students and children in terms of inclusion and inclusive practice for children with special and/or additional needs?
- To what extent are students and mentors working together in applying the PLP?
- What can we learn from this data about developing the effectiveness of PLPs?

Please consider the data and record any reflections below. You can also annotate the data with thoughts and questions if you wish, and return that to me as part of your reflection.

To say that I 'long' for a class like [Student's name]'s was slightly the wrong impression I gave. I just felt that time out for 5 mins in another class was a ‘relief’ or escape from a very demanding class.

I think the PLPs for [Student's name] have been work in top of work. We have targeted 3 children with needs but in EYs these needs are spread over more than 3 children. The activities are suited for all children and are already differentiated to meet groups of ability where more than 3 children fit.
A3.13: Developing the criteria for inclusive practice (extract of process)
The criteria were developed through mapping what events in the classroom observation data were identified by the participating group as ‘inclusive’ and then linking these to the values and aspirations we had already voiced.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORIGINS OF CRITERION</th>
<th>Illustration of category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Potential Connections to themes arising in participant group’s statements of shared values, aims, aspirations and conceptions of inclusive practitioners/practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITERION DEVELOPED FROM GROUP’S ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF OBSERVATION DATA</th>
<th>Values</th>
<th>Aspirations</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ROUTINES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom routines and the physical environment (e.g. Register, class jobs, snack time and displays) are designed to promote security in children, independence and equal opportunities</td>
<td>Inclusion isn’t just about SEN Children should be at the heart of our practice</td>
<td>‘The children hang up their coats, put their lunch boxes and bottles in the right place and gather on the carpet in readiness for register.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONALISED INTERVENTIONS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Individualised interventions occur and imply knowledge of children’s individual needs</td>
<td>Thinking beyond labels</td>
<td>Students learning to personalise assessment, planning and teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>WARMTH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Warmth, humour, openness and positive interaction between children and adults is a feature of the learning environment</td>
<td>Loving children, warmth</td>
<td>Inclusion isn’t just about SEN Children should be at the heart of our practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A3.14: Sample transcript

Transcript of Conversation: Participants experiences of working with personalized learning plans

21/01/2011
13:33pm

Conversation with mentors/class teachers who are participants in the project
This took place at the end of the second week of the block practice

Prior to the conversation, the research facilitator reviewed the chosen focus of this action and confirmed with the participants that this was still where they wanted to focus their attention (given that the PLP was something designed and imposed by the university, albeit designed by other mentors). The participants confirmed that the PLPs still felt like an important and useful focus that fitted in well with the overall aims of our project. The PLP was a good idea in theory and one they wanted to look at.

Anna
...how I use my TAs more...

Debs
...yeah, I've started recording now 'cos we've started talking about PLPs

Anna
...yeah, OK'
Yeah, that's fine... because I had to 'cos I was going to give to Claire a, a specific child but then we decided that the child I was going to give her was an extreme so while we were going to do this child I then thought well 'am I using the TAs, the TA in the best way that I can?' So it has made me stop and think about how I'm supporting the child in the class which is a good thing, isn't it, really?

Jane
Mmm, mmm it is a good thing.

Anna
But having said that we've taken that child out of the PLPs now anyway

Debs
Yes, okay, so in thinking through which children to focus...

Jane
...best benefit

Debs
...best benefit, it made you re-evaluate your allocation of the adults

Jane and Anna
Mmm, yes, mmm

Debs
Yes, okay.... Have there been any effects on, on your practice d'you feel Jane?

Jane
Mmm, well I think, well obviously, Elizabeth chose who she was going to focus on and she was very quick on deciding and sort of, you know, voicing that with me and saying, you know, I think that I, I can do this, ummm... and all she's done is that she's taken on small groups and you know I think that because she started that, that is something that I will definitely carry on with, and we were just talking today because she was saying that she was reading through her PLP information and she said, you know, in some respects she didn't feel that it was always easy with Early years to directly involve them in, um, what their targets were, or the best way to do that and I said, well maybe if you give the little group that you've chosen a name, something, I mean we were just talking and said about the clever crabs because obviously, what she's
focusing on is fine motor control so she’s been doing a lot of that work with them and I said, if you call them that and say that they’re coming, I mean to this group, so, so that they can get really good at making these sorts of movements with their hands and then with their pencil, because we do say to them, you know, ‘pinch your pencil’, this sort of thing, um, I said, in, you shared that with them, they understand why they’re coming and what, what the purpose is but without being too target focused if you know what I mean

Debs    Yeah, so,

Jane    too wordy...

Debs    ...in a way though the voice of the child is hard to capture...

Jane    Yes

Debs    You can still be respectful to them...

Jane    ...of course you can....

Debs    saying...

Jane    yeah

Debs    By telling them about the purpose and why they are there

Jane    Yes, I think they’ve got to know because, but I think you’ve got to find the right language to use to explain to them what it is. I think it’s very hard even when we write, sort of, IEPs, I mean I’m struggling now with it, and it’s like, as you say (looking at Anna) if you pick an extreme child for one of these PLPs, um, its hard to narrow down what your specific focus needs to be.

Debs    Yeah

Jane    So by picking, like obviously she’s picked fine motor control, she’s picked um, you know, sort of speech and language development for another group, um, you know what your focus is, and rather than having too big a, too big a goal
## Analysis of Transcripts; 21st January 2011 - Frequency of theme arising in conversations

First iteration - black  
Second iteration - red (additions and corrections)  
Third iteration - green

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Claire (Student)</th>
<th>Elizabeth (Student)</th>
<th>Anna (Class teacher and Mentor)</th>
<th>Jane (Class teacher and mentor)</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grouping children with similar needs/learning targets as pupils selected for PLPs together for teaching inputs/learning activities (e.g. fine motor skills)</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork used to implement PLPs (specifically, Michelle)</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Description of reason for choice</td>
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<td>A feeling of making progress with implementing the PLPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>A feeling of not getting anywhere yet because of time pressures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors talking about students time pressures</td>
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<td>Mentors talking about time pressures in their general work</td>
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<td>Student seeming to be struggling to understand how she was going to provide differentiation in this setting and feeling anxious about it</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student implying that she needed more guidance and support in organising the timetable and in planning things</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Inclusion of PLP targets into whole class teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student thinking about how to integrate PLP targets into ongoing activity planned for the whole class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student stating that other children benefit from the personalised approaches and interventions planned for a pupil with a PLP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student explaining that providing personalisation in the context of the class, rather than through withdrawing specific groups, is more manageable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors commenting on insufficient induction time/time on placement for students as a limiting factor in their progress in personalised learning</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors commenting on the lack of priority given to mentoring as a whole</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors using the term ‘extreme’ when describing children’s SENs</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors using the term ‘norm’ or ‘normal class’</td>
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<tr>
<td>The PLP process being difficult to implement in the Early Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explaining to children what their targets are and why these are relevant to them</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticising university expectations and the impact on students’ workload</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors describing the pressures of their own workload</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme</td>
<td>Claire (Student)</td>
<td>Elizabeth (Student)</td>
<td>Anna (Class Teacher and Mentor)</td>
<td>Jane (Class Teacher and mentor)</td>
<td>TOTAL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors describing the tacit, unrecorded nature of their own</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>management of personalisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noting that targets for personalised learning evolve and</td>
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<tr>
<td>cannot be fixed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mentors expressing guilt that they were not giving their students</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>enough time or support</td>
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<td>Believing in the PLP as a good idea</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDICES B - FINDINGS

4.0a: What developed during the placement?
4.0b: Classroom observation data
4.1.1: Workload and conflicting priorities
4.1.2: The challenges and dilemmas involved in responding to diverse learners
4.1.3: Self-efficacy and professional adequacy for SEND

4.2.1: Conceptualisations of SEND
4.2.2: Conceptualisations of Inclusive Practice
4.2.3: Labels and Labeling
4.2.4: Conceptualisations of pedagogy for SEND

4.3.1: Having a positive impact on pupils
4.3.2: Personalised Learning Planning (PLP)
4.3.3: Lesson Study
4.3.4: Experiencing diverse learners in diverse contexts
4.3.5: Evidence of positive impact

4.4.1: Working with teaching assistants
4.4.2: Team work and collaboration
4.4.3: Special characteristics of the placement school
4.0a: What developed?

**FINDINGS TABLE 4.0a:** Developments experienced by participating school staff during the project and by students during their placements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-theme A - Professional adequacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1/26. Mentors communicating feeling less inadequate, amateur and inexpert in the area of SEN and inclusive practice because of the IAR</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/26a. Mentors reporting greater awareness of the wider political context for inclusive practices because of the IAR</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27. Mentors/teachers/teaching assistants finding affirmation in the data and a new appreciation of their investment, professional dedication and skill in meeting the needs of children.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 mentors whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/27a. Mentors/teachers/teaching assistants/students developing a more explicit understanding of the practices that they would conceptualise as inclusive as a consequence of the IAR process.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 mentor 1 class teacher 1 TA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

48 single occurrences across 7 research events among 6 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

| **Subtheme B - Confidence and self-efficacy for SEND and inclusive practices** | | | | | | | | |
| 1/32. The student experienced improved confidence and self-efficacy to personalise for children (including those with SENDs) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 5 | Whole group 3 mentors 5 students | 8 | 26 | 4 | 8 w |
| 1/34. The student did not experience improved confidence and self-efficacy to personalise for children. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4/28. Awareness of SEN, differentiation and inclusion has developed but it is unclear whether personal professional confidence has developed too. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 student | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

27 single occurrences across 4 research events among 7 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtheme C - Skills to support personalised responses to all children</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/30. Learning to personalise was a positive experience.</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1/31. An improved ability to personalise for children (including those with SENDs) in the placement class was experienced by the student and/or noted by others.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/34. By the end of the placement, children’s needs were being met by students and provision was personalised for the whole class. Students came to trust their judgement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/40. Student describing needs precisely and giving examples of related provisions and impact.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/41. Student not describing needs precisely and giving examples</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 single occurrences across 11 research events among 11 participants</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Subtheme D - Insights and new awareness | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2/30. That the peer group needs to be positive and accepting of children who have extreme needs. | 2 | 1 | Whole group | w | 6 | 1 | 2 TA | 2 | 8 | 2 | 2 | w |
| 2/34. The student learned that it was important to balance affirmation with high expectations. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 2 students | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 2/34. The student learned that warmth and affirmation was an important feature of being inclusive. | 1 | 1 | 1 mentor | 1 | 7 | 2 | 3 students | 1 mentor | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| 1/47. (2) Students learning that differentiation is not only an issue for SEN but for all children | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 1 student | 1 mentor | 2 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 1/48. (2) Students learning that differentiation is not just about groups but must sometimes go to an individual level. | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2 | 2 mentor | 2 TA | 1 student | 5 | 5 | 2 | 5 |
### SUBTHEME UNIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/45.</td>
<td>1/1/1 student</td>
<td>1/1/1 student</td>
<td>1/2/2 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/16.</td>
<td>1/1/1 student</td>
<td>8/1/2 students</td>
<td>9/2/3 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/18.</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>4/2/2 students</td>
<td>4/4/2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/30.</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>6/2/1 student</td>
<td>6/6/1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19.</td>
<td>0/0/0</td>
<td>6/1/1 student</td>
<td>6/6/1 student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54 single occurrences across 3 research events among 5 participants.

### Subtheme E - Positive impact on children

1/35. The children that were chosen for the PLPs were included.  
2/1/1 mentor 1 student  
1/7/7 students 2 mentors 1 class teacher  
1/10/10 19/5/12

1/34. By the end of the placement, children's needs were being met by students and provision was personalised for the whole class. Students came to trust their judgement.  
1/1/1 student  
1/24/4 students 2 TA Whole group SLT  
1/8/8 25/5/9 w

1/36. Tangible evidence of the progress children selected for the PLP had made was evident.  
1/1/1 mentor  
1/28/4 Whole group 6 students 4 mentors  
1/10/10 29/5/11 w

1/37. One child chosen for the PLP developed confidence because of the 1:1 attention she got with her reading but the other two were absent for much

1/0/0 0/1/1 mentor
The data included in this table implies development across a number of areas as follows, though it is important to note that these developments were illustrated in wider variety across the corpus data.

### Subtheme A - Professional adequacy

**Prevalence** - 48 single occurrences across 7 research events among 6 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

Five school staff (Jane, Anna, Pam, Charlotte, and Cerys) and others (in the context of whole group meetings) describe an experience of being affirmed by the data in relation to their classroom practice and/or their impact on the development of student teachers. [1/27]. Jane and Anna (mentors) regularly describe the positive impact that the project has had on their sense of professional adequacy for SEND and inclusive practices [1/26]. Jane, Anna and Elaine (mentors) express a growing awareness of the political context for SEND and inclusive practice, particularly in terms of labels and conditions as strategies to secure additional resources. This issue is further discussed in Table 4.2.3 (Labelling). Frequently present in the corpus data relating to school staff, is evidence that a more explicit understanding of what it means to practice inclusively has developed among participating school staff [1/27a].

#### Example from Data. Extract from respondent validated systematic evaluation of project action 1 with Jane (mentor) on 5th April, 2011 (during phase 1). Jane is reflecting on data capturing her simultaneous use of the general differences position and the unique differences position.

'What is a worry to teachers is that when you've got thirty children and one who as a label, you are pushed anyway and you find yourself believing that if you knew more about Down Syndrome or whatever, you would do a better job because you wouldn't be an amateur anymore. You always feel that you don't know enough and you are not doing enough. I think that the government and the media put out messages that erode our professional status. This means that we don't always trust our own judgement and that parents and experts believe that they know better than you. You can end up believing that too. ... ... I must say thought that the research process and the data that we have seen has made me more aware of all this going on. I tend to believe now that I should have much more confidence in myself and my professional skill.' [Phenomena 1/26, 1/26sa]

### Subtheme B - Confidence and self-efficacy for SEND and inclusive practices

**Prevalence** - 27 single occurrences across 4 research events among 7 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions

During phase 2, 1 PGCE student (Lorna) and 4 undergraduate students (Lily, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn) made direct reference to positive developments in their confidence and self-efficacy for making personalised responses to children, including those with SEND. [1/32]. Lorna (PGCE) seems to attribute this development to this particular placement school but undergraduate students seem more likely to see this placement as building on and adding to previous experience (see Table 4.4.4 – diverse placement experiences) but 5 out of 6 of them made reference to the specific and special opportunities offered by this school (see Table 4.4.5 – special characteristics of the placement school). Across the corpus data, there is no evidence of a total
absence of development for any student or member of school staff [1/33] and all participants provide some description of forward movement. However, 1 PGCE student (Abigail) is distinctive in believing that though the placement experience developed her awareness of SEND and inclusive practices, it did not necessarily develop her confidence [4/28].

In the case of Lorna, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn, the claims made by students about gains in their confidence and self-efficacy are supported by their mentors in data collected in separate forums. This may serve to add weight to their claims: [1/31, 1/34]. The evidence presented and discussed in Table 4.0b (classroom observation data) adds further weight to the claim that students did seem to apply inclusive practices as an expression of their developing skill in this area.

Example from Data. Extract from transcribed conversation with Lisa (undergraduate student) on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2). Lisa is talking about her level of confidence for SEND in the future.

‘Debs - you’re nearly there now aren’t you? Third year of four years you’ll have your own class, when it comes to being inclusive and having children with special needs you might work with in the future how do you feel about that? Do you feel confident; do you feel you know…?’

Lisa - Yeah, I do feel more confident than I did previously. You know, having that extra experience of a different range of needs in a classroom and having the support network of other members of staff and things around you. Um, it’s built my knowledge of both special needs and inclusion so it, I do feel a lot more confident in applying that.” [Subtheme 1/32]

Subtheme C - Skills to support personalised responses to all children (including those with SEND)

Prevalence - 71 single occurrences across 11 research events among 11 participants and in some whole group discussions.

During phase 2, all students were describing an improved skill in making appropriate personalised responses to all children and this was confirmed by school staff (Selina, Sascha, Elaine, Allison) and by other participants in whole group meetings. [1/31, 1/34]. In a similar vein, 5 of the 6 students in phase 2 and one of the 2 students in phase 1 were able to describe the needs of particular children very precisely and give examples of the related provision they had made with reference to Impact. [1/40, 1/41]. 1 PGCE student [Abigail] was distinctive in not making any reference to this.

Example from Data. Extract from conversation with Karina on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2). Karina is reflecting on the progress made by one of the children she selected to write a PLP for (Betty):

‘Debs - So tell me about the three children and where you feel they’d got to?

Karina - when she first started, she would go to the white board constantly or she would play outside in the book corner but she would just sit alone. Now she is quite happy to go to the creative table, though sometimes we do need to prompt her. We started a system with the whiteboard where, if they wanted to go to the whiteboard they would choose their lollypop stick, then have their go at drawing a picture and then that is their turn over until the rest of the session. Otherwise, Betty would have pushed in front of the other children to get longer on the whiteboard and then stay there for the whole session. So it was nice to see her more socially integrated with the class and I think that talk partners were another thing as well because we got talking on the carpet, telling them to sit next to different people each session so as to get different relationships with different people in the class. I think I have learned to be much more flexible about how to help individual children through changing the way I do things for the whole class and I think this will help me in the future.

[Subtheme 1/40]

Subtheme D - Insights and new awareness

Prevalence - 54 single occurrences across 3 research events among 5 participants. Across the corpus data, students give account of the particular insights they have gained as a consequence of this placement. For example, both PGCE students had come to realise that differentiation was not only about SEND or groups but was an issue for all children [1/47, 1/48]. The specific lessons learned seem different for individual students. For example, 1 undergraduate student from phase 1 (Elizabeth) and 2 students from phase 2 (Karina and Abigail) had learned how to work in a team to secure continuity of experience for children. These students had made a connection between inclusive practice and teamwork. This insight has been gained by other students but is more fully evidenced in Table 4.4.1 (working with teaching assistants) and 4.4.2 (teamwork and collaboration). Other students had gained new insights into relationship between continuity of experience and parental involvement. [4/18]. Abigail (PGCE student) had learned about the importance of the peer group in providing inclusive experiences for children with SEND. [2/30]. Abigail also believed that her mentor had learned from the process of collaborating with her about the PLP for one of the pupils in the class with SEND (Sophie) but there is no corroboration from the mentor on this in the data [4/19].

Example from Data. Extract from transcribed conversation with Kathryn (undergraduate student) on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2). Kathryn is reflecting on what she has learned about team work and its connection to continuity of experience for children.

‘Debs - What happened as a result of this team-work for you, for the children, what’s the impact of it do you think?
Kathryn - It scared me to begin with, it terrified me! But the children - it was as if they always have somebody to go to, I think that was nice and everyone knew what they were doing so it wasn't like the classroom was fragmented like it can be sometimes. All the adults knew what they were doing, all the children knew what adults were doing. I think it may have helped made their learning more maybe continuous in a way, I don't know if that makes sense? [Subtheme 4/16]

Subtheme E - Positive Impact on children

Prevalence - 84 single occurrences across 5 research events among 10 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions of the 6 students in phase 2 and 1 of the 2 students in phase 1 communicated an increasing trust in their own judgement. Though many signalled room for improvement (Lorna, Kathryn, Lisa and Karina), they claimed that children's needs were being met within the context of the whole class. [1/34]. This seems to have been supported by tangible evidence that the children selected for the PLP had progressed. [1/36]. School staff also claimed that students had ended the placement being able to meet children's needs [Sascha and Selina - TAs; Jane, Veronica, Elaine, - mentors, Charlotte - class teacher, Pam - SLT and SENCO) [1/34. 1/36]. The classroom observation data seems to give further strength to this claim as is discussed in Table, 4.0b. During phase 2, 3 students (Karina, Lisa and Kathryn) claimed that the teaching team were continuing to work with some of the strategies they had developed. In the case of Lisa, Jane (her mentor) confirmed this in a separate forum.

Example from Data. Extract from respondent validated systematic evaluation of project action 1 with Elizabeth (undergraduate student) on 30th March, 2011 (during phase 1). Elizabeth is talking about her reflections on the data arising from observations in her classroom and what it reveals about her skills in personalising learning.

'I can see that this is happening often when I look at the data. An example of this is where I am changing questions to support individual children; in making the question more scaffolded or easy to access (This happened with William and Marianne). For the pupils who were chosen for my PLPs, I accommodated their targets into my whole class teaching. For example, in praising Katy for her 'nice loud voice' and facilitating her speaking. Though I was doing this specifically for the PLP children at the beginning, I realised that these approaches were relevant to many children and I got a better sense of personalising for the whole class.'

Discussion and Implications

Taken together, the data presented here provides strong evidence to support the claim that students placed in the school and the participating school staff did experience significant development in the area of SEND and inclusive practice during the course of the project. For participating school staff, it was confidence and a sense of professional adequacy that seemed to have developed. For students, it was self-efficacy, skill and confidence for SEND and inclusive practices that had moved forward. Though one PGCE student (Abigail) did not leave the placement with the 'confidence' that she was ready for SEND, all other students described themselves as more confident and prepared for diverse learners, including those with SEND.

With evidence of development established, the wider corpus data can be analysed to support theorising about what conditions, processes and activities might have contributed to this development, this being the central question posed by the study. The data presented and analysed in the tables that follow casts light on the factors involved.
### FINDINGS - TABLE 4.0b - Criteria for Inclusive practice and the frequency of their application in practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion for inclusive practice (designed by the participant group during phase 1)</th>
<th>Events mainly initiated by student</th>
<th>Events mainly initiated by other practitioners (TA and teachers)</th>
<th>Events mainly occurring as a result of the design of the learning environment</th>
<th>TOTAL inclusive events within this category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Routines</strong>&lt;br&gt;Classroom routines and the physical environment are designed to promote security in children, independence and equal opportunities.</td>
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<td><strong>Personalised Interventions</strong>&lt;br&gt;Individualised interventions occur and imply knowledge of children’s individual needs (e.g. PLP targets, individual learning goals, emotional needs, interests)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Affirmation and Positivity</strong>&lt;br&gt;Positive interaction, affirmation and rewards are used meaningfully (meaningfully since they seek to promote progress, positive learning dispositions and positive relationships)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Warmth</strong>&lt;br&gt;Warmth, humour, openness and positive interaction between children and adults is a feature of the learning environment.</td>
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<td><strong>Monitoring children’s participation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Practitioners monitor who is involved and who is not and intervene to promote engagement, a sense of togetherness and equal access.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pupil Independence</strong>&lt;br&gt;Pupil’s independence is enabled and promoted.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

3 But planned activity carried out by TA enabled frequent Personalised support that seemed matched to children’s needs.)
### Criterion for inclusive practice (designed by the participant group during phase 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion for inclusive practice (designed by the participant group during phase 1)</th>
<th>Events mainly initiated by student</th>
<th>Events mainly initiated by other practitioners (TA and teachers)</th>
<th>Events mainly occurring as a result of the design of the learning environment</th>
<th>TOTAL inclusive events within this category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voice and ownership for children</strong>&lt;br&gt;Children are listened to and their choices respected. They can self-direct and operate creativity in the learning environment</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Team work</strong>&lt;br&gt;The teaching team work together to enact the inclusive practices described in these categories.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Communication and Access</strong>&lt;br&gt;Accessible language and resources are used.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging Activities</strong>&lt;br&gt;Activities are planned in a way that might appeal to children and their stages of development.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement and Response</strong>&lt;br&gt;Children are engaged in learning and respond to opportunities to learn.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Interaction</strong>&lt;br&gt;There is positive peer interaction between children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Parental Involvement</strong>&lt;br&gt;The involvement of parents is evident</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTALS</strong></td>
<td>165</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All data was collected in the middle of the students' block practice.
Analysis

Students in Phase 1

- The respondent validated data arising from classroom observations reveals the following:
- Elizabeth initiated 165 inclusive events, with personalized interventions, affirmation and positivity and engagement and response being at relatively high frequency. The design of the learning environment also seemed to result in a relatively high frequency of inclusive events fitting these criteria.
- Claire initiated 112 inclusive events with personalized interventions, engagement and response, teamwork and communication and access being at relatively high frequency. Other practitioners working alongside Claire also initiated personalized interventions, teamwork and engagement and response at a relatively high frequency.
- For both Claire and Elizabeth, the learning environment seemed to support the initiation of independence, engagement and response and affirmation and positivity at a relatively high frequency. Within Claire’s classroom, a total of 305 inclusive events could be identified and within Elizabeth’s classroom, 255 inclusive events could be identified. Parental involvement was relatively absent.

Students in Phase 2

- Abigail initiated 36 inclusive events with affirmation and positivity, communication and access and engagement and response being relatively more prevalent. The total number of inclusive events initiated by Abigail is at lower than for other students but not in all areas (affirmation and positivity, engaging activities, engagement and response). Abigail is the only student not to have had the following criteria identified in her practice – routines, personalized interventions, and warmth and peer interaction. However, other practitioners do initiate personalized interventions at a relatively high frequency. Distinct in Abigail’s classroom, is the presence of negative peer interactions. These arose when children became impatient with Sophie (a child with SEND).
- Karina initiated the highest number of inclusive events in comparison with others. Particularly prevalent were personalized interventions, affirmation and positivity, voice and ownership for children and engagement and response.
- Lorna initiated 61 inclusive events with the most prevalent being engagement and response and communication and access. However, the TA delivering the activity she had planned for a group containing two of her PLP children initiated personalized interventions at a relatively high frequency.
- Lisa initiated 61 inclusive events with affirmation and positivity and engagement and response being relatively prevalent. The design of the learning environment (which in this case involved a role play area based on fairy tales), seemed to support voice and ownership, engagement and response and positive peer interaction at relatively high frequency.
- Kathryn initiated 98 inclusive events, with personalized interventions, affirmation and positivity and engagement and response at a relatively high frequency.

Examples from the data - these extracts arose from observations in Elizabeth and Claire’s classes on 17th and 18th February, 2011 (during phase 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTINES</th>
<th>The children hang up their coats, put their lunch boxes and bottles in the right place and gather on the carpet in readiness for register.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Classroom routines and the physical environment (e.g. Register, class jobs, snack time and displays) are designed to promote security in children, independence and equal opportunities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONALISED INTERVENTIONS</td>
<td>Elizabeth says ‘Good morning Katy’ and Katy replies ‘Good Morning Miss Perry’ says ‘Thank you and well done, a nice loud voice!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualised interventions occur and imply knowledge of children’s individual needs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AFFIRMATION AND POSITIVITY</td>
<td>Elizabeth continues with the story and gets stuck with one of the dinosaur names which she finds hard to pronounce. She asks for Jack’s help and then at another point in the story, asks the children some questions which seemed to be aimed at helping the children to connect with the sequence of events. The interaction went like this; ‘Kiera, where is Harry taking his dinosaurs in his bucket?.....Well done Kiera!.....Molly, where are they visiting?.....That’s right!.....Ashton, where are the dinosaurs going now?.....yes they are!’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive interaction, affirmation and rewards are meaningfully (meaningfully since they seek to promote progress, positive learning dispositions and positive relationships)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARMTH</td>
<td>‘Luke has made a contribution to the discussion and Elizabeth exclaims ‘It looks as if Luke is reading our book already!’ Everyone laughs.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warmth, humour, openness and positive interaction between children and adults is a feature of the learning environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MONITORING</td>
<td>‘Elizabeth says, ‘Have some thinking time.....think about what might happen in the story.....’ Several children raise their hands but Katy doesn’t. Elizabeth asks L ‘What do you think Katy?’ She responds. Then Elizabeth asks individual children to tell her what they think and a range of responses arise.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practitioners monitor who is involved and who is not and intervene to promote engagement, a sense of togetherness and</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Discussion and implications

Even taking into account the different times of day, contexts and purposes of the sessions observed, there is evidence in the data of frequent application of inclusive practices not only by students but also by the practitioners working with them and as a result of the design of the learning environment. Overall, this tends to support the claims that students made about their developing efficacy for inclusive practice. Added to the support that participating school staff give to this claim, there is strengthening evidence for the claim that students did develop in skill during the placement. The data also implies that the school staff were applying the practices that participants had conceived as inclusive. The classroom environments also seemed to perpetuate these criteria for inclusive practice. This points to the position of the students within a school culture where a commitment to meeting the needs of all children was a shared concern. Further data relating to this school culture is explored in Tables 4.1.2, 4.2.3 and 4.4.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUPIL INDEPENDENCE</strong></td>
<td>Independence is enabled and promoted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOICE AND OWNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN</strong></td>
<td>Children are listened to and their choices respected; they are given time and space to make their own unique response; they can self-direct and operate creativity in the learning environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEAM WORK</strong></td>
<td>The teaching team work together to enact the inclusive practices described in these categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION AND ACCESS</strong></td>
<td>Accessible language and resources are used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENGAGING ACTIVITIES</strong></td>
<td>Activities are planned in a way that might appeal to children and their stage of development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ENGAGEMENT AND RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td>Children are engaged and respond</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POSITIVE PEER INTERACTION</strong></td>
<td>There is positive interaction between children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</strong></td>
<td>Involvement of parents is evident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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'Christopher tries to explain that he wants to do something different. 'I want to draw the picture out and around' and after spending some time listening, Claire asks Geraldine 'Can you help Christopher out a minute? He wants to draw round a template and I need to get back to work with the Triangles group.' Following Claire's request, Geraldine asks Christopher to come and sit with her and he does so immediately. He has a picture of a dinosaur with him and Geraldine asks, 'Which dinosaur have you got there?' and Christopher replies 'It's a dinosaur!' Geraldine says 'It's a Tyrannosaurus Rex and he needs a body — can you draw him a body?' Christopher smiles and draws a body on the card and as he does so he nods his understanding. Geraldine sounds impressed when she says 'You see, you don't need a template!' 'James is still engaged in making his dinosaur and he spends a few seconds looking and thinking and says to Geraldine 'I am making the same as that dinosaur' and points. James uses the plasticine and a pencil to make another hole.' 'Geraldine turns to Christopher and asks 'How can we attach the straw to make these go together........so we can make a hole in it and then what are we going to do? Christopher replies enthusiastically with 'Thread it!' and Geraldine says 'You are going to thread it through — good boy!' Geraldine speaks to Anna who is nearby and says 'He knows what he's got to do Mrs 1' and Anna says 'Yes he does, well done Christopher!' 'Slowly, and with a look of surprise, Elizabeth pulls out a book and a set of laminated cards from the box. The book is called ‘Harry and the bucketful of dinosaurs’ and each of the laminated cards has a question printed upon it. One of the questions is “Where is the story set?” and Elizabeth uses blu-tak to display each question on a small whiteboard for everyone to see.’ 'Christopher is still focused on the cutting and is working without adult help with Geraldine at his side. Anna and Geraldine have a discussion about Christopher and Geraldine gestures towards a file she has with her (which seems to contain assessment records). Geraldine and Anna praise Christopher together and affirm his effort and concentration.' 'Elizabeth asks ‘What do you think they do at the library Marianne?’ and Marianne answers ‘They can read some books!’ Elizabeth says ‘Well done, they can read some books!’ 'Christopher and Kirsty then begin to talk. After a while, Christopher cuddles Kirsty and says ‘Why are you crying Kirsty?’ and he touches her face in a loving way and seems to be speaking reassuring words to her that I can’t quite hear saying ‘and then you can……..and after that you can……okay?’ He asks her what she is having for her dinner. She smiles and responds to his questions.’ 'Meanwhile, Jane shows me a home school diary in which Katy’s mother has written that she had come home from school very happy and excited about getting a golden ticket; ‘She asked me many times what date it will be today.’ Anna explained that she would be preparing for the question that is asked in the morning as part of the usual routine; Jane saw this as evidence that Katy was moving forward in the targets set for her and that Elizabeth’s interventions were working.’
4.1.1: Workload and conflicting priorities

TABLE 4.1.1: Subtheme (a): Workload and conflicting priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Mentors and students experience a heavy workload as they manage the demands of the placement and in the case of mentors, as they to manage their wider professional role. This creates a feeling of not doing anything properly.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The placement described as too heavy in content and demanding. Meeting diverse needs is seen to sit within that challenge.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PGCE students have so much to learn that it makes it hard to prioritise PLPs or a focus on individuals at the start. Students have very little experience to go on.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Shortage of time/time pressures/heavy workload noted as a hindering factor in making progress towards the project aims and in being able to participate fully in it.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Mentors noting that they need more time to reflect with students in order to support them fully. Mentoring as a role should be prioritised and other roles put on hold during the placement period.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Teaching assistants expressing very strong commitment to supporting students but noting that lack of time restricts communication and how much they can move students on.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Teaching assistants suggesting that dedicated induction time is provided for students to establish a working relationship with them, with similar segments of time provided throughout the placement.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Mentoring should have more priority above other professional duties.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The processes through which students learn to meet individual needs, use personalised approaches and work inclusively needs to be prioritised and supported from the outset and throughout the placement (e.g. by planning in mentor/student reflection time focussed on this issue, by being more systematic in supporting student’s assessment and target setting.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Students need more induction time and time on placement generally if they are to fully master personalised practice.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Expression of the need for communication and collaborative reflection so that practice and the support network can be improved for everyone.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11a. Belief that collaborative reflection is an essential tool for inclusion and improving the inclusiveness of practice.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Analysis

Across phase 1 and 2, workload pressures, time constraints and competing priorities were experienced as factors that limited the amount of focus that participants could give to the project and more generally to the development of enhanced inclusive practice [1, 4]. Increasing the time available for collaborative reflection and action on the issue of SEND and inclusive practices was seen as a desirable or necessary step towards improved outcomes for children. [4,5,11,12] In the data, school staff seemed to be describing a tension between wanting to prioritise the development of improved inclusive practices (for themselves and students) and the swamping impact of more general demands. School staff identified this pressure in students’ workload over a short practice period of 8 weeks [7, 8, 9, and 10]. It is notable that in phase 2, this issue of workload pressure is not spoken of or reported by students. Further, they note the strength rather than the insufficiency of the support, collaboration and shared commitment to developing them as inclusive teachers that they experienced within the school (see Table 4.4.4).

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
100 single occurrences across 11 research events among 12 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources
- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
- Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports

Discussion and Implications - Sufficient time and space for collaborative reflection and action (among school staff and students) may be among the conditions necessary to develop ITE in SEND and inclusive practices. In support of this claim, participants frequently identify this as a condition they need. Further, the evidence in Table 4.0a suggests that school staff and students did experience significant developments in either their skills and/or confidence and the evidence in Table 4.1.3 implies that staff and students experienced deepened opportunities for reflection as a consequence of involvement in the project. In relation to the central questions for this study, it will be important to understand how the project itself and the existing culture within the school combine to support the perpetuation of this condition.

Related literature - The claim that collaborative working is a required condition for the development and enactment of inclusive practice is prevalent in the literature (O’Hanlon, 2003; Dadds, 2005; Hart et al., 2004; McIntyre, 2009; Nind et al., 2006; Rouse, 2010). However, the significance of this condition to ITE for SEND and inclusive practices has not yet been explored in much detail, though it is acknowledged as a key site for development.

Examples from Data

Extract from transcribed conversation with Anna and Jane (mentors) on 21st January 2011 (during phase 1)

‘Jane: I don’t think we ever have enough time as teachers because, you know, although we have, I mean we are very grateful that we have PPA, but you know within your PPA time you have to do planning for the following week, plus maybe a general assessment, that some of these other things you know, when you are focussing on individual children it can be ‘Oh, we have run out of time!’

[Subtheme 4, 5]

Extract from transcribed conversation with Elaine (mentor) on 26th January 2012 (during phase 2)

‘Elaine: So, I think that’s a good way of having to identify people early on, it was a bit challenging I think because she had so much bless her to take in, in the beginning and I know with a PGCE when you haven’t been in school a lot, it felt like she was a bit at sea, not in a nasty way, just that there were so many things for her to absorb and she did! She absorbed a huge amount!’

[subtheme 3]
4.1.2: The challenges and dilemmas involved in responding to diverse learners

PROFESSIONAL ADEQUACY AND SELF-EFFICACY FOR SEND AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

TABLE 4.1.2: Subtheme (b): The challenges and dilemmas of responding to diverse learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12. Participants (students and school staff) communicating professional commitment and obligation to learners with SENDs</td>
<td>(n) single occurrences (n) research events (n) participants</td>
<td>(n) single occurrences (n) research events (n) participants</td>
<td>Total occurrences Total research events Total participants Plus whole group?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12a. Participants reporting tensions between providing the play based experiences a child needs now and accelerating their development so they can cope with more formal learning later in the school career</td>
<td>3 1 Whole Group</td>
<td>15 4 2 mentors class teacher 4 students</td>
<td>2 6 2 5 w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Participants (students and school staff) reporting that meeting diverse needs is challenging.</td>
<td>3 1 Whole Group</td>
<td>11 4 3 students 2 mentors</td>
<td>5 14 5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14a. Participants communicating a belief that the high level of content in the KS2 curriculum presents challenges to meeting diverse needs.</td>
<td>1 1 1 student</td>
<td>2 1 2 students</td>
<td>2 3 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. SEN adds another level of challenge when there is no clear way forward and/or diagnosis.</td>
<td>1 1 Whole Group</td>
<td>2 2 1 mentor 1 student</td>
<td>2 3 3 0 w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. There was insufficient time for the student to get to know the child and secure their progress during the block placement.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>3 2 1 mentor 1 student</td>
<td>2 3 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The most difficult needs to meet are those that are extreme but not yet understood or confirmed as SEN.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>6 2 1 mentor 1 student</td>
<td>2 6 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The challenge with diagnosed and undiagnosed special needs is about knowing where to start.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>7 2 1 mentor 1 student</td>
<td>2 7 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Knowing that a child has diagnosed or un-diagnosed needs is daunting and triggers panic or worry, particularly about where to start.</td>
<td>1 1 Whole Group</td>
<td>3 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 4 2 0 w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. A worry is having children in the class who have extreme needs but whose needs are not extreme enough to warrant SEN support.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. A worry is not having time as a full time teacher to become an expert in all children in order to meet their needs.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Having children with extreme SENs in the class or named conditions could potentially be professionally and personally exposing, particularly in an unsupportive setting.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Knowing that one of the children had severe SENs made me unsure of my ability to have an impact but I did have an impact.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The most difficult needs to meet and plan for are among those children who are struggling but not identified as having SENs and so do not have allocated support.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td>5 1 2 students</td>
<td>2 5 1 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The summary - Across the corpus data are regular expressions of obligation towards meeting the needs of diverse learners including those with SEND [13] but with an acknowledgement that meeting diverse needs is challenging [13]. This is explicitly communicated by all members of the participant group and by undergraduate and postgraduate students. In relation to this sense of obligation, postgraduate students seem more likely to be fearful of having a negative impact on children’s progress [22] since undergraduate students do not communicate this concern. The emboldened data set emerged from one PGCE student (Abigail) and in some cases her mentor (Veronica) in separate forums. These participants shared anxiety about ‘extreme’ needs that are ‘diagnosed’ or ‘undiagnosed’ and about their capacity to make an appropriate response. This anxiety was also voiced by other participants during whole group discussions during phase 1 [19], as was the fear of falling short in their professional responsibilities to children, students and colleagues. This was particularly significant for mentors Anna and Jane [23]. However, both Anna and Jane reported that this anxiety had resolved as they had gained affirmation from the data about their effectiveness as practitioners with both children and students. (Table 4.1.3) There is no evidence that such a move happened for Veronica since a sudden and then long-term illness meant that she was absent from the latter stages of phase 2.

The parallels between Abigail (student) and Yvonne (mentor) shown in the emboldened section are interesting since they imply that mentors attitudes may have an influence on students’ self-efficacy for SENDs. However, though we see similar parallels emerging in data associated with other sub-themes (Table 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4) the evidence of this across other pairings is generally weak in the corpus data. There is strong evidence to support the claim that Abigail’s confidence and skill for inclusive practices and SEND was significantly weaker than other students who were less anxious about SEND (Table 4.0a). Abigail was more likely to focus on problems than solutions though with other students, it was the other way round. (Table 4.3.1). Within the context of this placement school, it would seem that being less anxious or ‘hung up’ about SENDs may combine with particular conceptualisations of SEND (and other factors) to secure more significant professional development. The evidence presented in this table begins to point to the very complex nature of learning to be an inclusive practitioner for all children including those with SENDs. For example, Abigail sees potential for professional exposure in having children with SEND in the class. This will be further explored in the tables and sections that follow.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data - 81 single occurrences across 11 research events among 11 participants inclusive of whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Records and notes arising from meetings
Artefacts (participant written reflections)
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports

Implications - Understanding the conditions in which fearfulness of SENDs can be minimised could be important in developing ITE for
SEND and inclusive practices. The data does support theorising about what these conditions might be and these seem to relate to the concepts of SEND and of pedagogy for SEND that participants operate (Tables. 4.2.2, 4.2.3, 4.2.4), the experience of having a positive impact (Table 4.3.5), specific activities and tasks (namely the PLP and lesson study task – Tables 4.3.1, 4.3.3) and the experience of team membership (Tables. 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.4, 4.4.5). These are all addressed in future tables.

Related literature – Slee (2010) and Forlin (2010) put forward the argument that teacher self-efficacy in the area of SEN or diversity more widely is key to the development of a more inclusive education system. However, the main argument is that to do with the dominant discourses of expertism, since these discourses situate the locus of control outside practitioners. Though the influences of the discourses of expertism seem to be illustrated in the data (Tables. 4.1.3.), the influence of ‘fear of falling short’ does not seem to be acknowledged as significant by Slee or Forlin nor does the relationship between this and a strong sense of professional obligation.

Examples from Data - Extract from transcribed conversation with Abigail (student) on 6th December 2011 (during phase 2) - Abigail is talking about when she was initially briefed on Sophie, a child with SENDs. ‘[my mentor] said there is nothing particularly wrong, she has a referral, we are waiting, there are processing problems but as yet undiagnosed.....I mean, you know, I said to [my mentor] such as what sort of problems, you know ‘expand’ and she said that it was that you would say something to [Sophie] and she would come back with something inappropriate – concentration really. I wanted to know as much as I could about it so you can, you can differentiate with your lesson planning because if you have not actually had the experience of working with children with any particular need, it is panic ‘what do I do, where do I start?’

[Subtheme 18, 19]

Extract from validated notes arising from a meeting with Jane and Anna (mentors) on 17th February 2011 (during phase 2) - ‘Well, the problem here is that for medical conditions we just do not have the training. Like with Prader-Willi – we are not Doctor’s but equally, with say Kirsty’ (a child who exhibits very challenging behaviour and who is at a significantly earlier stage of development in communication and language than her peers) ‘.....we don’t know what she’s got so we can’t even look this up in a book’ [theme19]
### 4.1.3: Self-efficacy and professional adequacy for SEND

PROFESSIONAL ADEQUACY AND SELF-EFFICACY FOR SEND AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

TABLE 4.1.3: Subtheme (c): Self-efficacy and professional adequacy for diverse learners and SENDs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Mentors communicating that they feel like amateurs (or are regarded as amateurs) in the area of SEN.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Mentors feeling inadequate in meeting the needs of children with exceptional needs.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Mentors communicating feeling less inadequate, amateur and inexpert in the area of SEN and inclusive practice.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26a. Mentors reporting greater awareness of the wider political context for inclusive practices</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Mentors/teachers/teaching assistants finding affirmation in the data and a new appreciation of their investment, professional dedication and skill in meeting the needs of children.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 mentors whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27a. Mentors/teachers/teaching assistants/Students developing a more explicit understanding of the practices that they would conceptualise as inclusive.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 mentor 1 class teacher 1 TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Researcher noting that critical and negative self-evaluations are resistant to the influence of data that raises questions about its validity as a position.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Researcher noting that school based participants (mentors/class teachers) seem more likely to defend student teachers against criticism and critique than her, seeking reasons to explain and forgive students' relative failure in developing inclusive practice.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Summary

It is notable that during phase 1, 2 mentors (Anna and Jane) were reporting at a relatively high frequency, their experience of feeling inexpert and amateur when it came to SENDs [Subtheme 24, 25]. At this time, they were having increasing numbers of children in their classes with needs that were more exceptional than they had previously experienced or which were associated with named conditions (such as Prader-Willi Syndrome, Down Syndrome and Williams Syndrome. A change arose during phase 2 when both Anna and Jane were reporting rising levels of self-confidence and self-efficacy [Subtheme 26]. There is strong evidence in the wider data to support the claim that involvement in the project had contributed since the data arising from the project had provided affirmation for the effectiveness of their practice, their skill and their sustained commitment to doing the best they could for their children [Subtheme 27]. This was the case for many other participants. Further, engagement in the project seemed to have supported some re-conceptualization of inclusive practice and pedagogy for SEND (see Table 4.2.4) and of strengths and weaknesses in practice [Subthemes 4/30, 4/31].

It is also interesting to note (using the rather limited evidence of the reflective journal) that school staff seemed resistant to altering negative self-perceptions about their efficacy as inclusive practitioners in the light of data that challenged these self-perceptions. However, they would also defend student teachers against criticism where the data may justify it [Subthemes 28 and 29]. Relatedly, their commitment to valuing all students' starting points also emerged in the data (see Table 4.4.4).

With the exception of Abigail, the students did not conceptualise themselves as amateur or inadequate when it came to SEND nor did they make any reference to mentors being low in confidence in this area.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data - 64 single occurrences across 11 research events among 6 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher's fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
Classroom observation data

Implications. - Practitioners in the school tended towards underrating and underestimating their skill, commitment and effectiveness in the area of SEND and inclusive practices. The process of analysing and reflecting on the data seemed to have prompted a significant re-evaluation leading to a greater sense of confidence and self-efficacy for SEND. With reference to the developmental impact of collaborative reflection referred to In Table 4.1.1, this adds strength to the claim that student teachers and school staff did develop as a consequence of the study itself. It is possible that developing a positive professional identity (in terms of feeling skilled and knowledgeable) may be a supportive condition to development in SEND and inclusive practices for student teachers and others. As has been noted, the data explored in future tables casts light on the factors that seem to create the conditions where this may occur.

Related literature – the potential developmental impact of collaborative reflection within a context of sustained enquiry related to practitioners own practice and values is strongly supported in the literature. For many authors, the development of inclusive practice is seen to depend on the transformation arising from such processes (Dadds, 2005; Nind et al., 2005; O’Hanlon, 2003, Lewis and Norwich, 2005) though in this study, the transformations were in the area of professional identity, particularly in challenging participants' self-perceptions of their own expertise and adequacy.

Examples from Data: Systematic evaluation of Project Action 2. Validated notes arising from a meeting with Anna (mentor) on 5th April 2011 (end of phase 1)

'Anna Commented:
When I think of an expert in SEN, I tend to think of the professionals from the local Special School that I have worked with. I tend to believe that Stephanie (a teacher from the Special School who comes to assess and provide advice about Kirsty) is more of a professional when it comes to Kirsty than I am - her knowledge and experience make her more of an expert. As I have said from the outset, I haven't felt confident in the past. As teachers, we do feel like amateurs but now I have thought about this, I would question this assumption. I am less of an amateur than I thought I was. I think that what makes us feel like amateurs are the messages that keep coming from the outside world about teaching and teachers. We are told what to do and how to do it but actually, the people who are instructing us are not usually classroom practitioners and so, in actual fact, they are the amateurs. I think I am a professional because I try to do right and to be moral for the sake of the children. The data and my own assessments of children have shown that I do know what I am doing and that has been a real benefit for me.'
4.2.1: Conceptualisations of SEND

FINDINGS

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF INCLUSION, INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND SEND

TABLE 4.2.1: Subtheme [e]: Conceptualisations of SEND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Developmentally behind in an extreme way.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 6 1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 mentor 1 TA</td>
<td>2 7 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Developmentally behind in a severe way</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 7 2 1 mentor 1 TA</td>
<td>2 mentor 1 TA</td>
<td>3 7 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Conditions associated with medical facts following a diagnosis.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 7 2 1 student 1 mentor</td>
<td>3 7 2 3</td>
<td>3 7 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Having allocated extra support.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 2 1 1 student 1 mentor</td>
<td>3 7 2 3</td>
<td>3 7 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. When considering SEND some children's needs are 'extreme.'</td>
<td>2 1 2 mentors 2 students 2</td>
<td>2 2 1 2 students 2</td>
<td>4 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. When considering SEND Some children's needs are 'not the norm.'</td>
<td>2 1 2 mentors 2 students 2</td>
<td>2 0 0 0 0 0 2 1 2</td>
<td>4 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Operation of a medical discourse by participants</td>
<td>8 2 2 mentors 2</td>
<td>2 5 2 1 mentor 1 student</td>
<td>13 4 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

With reference to the emboldened data for phase 1, Jane and Anna (mentors) used the term 'extreme' when describing children with SENDs, and seemed to relate this to being outside the norm [13, 14, 15]. As evidenced in Table 4.1.3, Jane and Anna were feeling professionally inexpert and inadequate at this time but had reported that these negative self-evaluations had been replaced with more positive ones by the end of phase 1. With reference to the emboldened data for phase 2, the discourses associated with a medical model were no longer present in the data for Anna and Jane but were present for Abigail and Veronica (a student and her mentor). Evidence of Abigail and Veronica's anxieties about SENDs have been evidenced in Table 4.1.3. In the case of Abigail, Veronica, Anna and Jane however, the operation of a medical model arises at the same time (within the same research events) as anxieties about professional adequacy.

Lorna (PGCE student) was the only participant to relate the term SEND to additional support [12] but this may be due to the particular context of her placement class, where 1 pupil had a statement of SEND and had an allocated Teaching Assistant. The theory that the context and make-up of the placement class can have an impact on the way in which a student teacher develops in relation to SEND and inclusive practices is one that is supported by the data (see Table 4.3.4).

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
28 single occurrences across 4 research events among 8 participants.

Respondent Validated Data sources

Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher's fieldwork and reflective journal
Validated notes and summaries of meetings/discussions with participants.
Discussion and Implications

The data explored in this table combined with that presented in Table 4.1.3 (Professional adequacy and efficacy for SENDs), may imply a relationship between low levels of professional confidence for SEND and a medical model. It is possible that the operation of a medical model propagates low confidence and that low confidence makes the activation of a medical model more likely. More directly expressed participants operate a medical model because their confidence is low and their confidence is low because they are operating a medical model. In the case of Abigail, this may have combined with other factors to perpetuate relatively weak practices [see Tables 4.0a and 4.0b].

It is important to note that this relationship has only been seen in the data relating to 3 mentors (Anna, Jane, and Veronica) and one student (Abigail). Further, there is a suggestion in the data that Anna and Jane's practice was not weak or ineffective but rather the contrary (see Tables. 4.0a and 4.0b). Arguably, evidence to support the claim that a medical model triggers and is triggered by low self-efficacy is relatively weak. However, evidence to support the claim that more significant development, confidence, and effectiveness arises for students when they operate a social model of SEND and a unique differences position is stronger given that this relationship was evident in the data relating to 7 of the 8 students. Though Abigail and Veronica did seem to operate an anti-labelling and unique differences position, this is perplexingly mixed with a dominating medical model and a general differences position. This is evidenced further in Table 4.2.3 and 4.2.4.

The claim that these 7 students did develop skill and confidence in SEND and inclusive practices has been supported by evidence presented in Tables 4.0a and 4.0b and the relationship between this and particular conceptions of pedagogy for SEND is explored in Tables 3.2.3 and 3.2.4.

This has particular significance for the central questions raised in this study since particular conceptions of SEND and of pedagogy for SEND may create more supportive conditions than others for the development of ITE for SEND and inclusive practices.

Related literature — The validity of a general differences position is regularly critiqued in the literature (Forlin, 2010; Hart, 2003; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Thomas and Glenny, 2010) but absent is evidence of the impact of pedagogic positions for SEND on self-efficacy, confidence, and development for student teachers. This study may cast some light on the relationship between conceptions of SEND and pedagogy for SEND and the development of beginning teachers.

Examples from Data

Extract from conversation with Abigail (student) on 6th December 2011 (during phase 2) — Abigail is talking about SEND and how to prepare for teaching children with conditions — ‘Well, I think with a medical diagnosis you need to know what, I mean, people can throw in all sorts of long sounding, you know, lists of this, ‘this is a child and they have whatever it is’, um, and if you come across one you’ve never heard before, you need to ‘Google’ it just to get a heads up. I mean there were children at the school with other syndromes I had never heard of but you make sure you have a quick look you know to see what it’s all about so at least you know what the problems are likely to be as they manifest them in the classroom. Um, I mean I’ve actually just recently taken on the role of a special needs governor at my children’s school and there are some quite interesting, rare complaints there and I have had a ‘Google’ of them to see what they are developmentally as you’ve got your physical needs as well and they need support in other areas, so yeah, and you have got to, sort of, do your homework as well.’ [Subtheme 22]

Extract from conversation with Veronica (Abigail’s mentor) on 26th January 2012 (during phase 2) — Veronica is talking about a child who Abigail and Veronica both describe as ‘standing out’ from the others and who they both believe has an undiagnosed condition that is leading to her learning difficulties. ‘Sophie had written something it was totally legible ok it wasn’t correctly spelt but it was correctly orientated, correctly legible it’s about Shrek and Princess Fiona being beautiful and Shrek had green ears and Princess Fiona is very beautiful she’s very pretty. I said that to me of a little child of Sophie’s age doesn’t present a problem. She said no it doesn’t, but I know that she cannot process it, she shouts out all the time I’m bearing on the other side of ADD but until you’ve got a diagnosis you can’t work with it.’ [Subthemes 11, 22].
4.2.2a: Conceptualisations of Inclusive Practice

FINDINGS

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF INCLUSION, INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND SEND

TABLE 4.2.2a: Subtheme (d):a: Conceptualisations of inclusion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n)</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Inclusion means educating everyone together within the same class.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The above is possible.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inclusion is valuing all steps in progress and all starting points whether or not they were planned or what is considered ‘normal.’</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Every child should be seen as special and unique and this is central to our view of what it means to be inclusive.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Whole group 1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Inclusion is where everyone feels valued, cared for and secure.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Children experience inclusion when they are participating socially and in the learning. The peer group is an important resource.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6a. Children need to see themselves as capable learners if they are to progress.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Inclusion is not just about SEN</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Whole Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Inclusion involves choice and independence for children.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 Whole group 1 mentor 1 student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis

With reference to phase 2, both PGCE students seemed to define inclusion as educating everyone together in the same class. However, at the end of the placement, Lorna believed that it was possible to achieve this [1, 2] and this may arise from and explain the higher level of confidence for SENDs and inclusive practice that she seemed to have compared to Abigail. [Table 4.0a and Table 4.0b]. Strongly present in the data for both phase 1 and 2, is a belief among participants that inclusion involves valuing all children and their uniqueness [3, 4, and 5]. Relatedly, the relationship between inclusion and participation seemed to be regarded as important among students [6]. Further, the term ‘special’ and ‘inclusion’ were seen to be relevant to all children rather than specifically to SENDs [3,4,5] and this idea is present elsewhere with evidence of PGCE students coming to realise that ‘differentiation’ was required for all children and sometimes at a class, group and individual level (Table 4.0a). For mentors and students, there was a belief that inclusion is manifested when children have choice and independence [8] and this belief was strongly represented in the criteria for inclusive practice developed by the group and in actual classroom practice (Table 4.0b)

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data - 47 single occurrences across 8 research events among 10
participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
Classroom observations
Artefacts (e.g. participant written reflections)

Discussion and Implications - Among the participant group, ‘inclusion’ encompasses all children (including those with SENDs) and is associated with children being valued, independent and experiencing belonging. The claim that this definition of inclusion operated consistently across the participant group is strengthened by the data related to concepts of inclusive practice (Table 4.2.5) and the application of this (Table 4.0a). This strong values position, combined with the evidence of shared obligation to all learners presented in earlier tables (Table 4.1.2) may be among the conditions that explain the positive developments illustrated in Table 4.0a and 4.0b. However, there is also evidence that the discourses participants sometimes operated discourses that are more negative, particularly in relation to labelling and a medical model of SEND. This is further explored in Table 4.2.2, 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 (concepts of SEND, labelling and pedagogy for SEND) but aside from Abigail (PGCE student), there is evidence that these values were consistently applied in practice by students and by school staff as has been further evidenced by Table 4.0b.

Related literature – The relationship between the concept ‘inclusion’ and ‘participation’ is explored widely in the literature (Forlin, 2010; Garner, 200; Hart et al., 2004; Hick et al., 2009, Reynolds, 2001).

Examples from Data

Extract from transcribed conversation with Abigail (student) on 6th December 2011 (during phase 1) - Abigail is describing her experience and conception of what is meant by inclusion – ‘Well my views, obviously, Inclusion is very important. It was interesting to me to reflect on my experiences in school where inclusion wasn’t really the done thing really. Those that were at a less developmental stage were educated outside the classroom or even in another part of the building.’ [subtheme 1]

Extract from minutes for a meeting of the full participant group on 11th January 2011 (during phase 1)

1. All participants felt that REFLECTION and more particularly, COLLABORATIVE REFLECTION was something that we wanted and needed to do in order to develop ourselves and our students as confident inclusive practitioners. This theme was paralleled in both meeting groups. Carving out and prioritising time to reflect with others was seen as an essential element of inclusive practice.

2. That ‘attitudes’ and ‘dispositions’ seemed so important to us in the way we saw inclusive practice: flexibility, a team approach, valuing children, a ‘no-blame’ culture and collegiate working were key – it was important that students experienced that.

3. Particularly important was valuing each child as an individual, being positive and seeing the unique gifts that all children had to offer.

4. A key theme that emerged in the discussions was the need to think of inclusion as a process that related to ALL CHILDREN, it wasn’t just about SEN. [Subthemes 4,5,6,7,8]
4.2.2b: Conceptualisations of Inclusive Practice

**FINDINGS**

**CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF INCLUSION, INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND SEND**

**TABLE 4.2.2b: Subtheme (d)b: What is conceptualised as ‘inclusive practice’?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a. (3) Learning to plan for personalised learning (but with a holistic view of the child including strengths and family situation) is important in being ready for inclusion.</td>
<td>4 3 1 TA Whole Group 1 1 1 1 1 5 4 2 w</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 9 2 5 students 5 9 2 5</td>
<td>11 22 14 5 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Once you know the child, pedagogic solutions can be found that have a positive impact on children's progress and inclusion (e.g. visual supports, clear instructions, building from interests breaking things down into smaller chunks) and on other children.</td>
<td>1 1 1 student 1 21 4 5 students 1 mentor</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 2 1 2 TA 1 mentor</td>
<td>2 2 1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Finding children's starting points through assessment and observation (particularly where these were developmentally early) supports effective planning that meets children's needs including SENDs.</td>
<td>2 1 1 mentor 1 12 2 2 TA 2 student</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 6 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 6 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Building on children's strengths is a good starting point for making a personalised response.</td>
<td>2 2 1 mentor 1 student 2 2 2 students</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 9 2 3 students 1 mentor</td>
<td>5 9 2 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Leading from children's interests is an essential way to personalise and secure participation for all children including those with SENDs.</td>
<td>2 2 1 student 2 1 1 TA</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 13 1 1 TA</td>
<td>1 13 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Children's interests can be a useful alternative starting point for target setting.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 9 2 3 students 1 mentor 2 TA</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 9 2 5 students 2 TA</td>
<td>7 11 3 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Involving the child in setting targets and valuing their voice has a positive effect on their motivation and participation</td>
<td>1 1 1 TA 1 1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Setting clear and measurable learning targets is a key skill for inclusive practice.</td>
<td>1 1 1 mentor 1 12 3 2 mentors</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49a. Inclusive practice involves dialogue with parents.</td>
<td>1 1 1 mentor 1 12 3 2 mentors</td>
<td>1 1 1 1 1 student</td>
<td>1 2 2 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
50. An early start to knowing children’s starting points and setting appropriate targets can accelerate progress.

48. (1) It is unclear what aspects of development will be transferable to future classrooms because the conditions and levels of support in place those contexts cannot be predicted.

51. An expectation that students will take responsibility for meeting the needs of learners including those with SEN may accelerate progress.

Summary

For participants (students and school staff), there seems to be a strong association between the concept of ‘inclusive practice’ and the concept of ‘personalisation’ with the latter seen as a strategy to achieve the former. [32, 37, 43]. Participants regularly present assessment and target setting as an important tool for personalisation and a solution to the challenge of meeting diverse needs. [42, 43]. Flexibility, understanding children’s starting points as early as possible, building on children’s strengths and interests, making links with home and involving children in the process are identified by participants as useful approaches to meeting children’s needs successfully. Abigail (PGCE student) along with other participants expressed many of these ideas [specifically 32, 35 and 43]. Relatedly, the importance of collaboration and teamwork in providing an inclusive learning experience for children is noted by students and explored in Table 4.4.2 (Teamwork and collaboration). For school staff, a holistic and structured approach to personalisation was a key skill for students to learn. [1a/3]

In terms of practical responses to diversity, most participants do not draw a distinction between SEND and other needs. Only Abigail (PGCE student) and Karina (undergraduate student) show some uncertainty about the transferability of these approaches to SEND, with Karina being less uncertain than Abigail. [48/1]

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data

122 single occurrences across 10 research events among 13 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources

Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
Validated notes and summaries of meetings/discussions with participants.
Systematic evaluations of project actions
Classroom observation data

Discussion and Implications

This evidence seems to add further weight to the claim that most participants (students and school staff) operated a general differences position. Relatedly, students and school staff seem to regard systematic assessment, target setting and planning as solutions to the challenge of meeting diverse needs, particularly if key approaches are applied (including dialogue with parents, flexibility and involving the child). 5 out of 8 students believed that knowing children well (including their starting points) was the trigger for designing appropriate pedagogic responses. For school staff, holistic and structured approaches to responding to diverse needs were priorities for students to learn.

There is strong evidence across the corpus data that structured personalised planning was indeed a scaffold for securing children’s participant and response. Further, students seemed to gain confidence and new skills from engaging in such activities. This has been evidenced in tables 4.0b and is further evidenced in Table 4.3.1.

With this in mind, it could be suggested that activities that involve assessment, planning and target setting for individual children had impacted positively on the development of ITE for SEND and inclusive practices within this school and across the wider partnership. This claim is drawn from some weight of evidence in the wider corpus data (Tables.4.3.1, 4.3.2 – Personalised Learning Plans, Lesson Study)

Examples from Data

Extract from transcribed conversation with Lorna (PGCE student) on 6th December 2011 (during phase 2). Lorna is talking about the insights she gained about how to respond to the diverse needs in her placement class:
'Yes, yes, because I was able to tailor my lessons with them in mind so I always knew er, um, that that's the..... lowest level to which you need to take your information. And often with somebody like Skye who didn't always grasp concepts you really needed to..... to.... unpick before you'd even really started to think 'How am I going to teach this?' and go right down to 'Where does she possibly see this at the moment?' because I guess the more time you spend getting to know those children the more you will find that out...’ [Subtheme 35]

Extract from transcribed conversation with Karina (undergraduate student) on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2). Lorna is talking about how prepared she feels for SEND in the future.

Karina - I feel more prepared now, especially knowing some of the children in the class. I didn’t necessarily need to know that child has got a label or whatever so it was just knowing the children and planning for their needs. I do think that when I went to a special school I didn’t feel prepared for it. I don’t feel prepared for a class, maybe, with physical difficulties – I think I would find it hard to cater for their needs because I hadn’t had much experience whereas dyspraxia and visual impairments and things I feel quite prepared for including children with those needs.
[Subtheme 48, 32, 37]
### 4.2.3: Labels and Labeling

**FINDINGS**

**CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF INCLUSION, INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND SEND**

**TABLE 4.2.3: Subtheme (f): Labels and Labelling**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. It is important not to label children too young or to make assumptions about children with named conditions (e.g. dyslexia).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15a. It is important not to separate children out when making personalised responses.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. It is important to have an awareness of the dangers of labelling.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Labels abdicate people from responsibility for getting to know a child. It is important to operate an anti-labelling philosophy.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Once a syndrome or condition is named or suspected it is essential to know its specific characteristics and how these manifest in the classroom (e.g. net search, talking to other professionals to get proper medical facts) at the same time as getting to know the child as an individual.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. With diagnosed conditions you need proper medical facts as a starting point, not hearsay or assumptions.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. A label can bring recognition from others that a child has problems that need addressing (and may lead to a resource).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Labels and diagnosis may create a sense of informed practice.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>SLT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary**

The emboldened data for phase 2 arose from conversations with Abigail (student) or Veronica (her mentor) in separate conversations.
It is interesting to note that though these participants were more likely than others to use operate a medical model (Table 4.2.2) and a general differences position than other participants (Table 4.2.1) they also communicated a very strong anti-labelling stance. [17, 18, 19]. Along with Alison (School Link Teacher and SENCO) and Elaine (mentor), Veronica believed that labels could be strategy for gaining recognition for the child, resources and a sense of more informed practice [21] and this belief was also expressed by other participants during whole group meetings. However, on several occasions, the participant group seemed united in holding a strong anti-labelling stance. Generally, school staff believed that it was important for student teachers to be aware of the dangers of labelling [16]. 7 of the 8 student teachers made no reference to labels or their dangers and none made reference to the need for diagnoses except when considering 'types' of disability they had not yet encountered (Karina – Table 4.2.4).

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data

34 single occurrences across 8 research events among 10 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources

Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants

Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups

Discussions and Implications

With additional reference to the evidence presented in Tables. 4.2.1, 4.2.2 and 4.2.4, contradictory discourses emerge relatively frequently in the data. Abigail and Veronica seem to stand strongly against labelling, at the same time as seeking a clear diagnosis for Sophie (one of the children in the placement class). They also seem to believe that a label will lead them to the pedagogic solutions they are seeking. Evidence to support claims about these beliefs has been presented in the sample data in Table 4.2.2. However, though the wider group also support a strong anti-labelling stance, a number of participants recognise that labels can be of use in bringing supportive recognition and resources to a child. This may explain why there are contradictions about labelling since practitioners understand the political function that they serve. However, there is some evidence that in the case of Elaine (a mentor and ex-SENCO) and Alison (a SENCO), there is a clearer delineation between their anti-labelling values and their efforts to secure resources. In fact, Elaine makes direct reference to this in one of her written reflections as has been evidenced in Table 4.0a [Findings 1, phenomenon 26a] and sampled below.

All of this may signal the need for student teachers to understand, recognise and deconstruct dominating and alternative discourses for SEND and pedagogy for SEND and to recognise the different purposes of the discourses adopted by the professionals they work with. Further, the relationship between the operation of a social model of SEND and a unique differences position with the development of confidence, skill and effectiveness during placement experiences has been illustrated in the data and discussed in Table 4.2.4 (models of pedagogy for SEND). Hence there is a strengthening support for the claim that the promotion of these discourses may be relevant the development of ITE for SEND within this specific school and perhaps more widely. This has implications for the centre-based curriculum, for mentor training and for CPD.

Related literature – Widely supported in the literature is the belief that practitioners need opportunities to engage critically with the concept of inclusion. (Dadds, 2005; Reynolds, 2001; Rouse, 2001; Moore, 2004). This study may validate this belief to some extent but it may also shed some light on what concepts and discourses are most central, with models of SEND and models of pedagogy for SEND being particularly central. Black – Hawkins and Florian (2011) claim that a pedagogic focus on all children (as a starting point for planning pedagogic responses to diversity) offers an promising alternative to separating out some children as in need of special or differentiated teaching.

Examples from Data

Extract from conversation with Veronica on 26th January 2011 (during phase 2) – Veronica is talking about her anti-labelling stance and how far this influences her practice. That's something I have said to her it was for Sophie's mother actually, before the children come I always make it, because we know before term, I make it my business to get to know these children before September and in September they come and make labels with names in other classes and Sophie's mum came in and was 'well why hasn't my Sophie got a label?' Well she doesn't need one. 'Why's that?' I said because I get to know the children before they get to come into my class and go and visit them in reception and take photographs and put names in places; oh she wanted a label. It wasn't; she was so sad she hadn't got a label so but actually I think it's better not to have one because it labels every child in the class so you know I prefer not to put sticky labels on.  [Subtheme 17]

Extract from reflective notes made by Elaine on 16th July 2012 (during phase 2).

'I have been very interested in the distinction between a medical model and a social model and this has really helped me today. I feel clearer about the difference in approach and how, as a busy SENCO, I have had to use labels to secure funding for children but I have realised that this is only a tiny part of what we do and isn't a reflection of my bigger practice and values' [Subtheme 20]
4.2.4: Conceptualisations of pedagogy for SEND

FINDINGS

CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF INCLUSION, INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AND SEND

TABLE 4.2.4: Subtheme (g): Models of pedagogy for SEND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single occurrences</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Participants taking up a dominant unique difference position - Participants taking up a unique differences position</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Whole Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Participants taking up a dominant general differences position</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24a. Participants adopting a general differences position but with the unique differences position dominating.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Taking up a unique differences position may accelerate students’ progress and level of confidence.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 class teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Taking a general differences position and believing in a box of tricks may hold students back and make them fearful of SEN.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary.

There is evidence across the data that most participants operated a unique differences position [23, 24a]. The exception (as shown in the emboldened section) arose in the cases of Abigail (student) and Veronica (her mentor). Where other participants operated a general differences position it was in a context where the unique differences position dominated. For example, in the case of one undergraduate student (Karina), the operation of the unique difference position was present once in transcribed data, with the unique differences position identifiable on 6 occasions in the same transcript. Following some collaborative examination of the data, 2 teaching assistants theorised that the general differences position (though they didn’t name it as such), was a key factor in Abigail’s relatively low level of confidence. [28, 29]. This was also believed by Charlotte (a class teacher working with Project Action 1), during phase 1 and later in her written reflections at the end of the project [29]. Further, the unique differences position is taken up by all of the 7 students who did develop their skill and confidence in SEND and inclusive practices as evidenced in Table 4.0a and 4.0b.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data

62 single occurrences across 11 research events among 15 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Respondent Validated Data sources

- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
- Validated notes and summaries of meetings/discussions with participants.
- Systematic evaluations of project actions
- Classroom observation data

Implications

This may give further weight to the claim that adopting a general differences position is both desirable and supportive to
the development of ITE for SEND and inclusive practices within this school at least and perhaps across the wider partnership. The potential value in giving students and practitioners opportunities to understand, identify and deconstruct established and alternative discourses and pedagogic models for SEND seems further confirmed by the evidence presented in this table.

Examples from Data

Extract from transcribed conversation with Kathryn (undergraduate student) on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2) – Kathryn is talking about what the term SEND means to her:

Debs: What about SEND, what does that mean to you?
Kathryn: Um, inclusion - a lot of people say it is about helping everybody achieve I don’t really like that because not everybody will achieve the same thing. I think it is letting everybody have a go and everybody doing what they can get to. I don’t think it’s always about making sure everyone hits the same point. Having a go! I think that’s my motto, have a go! [Subtheme 23]

Extract from transcribed conversation with Sascha and Selina (teaching assistants) on 24th January 2012 (during phase 2) – Sascha and Selina are talking about the data relating to Abigail’s development during her placement and her comments about Sophie.

Sascha: It is like a jack in a box and something surprising you and comes out it is as though she has put in this special needs in a box and because Sophie hasn’t got a label, this jack in a box is going to jump out, this Jack’s going to jump out and it could come at her and she’s not quite aware of what it’s going to be or know what’s going to come out of the box.
Debs: How would you like her to see it? So rather than a jack in a box that she’s fearing, what?
Selina: I think she could recognise it as every day and even if she didn’t go to a class, suppose she was in a class without any particular SEN that she can recognise that all classes no matter how wonderful the children are, they will always have their own special needs because each child is an individual and I think that she just needs to break it down a little bit more than wanting to pigeon hole everything I think it’s the acceptance that each individual child.
Sascha: ......Is different. [Subtheme 23, 29]
### 4.3.1: Personalised Learning Planning (PLP)

**FINDINGS 3**

**HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUPILS**

**TABLE 4.3.1: Subtheme (h): The PLP process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a. Learning to plan for personalised learning (but with a holistic view of the child including strengths and family situation) is important in being ready for inclusion.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The PLP process most probably has triggered student’s understanding of the way in which provision for the whole class can be informed by knowledge of individual children</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The PLP process most probably has not triggered student’s understanding of the way in which provision for the whole class can be informed by knowledge of individual children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Inexperience of mentoring and of misunderstanding of the PLP task impacted on its implementation.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The PLP process should be retained in principle but should be based on setting evolving weekly targets supported by an assessment portfolio.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Whole group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. The PLP process could be developed for groups (GLPs) and hence be more responsive to context.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The PLP task was an important scaffold and/or tool for learning how to personalise for individuals within a whole class environment.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Student not being sure how relevant the PLP is to children with</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTHEME UNIT</td>
<td>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</td>
<td>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</td>
<td>Total across both phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very extreme SENs since more experience of SENs is needed to make that judgement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Student reporting that the PLP will be a tool for responding to the needs of children where these are more severe.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 2 1</td>
<td>1 2 1 1 2</td>
<td>1 2 1 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Getting to know the children for whom the PLPs were written helped students to meet the needs of the whole class.</td>
<td>7 2 2 students 1 mentor</td>
<td>3 8 3 Whole group 2 mentors 5 students</td>
<td>7 15 5 10 w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Other children benefit from the personalised targets/adaptions set for individual children.</td>
<td>4 2 1 mentor 2 students</td>
<td>3 9 2 5 students</td>
<td>5 13 4 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Students experienced the PLP process as kick starting their journey towards learning to personalise.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 6 4</td>
<td>3 3 1 students 1 mentor</td>
<td>4 6 4 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The PLP process was motivating and helped students feel positive about their practice and their impact on children.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 6 2</td>
<td>4 students</td>
<td>4 6 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The PLP process forced consideration of individual needs from an early stage and this was beneficial to students and children.</td>
<td>1 1 1 student 1 9 3 4 students</td>
<td>4 students</td>
<td>4 10 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The PLP process provided students with an opportunity to reflect on whether their practice was having an impact and thereafter to scrap targets or approaches that were not effective.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 6 2</td>
<td>2 students 1 mentor</td>
<td>3 6 2 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The new approach to setting week-by-week targets was an improvement.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 5 2</td>
<td>2 students 2 mentors</td>
<td>4 5 2 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Student learned how to plan next steps to move children on.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 5 3</td>
<td>4 students 2 mentor</td>
<td>6 6 3 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The PLP process supported a 'don't give up and try something else' approach amongst students.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 1 1</td>
<td>1 student</td>
<td>1 1 1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTHEME UNIT</td>
<td>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</td>
<td>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</td>
<td>Total across both phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Student reporting that their skills in using PLPs effectively had developed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Student reporting that the PLP process is a tool useful for the NQT year</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Student reporting that the PLP process represents a more holistic, within class tool for personalisation than IEP.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The PLP process prompted students in accessing this collective knowledge.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Individual interventions and personalised targets can be achieved within the whole class learning environment</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Personalised assessment, teaching and learning in the early years is about setting evolving learning goals and targets, not fixed ones.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Whole group 2 mentors 2 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

3 Mentors (Jane, Elaine and Ann) and 8 of the 9 students (the exception was Claire in phase 1) believed that the PLP activity had been an important scaffold for developing inclusive responses within a whole class environment [5]. One of the students (Abigail) was not sure that the PLP process would be transferable to children with more severe SENDs though two of the students (Lily and Karina) thought that it would. [6]. Other students did not comment on this. Many participants believed that the PLP process had had positive consequences. Jane and Anna (mentors) noted that getting to know the children/groups selected for the PLP had helped students to get to know the rest of the class more quickly [7]. Elizabeth, Abigail, Lorna, Lily, Karina and Lisa (students) also believed this to be true and noted that the adaptations they had made for the focus children had helped other children to access learning more effectively. Elizabeth (from phase 1) and Abigail, Lorna, Lisa, Karina and Kathryn believed that the PLP process had kick started their journey since without its demands, they would not have prioritised individual needs so early (being more focussed on the majority) and that this would have had consequences for the level of match between their planning and the children's stages of development. The children may have missed out because of this because their pedagogic responses may have alienated them. Elaine (mentor to Lorna) also made this comment. [9, 10, 11]. Jane and Anna (mentors) felt that one of the positive consequences of the PLP process was that it enabled students to gain a tangible experience of the positive impact of their practice – this idea was also expressed by Lorna, Lisa, Karina and Kathryn. [10]. The structure of the PLP process (with its emphasis on evolving targets and adaptions planned week by week) was believed to be beneficial since it enabled students to reflect on the impact of their practice and improve it towards the benefit of children [12] and this idea was voiced by Jane (mentor) and Lily and Kathryn. Anna, Jane,
Claire and Elizabeth believed that this was particularly important in the early years. Anna, Jane, Lily and Kathryn also believed that the developments made to the PLP process were an improvement [13]. Jane, Elaine (mentors), Lorna, Lily, Lisa and Karina commented that the PLP process had helped them learn how to plan next steps and move children on [14] though for Kathryn it had been a prop for not giving up and trying something else [15]. Lily and Karina (students) reported that their skill in using personalised planning had improved [16] and Lily (a final year student) said that she would use it in her NQT year as a way of planning for personalisation since it seemed to offer a more holistic approach which she believed was better than an IEP. [17 and 18]. Lorna, Lily, Karina and Lisa said that the PLP process had prompted them to access the collective knowledge of the team and this had been particularly valuable. Lorna, Lily, Karina and Kathryn said that they now believed that personalised targets could be provided for and achieved within the whole class environment through thinking more creatively about how everyone could be included. Table 4.0a described the positive experiences arising for children form students activities and it would seem that in many students and mentors view, the PLP process contributed to the ways of assessing, planning and teaching that were inclusive in nature.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
155 single occurrences across 6 research events among 17 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Validated Data sources

- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
- Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
- Classroom observations

Discussion

The data tends to confirm that the PLP process had been an effective scaffold for learning how to personalise, with the following reasons being cited by participants:

- It demands an early focus on individual needs and adaptions which may accelerate the students understanding of the needs of the whole class.
- It triggers adaptions to practice that benefit the focus groups/children but also other children
- It supports reflection and improved responses
- It demands accessing the collective knowledge of the team
- It prevents students from overlooking those individuals that may not share the characteristics of the majority
- It provides evidence of positive impact and can lead to more positive self-evaluations among students.

In this way it seems to enable a recognition of the way in which a focus on individual children can lead to more inclusive outcomes for all. It also seems to confirm for students, that personalised responses can be enacted in a whole class environment. Many of the students seem to conceptualise this process as one involving continual problem solving and other data implies that they have learned that such problem solving may best be enacted collaboratively [Table4.4.2] and that it should extend beyond the children selected as the original focus. This conceptualisation of inclusive practice (as an extension of what is usually provided for everyone within the context of a learning community) is promoted in the literature (Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2011; Black-Hawkins and Florian, 2007) and students came to recognise inclusive practice as a response to the needs of all children but that it was important not to begin with a majority first approach and in a way that was about working within the classroom. The data below provides some insight into the kind of thinking represented among 7 of the 8 students. This may suggest that an activity like the PLP process can support the development of inclusive thinking and practice. The construction of inclusion and inclusive practice used in the study and applied in the design of its actions relates to all children including those with SENDs. Hence, inclusive practice demands continuing consideration of what common, distinct or additional systemic or pedagogic actions might secure inclusion for all children with an acknowledgement that from time to time, particular individuals or groups may require from practitioners more intensive attention to what common, distinct or additional pedagogic choices must be made in extended that which is commonly available to all children within a learning community.

Examples from data - Extract from transcribed conversation between Debs and Karina (undergraduate student) on 26th March 2012 (during phase 2)

Debs ...so let’s play devil’s advocate for a minute and you must say what you like and whatever you believe, if the PLP process hadn’t existed and you weren’t asked to do it, that might be quite nice not to have another job off us, but if it hadn’t happened what do you think might have been the consequences of that, would you have carried, would you still be.....

Karina Um, I feel that with the children - I think teachers would become quite closed in their opinions
and in their minds as to right I need to focus on middle ability and outside of that can't be catered for because I just need to aim for the majority

Ok

Um and I think that would have consequences for the children really

But say we hadn't given you the PLP as a school task and it hadn't existed what do you think may or may not have happened?

I think it would be difficult to plan for differentiation um, and I think that the children would have continued in the same ways so some of the children would have carried on working alone and they wouldn't have even thought about associating with others in the class – they would have become outsiders more and more.

[Subthemes 9,11]

Example from the data – Extract from transcribed conversation between Debs and Lorna (postgraduate student) on 6th December 2011 (during phase 2)

Debs

It kind of shaped the way you were thinking or not – have I got that right?

Lorna

Yes, thinking about, thinking about Individualising learning and how to do that within the whole class environment and it is possible.

Debs

Would you have done that without the PLP process being there as a......as a...... scaffold?

Lorna

(pause) I don’t think, I don’t think you would have, it would have focussed your thinking quite so easily, no. I think it would have taken a lot longer to get there, and perhaps been a lot more demotivating because you would have learned from mistakes and..... and.... disappointments in yourself more than you had got something that had scaffolded your thinking.

Debs

Yes, I understand. So......something concrete to look at the impact. You had a plan and you put it into practice and maybe you’ve got evidence that that happened? Is that what you mean? It might not be?

Lorna

Yes, yeah yeah. I needed some system for seeing it more clearly.....this made me more confident about what I was doing.

[Subthemes 9, 10 and 11]
4.3.2: Lesson Study

FINDINGS

HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUPILS

TABLE 4.3.2: Subtheme (j): Lesson Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Student/teacher learned new strategies to secure children's participation the collaboration and new insight into pedagogic approaches that would work for a focus pupil</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. The lessons planned and taught collaboratively had a positive impact on levels of participation in learning.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Time was an issue and organising this activity out of placement time would be useful since it is of value when there are no children with SENs in own class.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

In the first phase, Charlotte (NQT and class teacher), Rebecca and Jenny (GTP students who worked with Charlotte on this task in phase 1) believed that engaging in the lesson study activity had enhanced the development of their pedagogic range [28,29] and this view was shared by Lily during phase 2 (fourth year student). For example, Charlotte and Rebecca had learned about the value of peer tutoring in supporting a child who was finding it harder to focus on literacy based tasks. All of the students and the class teacher involved in this activity also believed that the lesson planned and taught collaboratively had had a positive impact on the focus child/group’s level of participation in learning.

EXAMPLE ONE:

Across two literacy lessons, one focus pupil had demonstrated the following positive changes in levels of participation:

Engagement and Response

Children are engaged in learning and respond to opportunities to learn.

In the collaboratively planned and taught session, 25 instances of engagement in tasks and activities was in evidence compared to in the original lesson.
Voice and ownership for children
Children are listened to and their choices respected. They can self-direct and operate creativity in the learning environment.

In the collaboratively planned and taught lesson, 19 instances of independent action were in evidence compared to 3 in the original lesson.

Peer Interaction
There is positive peer interaction between children.

In the collaboratively planned and taught lesson, 8 instances of positive peer interaction were observed compared to 6 in the previous lesson.

Charlotte (Class teacher) and Lily collaborated in this lesson study (phase 2).

EXAMPLE TWO

Engagement and Response
Children are engaged in learning and respond to opportunities to learn.

In the collaboratively planned and taught session, 50 instances of engagement in tasks and activities was in evidence compared to 16 single occurrences across the corpus data. They are engaged in learning and show clear evidence of positive peer interaction.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data.

16 single occurrences across 3 research events among 4 participants.

Validated Data sources

- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher's fieldwork and reflective journal
- Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
- Classroom observations

Discussion
Those involved in the lesson study activity did develop new insights into inclusive practice. These outcomes seem to add weight to the claim that collaborative work between students and other members of the teaching team are can support everyone’s learning including children’s (see 4.4.1 and 4.4.2). The task also provided a forum for reflecting critically on practice and seemed to have confirmed for Charlotte, the importance of a play-based curriculum in year 1. The effectiveness of this task derive from its critical, collaborative and reflective quality and implies that these kinds of activities might be useful ways of structuring ITE in the context of the practicum in ways that might accelerate the development of skill, confidence and insight among student teachers and more experienced staff working with them. This resonates with the work of Agyropoulos et al. (2009) who claimed that the collaborative and reflective an action research project which they facilitated within one school among two students and their mentors, resulted in the development of inclusive collaborative thinking and the adoption of relevant teaching practices which promoted access to the curriculum. This also supported student teachers’ and teachers’ professional development. The lesson study approach may offer a more bounded methodology for achieving this in the context of a relatively brief school placement or field experience. It is possible that inclusion-focussed lesson study could be a means of structuring school placements in effective ways because it is built around a critically reflective and collaborative process that focuses not on the pupils’ deficits but on the pedagogic innovations that might extend curriculum access to everyone. There is much support for the value of collective and collaborative approaches as a means of securing more inclusive practice in the literature. (Florian and Rouse, 2009; McIntyre, 2009; Nind et al., 2005; O’Hanlon, 2003; Nind et al., 2006).

Examples from data

Table 4.3.3.1 is an analysis of a coded classroom observation of Charlotte and Rebecca’s collaboration (30th May 2011 – Phase 1).

Extract from systematic evaluation of Project Action 1 (phase 1) jointly constructed by the researcher and Charlotte (validated).

“How did Project Action 1 support our professional development in the areas of SEN and inclusion?”
The opportunity for collaborative reflection was significantly supportive to our professional development. We believe that collaborative reflection is key to the processes through which we may come to practice more inclusively.

Rebecca had come to understand how important it was to enable children to work collaboratively with others. Charlotte came to value even more deeply, the value of collaborative learning.

Charlotte noticed that Paul (a focus pupil) needed opportunities to develop his literacy and numeracy skills through playful activities that demanded less in terms of written recording. He needed to learn in ways that matched his level of maturity.

However, the group participating in this action also recognised how the demands of the National Curriculum created tensions for them in this area.

At the point of writing this report, Charlotte was seeing more justification for designing learning activities that included earlier developmental starting points since this would allow pedagogic responses to reach all children.

Charlotte also expressed allegiance with a unique differences position explaining that though children’s needs may be described in terms like ‘Down’s Syndrome’ the label was not always helpful since every child was different. For Charlotte, inclusion was a process of problem solving with every child being a new conundrum to work out.'
### Table 4.3.3.1: Analysis of a coded classroom observation of Charlotte and Rebecca’s collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Inclusive Practice</th>
<th>Frequency in whole class ‘fruit tasting’ lesson</th>
<th>Frequency in literacy lesson collaboratively planned and taught by Charlotte and Rebecca (GTP student)</th>
<th>Frequency in whole literacy lesson taught by Charlotte</th>
<th>Frequency in literacy lesson collaboratively planned and taught by Charlotte and Lily (Final year undergraduate student)</th>
<th>Example of coded events.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement and Response</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Paul draws a picture on his whiteboard. He is gripping the pen with four fingers wrapped around the barrel whilst the other children are using a more conventional grip. He draws what looks like a rocket. Rebecca says 'No cheating! You need to look and remember and look really, really carefully; it doesn't matter what colours you use as long as you construct it exactly the same. I am going to cover it up now......' Once the model is covered, the children start to make their own model immediately (including Paul). Charlotte asks Paul 'What can you remember?' and Paul replies 'A smiley face!' and Rebecca says 'Well done!'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Independence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Millie asks Paul 'Was it hard to do?' and he says 'Yes it was and it was a space rocket and will it work?' and she asks, 'Does it work?' Their conversation comes to a close when Charlotte signals that it is time to clean the boards and move on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pupil's independence is enabled and promoted.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>His attention seems entirely on the task and he asks one of the children next to him for some advice; 'Is this right?' The other child nods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Interaction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### FINDINGS 3

**HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUPILS**

**TABLE 4.3.4: Subtheme (k): Experiencing diverse learners in diverse contexts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Students understanding how an Early Years approach (i.e. curriculum, learning environment, flexible adult interventions) lends itself to inclusive practice and personalisation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. The EYFS curriculum and approach allowed personalisation to a degree not experienced before and inspired new starring points for personalisation.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Learning to include in the EYFS can be transferred to other key stages.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. I am not sure how much I will be able to transfer to other key stages.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. There are some types of need that I have experience of but with those I have not, I would be less sure about where to start but getting to know the children as individuals would be my first step.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Experience of diverse learners in diverse contexts (including more severe SEN) raises confidence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. The nature of the placement class and the children in it had an effect on the students' development in the area of SENs and inclusive practices.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Where the placement class manifest wide ranging needs and challenging needs, this can accelerate students' development.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

350
### Summary

During phase 1, Elizabeth had learned new ways of approaching inclusive practice from working in this key stage and this was also the case for Karina, Lisa and Kathryn. For example, Kathryn had learned how valuable it was to use children’s own interests and questions as starting points for planning learning experiences and other students (Elizabeth, Karina and Lisa) had learned about the way in which the whole learning environment could be shaped to respond to the needs of everyone. For these students, a placement based in the EYFS had broadened the way they thought about inclusion and how it could be secured. [31, 32, 33]. Lisa was the only student who was sceptical about whether these practices could be transferred into other key stages. [33, 34]. Experience of diverse learners (including those with low-incidence SENDs) was reported as an important factor in being confident about SEND. For example, Lily and Karina were not completely confident that they were ready for the full range of difficulties and disabilities that may be present in their future classes but they noted that the starting point would be getting to know the children as fully and holistically as possible and they knew what kinds of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) instances (n) research events (n) participants</td>
<td>(n) instances (n) research events (n) participants</td>
<td>(n) instances (n) research events (n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39. Where the placement class manifests a single child who has undiagnosed SENs and whose progress is atypical and spikey, this may not offer the best opportunity for the student to develop confidence within the short placement period available.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 3 1 2 TA</td>
<td>2 3 1 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Where there is a more urgent to know children’s starting points and cater for diverse needs (because of the challenging make-up of the class) students’ progress is likely to be accelerated.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 15 3 1 mentor 2 TA</td>
<td>3 15 3 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. Student reporting that personal experience of inclusion (in terms of everyone being educated in the same school/class) in own schooling was limited and this may be a factor.</td>
<td>0 0 0 0 0 0 0</td>
<td>0 0 0 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Alternative placements (in SEN contexts and contexts where there are diverse learners) can raise confidence.</td>
<td>1 1 1 student 1 3 1 1 student 1 4 2 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Confidence and effectiveness in meeting needs grows with extended contact with particular needs/children/classes</td>
<td>1 1 1 student 1 6 2 1 student 2 TA 3 7 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
processes to use to make an inclusive response (knowing starting points, setting goals, adapting practice, prioritising membership of the class). [35]. Lily also commented on the impact of the experience she had had in special schools since this had raised her confidence and Karina believed that the alternative placements embedded in her undergraduate programme (in special schools, EAL settings and other key stages) had contributed to her readiness for diversity as had the diverse children she had come across in placements thus far. Sascha (TA) and Elaine (Mentor) when reflecting on the progress of the students placed with them (Abigail and Lorna), noted that the make-up of the placement class was a factor – where students worked with classes that were very diverse and challenging, there was a more urgent need to get to know the children’s starting points and preferences and hence development was likely to be accelerated [40]. Elaine (mentor to Lorna) and Sascha and Selina (teaching assistants) believed that Abigail might have struggled to develop inclusive practice because her class was less diverse (in terms of range and challenge) than other classes. [40 and 44].

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
80 single occurrences across 5 research events among 10 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
Classroom observations

Discussion
This data suggests that it is important for student to have experience of diverse learners in diverse contexts. Though Karina, Elizabeth, Kathryn and Lisa were on a primary course, they had opted to do an EYFS placement in their third year. Students can also opt to do a placement in a special school within my institution. ‘t would seem that these diverse contexts offer new insights into inclusive practice and that it is important for students to experience as much diversity as possible. This view is widely supported in the literature. (Nash and Norris, 2010; Florian and Rouse, 2009; Ofsted, 2009; Bet al., 2009; Vickerman, 2007; Golder et al., 2005; Avramidis et al., 2000).

Examples from data

Extract from transcribed conversation between Debs and Karina (undergraduate student) – 26th March 2012 (during phase 2).
Debs and Kathryn are talking about her experience of EYFS

Debs | Um, so a lot of developments you made in being inclusive were to do with being in the early years curriculum is that what you’re saying?
Kathryn | Yeah definitely um, I was in year six last year so it was kind of, ‘here’s the learning objective how are you going to meet it’ rather than what are you going to get out of the learning. I found that was a lot more inclusive the way the curriculum is kind of built up from the children outwards.
Debs | That’s very interesting so do you think some of that could shift into Year six?
Kathryn | Yeah totally
Debs | Tell me about that then?
Kathryn | I think last year I was oh I’ve got to teach them that, I’ve got to teach them this, how are they going to get to it? But um, just seeing it can work the other way and probably works better that way I think you couldn’t translate it exactly because you have the objective to meet but I’d definitely try do that a bit more, definitely.
Debs | So this was part of the journey you made on this placement and you said earlier it was a big, important journey
Kathryn | Massive yeah! Goodness me
Debs | So tell me about it, tell me about the journey and what you learned and what changed for you as you went through it
Kathryn | I think my outlook completely changed before I was very much kind of not ‘tell them what to do’ but it was a lot of my ideas that initiated the learning but now it’s definitely take it into National Curriculum as well it’s their ideas that initiated the learning, that worked so much better. We went to the farm, just my example, I asked them questions about what they would like to find out about the farm and my ideas where completely forgotten about. So obviously you still hit the curriculum but the children are valued in it and to me that is more inclusive. [Subthemes 31,32,33]
Debs and Elaine are reflecting on two students and their progress - Lorna was placed with her and progressed relatively better than Abigail who was placed in the parallel year 1 class with Veronica.

Debs: So in terms of Lorna who we got to know really well on her placement here, where do you think she got to in her capacity to include and why do you think she developed what she developed?

Elaine: Um, I think she did well, this class has got quite a range of needs and I think initially that was a little bit overwhelming for her just because of the nature of them I think. Um, and it was getting to grips with what the needs were as well as getting to grips with everything else, because of the nature of the needs you couldn't leave it for a couple of days to work out what they were. So she really had to understand just because it was imperative that she did really. Um, so I think because of the nature of the group she was made to realise that it was very important from the very beginning, possibly more so than a class like Veronica possibly. Um, and the fact we were already making lots of provision so she kind of came into that as a way of working. She was a very um... I think she tried very hard to make sure everything um was accessible to everybody and it was something she thought about. I think having the process of identifying children was good to do that because that made her think of things she could do for herself but didn't rely on me or the team or whoever.
4.3.4: Evidence of positive impact

FINDINGS 3
HAVING A POSITIVE IMPACT ON PUPILS
TABLE 4.3.4: Subtheme (I): Evidence of positive impact

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Seeing tangible progress boosts students’ confidence and children’s confidence to secure engagement.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Spending time getting to know starting points and planning measurable targets may accelerate progress and build confidence and self-belief.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary
7 participants (Veronica, Elaine, Lily, Karina, Lisa, Kathryn and Elizabeth) believed that confidence was gained through evidence of tangible progress. Where students could see their practice having a positive impact, it made them trust their judgement and feel more able to respond appropriately to varied needs. [46]. Lorna, Kathryn Sascha and Selina believed that knowing children’s starting points from the outset could build confidence and self-belief since it was possible to plan well-matched activities but also to see the fruits of your labour.

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
30 single occurrences across 3 research events among 9 participants

Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
Classroom observations

Discussion
Combined with the data presented in tables 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, there is a further suggestion here of that tangible, visible experiences of success and positive impact builds confidence. In some way, the PLP and lesson study
Tasks are ways in which this can be secured since they offer structures and systems for seeing the impact of practices (and adaptations of practices) on children. This then may be one of the important conditions for students — to experience this during school placements so that they can become more confident in their judgment and efficacy. It is important to design tasks and activities that allow them to reflect on this systematically and this is likely to be tied into the way they learn to use assessment to inform their teaching.

Examples from data

**Transcribed conversation between Debs and Kathryn (undergraduate student) — 26th March 2012 (during phase 2)**

Debs: So you are confident enough to try things to start somewhere and what kind of things have you learnt in your placement that would help you to start somewhere with the children you meet in the future?

Kathryn: Um, really know them absolutely really know them. I set targets for one of them, Rosa and they just didn’t work because it wasn’t until the last two or three weeks of placement I thought ‘oh this is why it is not working and just really got to know how they think and they work, what they respond to and what they don’t so it’s getting to talk to them, getting to play with them that would really help.

([Subtheme 46])

**Transcribed conversation between Debs and Lorna (postgraduate student) — 6th December 2011 (during phase 2)**

Lorna: when we got you know, having supported Danny with his phonics having had him do guided writing and then him writing some words, writing the word ‘robot’ that might be in his Christmas present was like ‘Oh my life that says robot!’ You know robot but ‘r’ ‘o’ ‘b’ ‘t’ and he’s going ‘Mrs. Payne, look at this, You know I’ve written’.... and it did, it looked like the..... b......before at the beginning that lad was writing a string of ‘c’s and he was telling me that that said words and it wasn’t even in w...... in little groups of ‘c’s it was just a line and he could actually now do...... show you words and know what they meant every time......and that was just massive progress....and then you have got to leave, you know (laughs)

Debs: But you’ve left something behind......haven’t you?

Lorna: (sighs) I feel like, yes, and he was...... his pride as well at having produced something that looked like something that he felt was right was just brilliant, so, yeah.

([Subtheme 45])
4.4.1: Working with teaching assistants

FINDINGS

TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Table 4.4.1: Subtheme (m): Working with teaching assistants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The TA workshop provided valuable new insights and awareness of children's needs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Teaching assistants should be more involved in the induction of student teachers into the placement class and in supporting students generally (e.g. in sharing their insights about individual children, in establishing collaborative working practices at an early point).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Securing collaborative reflection and planning between teaching assistants and teachers is a development priority in the school generally, as well as in the case of student teachers.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 mentors 1 TA 1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Teaching assistants have expertise (e.g. in their knowledge of individual children, in their understanding of how to make learning accessible) that is of value.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 mentor 1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I learned from observing the TAs practice.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 mentor 1 student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My TAs knowledge of the children and of resources was helpful to me.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. TAs communicating a desire to support the students' development as much as they can.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBTHEME UNIT</td>
<td>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</td>
<td>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</td>
<td>Total across both phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Students having had a close working relationship with the TAs during the placement.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2 TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The less formal relationship with TAs meant that students could ask questions they might otherwise not ask or simply seek reassurance.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The realisation that TAs' expertise and unique insight into children as individuals must be valued.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I knew of TAs in other parts of the school with real expertise in SEN and I would have liked to work with them more.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Recognition that TAs knowledge of individual needs can compensate for teachers lack of time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. The value and impact of the support offered by TAs depends on their quality.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. TAS communicating a concern to establish themselves as professionals to be valued in the way they work with student teachers.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. TAs supported students' professional development (through feedback and advice).</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

85
Summary

From the outset of the project there was widespread support for TA involvement in student placements since they could make a valuable contribution given their expertise, unique perspective and knowledge of children [2, 3]. At the end of their placements, a number of students had found the TAs working with them in their placement class, a valuable support. For example, Elizabeth, Abigail, Lorna, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn believed that the TAs knowledge was very valuable since they understood how to make learning more accessible for individual children [4, 5] and Lorna believed that this might compensate for teachers' lack of time in getting to know children [12]. Lisa and Kathryn reported that they had learned important things from observing the TAs (for example, in how to scaffold language and make it accessible) [5] and Lily was disappointed about not being able to work with TAs in other parts of the school that she knew had expertise in particular areas. [11]. Abigail, Lorna, Karina and Lisa believed that the less formal relationship that they had with TAs meant that they could ask questions they might not otherwise ask or simply seek reassurance. [9]. Kathryn, Karina, Lorna and Abigail all commented on the usefulness of the workshop provided by the TAs [1]. The TAs in the school often communicated a desire to work more closely with students and to support them, in part because it would establish them as professionals to be valued. [14, 7. There was a general acknowledgement among the school-based participants that more time should be carved out for teachers and TAs to reflect and plan collaboratively since this could bring deeper positive outcomes to children. [3]. Elaine expressed the view that the contribution that TAs could make would depend on their quality and experience [13].

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
85 single occurrences across 7 research events among 11 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

Validated Data sources
Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
Researcher's fieldwork and reflective journal
Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
Classroom observations

Discussion

The data gives general support to the idea that TAs could make an important contribution to the development of student teachers whilst on placement. This seems to have been so in this case. TAs provided practical support and encouragement. They also provided important information about individual children that the students could make use of though time for collaborative reflection between the teaching team and TAs seems to have been an issue. It is interesting to reflect on the findings presented in 4.1.1, 4.2.2, and 4.2.4 since these suggest that TAs operate a strong and unequivocal social model and unique differences position and this may be of value in promoting similar conceptions among student teachers though this would depend on the level of involvement and status of TAs during the school-placement. There is no direct reference to the role of TAs in ITE during school placements in the literature but these findings suggest that within this case, involving them more fully brought positive consequences. For my institution this is an important consideration and it may be one that other providers want to explore since there is also evidence in Table 4.4.2 that students came to understand that inclusive practice was drawn from collective knowledge and action.

Examples from data

Extract from conversation between Abigail and Debs – 6th December 2011 (during phase 2)
Allison is talking about the TA workshop provided during the placement
Oh definitely, as I said, the work with the TAs, they put on a session for us in the afternoon which was hugely useful and absolutely invaluable and the several workshops - we spoke to Sue about the emotional aspects as well about the ASPEN. That was quite enlightening because there were issues there that you wouldn't think would apply to primary school children.
[Subtheme 1]

Extract from conversation between Kathryn and Debs – 26th March 2012 (during phase 2)
Debs and Kathryn are talking about the TA in the placement class.
Debs Did you find Geraldine.....? Did she give you advice or?
Kathryn Yeah
Debs What kind of advice and support did she give and what impact did that have do you think?
Kathryn She was really good, oh these resources for this, like the role-play area. We did fruit printing I know it sounds silly
but she would give me practical points like 'oh we need to have big ones' and 'this bunches up so is no good' and everything like that. The resources that she'd suggested and she'd gathered were so good for the children and I wouldn't have thought of these by myself so that was good and also she knew about particular approaches to lessons that might be good. She loves circle time and I didn't really see why to start off with but then her ideas..... I really valued - they were really good. She was very knowledgeable about the children and discussing and talking and working together was important in making things better.

Debs Fantastic. What a rich experience it must have been so I guess.....

Kathryn It was terrifying but it was really good and developed my confidence and I felt supported.

[Subtheme 5, 6, 8, 10]
### 4.4.2: Teamwork and Collaboration

**FINDINGS**

**TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND COLLABORATION**

Table 4.4.2: Subtheme (n): Teamwork and Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBTHEME UNIT</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
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<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research participants</td>
<td>Total (n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The team (mentors, TAs, research facilitator and student) found solutions together in support of meeting children’s needs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Students learned to work in a team and came to understand how teamwork provides continuity of experience for children.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Working in a team was at first complex and intimidating for the student but it sharpened the inclusiveness of their practice in their view given the requirement to communicate and collaborate.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. The student learned that parents were part of the continuity of experience for the child.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. The mentor learned from the students’ engagement with PLP.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. A view that it is important to be diplomatic and build on the practice that is already there so that you do not upset the adults or the children.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. The knowledge and support of other professionals is essential for meeting children’s needs.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Student understood that the teaching team had collective knowledge of children that was important to tap into from an early point and throughout,</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. As a consequence of EYFS, students experienced TAs being present more of the time.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Student reported that being part of a team provided a support network that boosted confidence.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Students reporting feeling included in the team and feeling that their professional judgement was valued and their development important.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary

There is a suggestion in the data that students learned about the value of collective and knowledge and action. For example, Karina, Lisa and Kathryn all reported instances where they had worked with the teaching team (TAs and mentor) to find ways forward with individual children so that they might be better included. Lisa, Kathryn and Elizabeth had come to understand that teamwork brought continuity of experience to children and that this was important for their quality of experience in school. [18] Abigail and Karina had also learned that parents were an important part of this continuity (but this theme is relatively absent from the wider corpus data). Abigail was distinctive in making a case for careful, diplomatic approaches to working with established teams [20] but Abigail, Lorna, Lisa, Kathryn and Karina all felt that team membership had boosted their confidence since it provided a support network and they felt valued/included as professionals. [25, 27]. Sascha and Selina believed that it was particular important to offer the support of the wider teaching team since this could accelerate students’ progress [32, 35]. All participants noted that engagement in the project had facilitated useful reflection and new awareness about strengths and weaknesses in practice. Sasha, Veronica, Elaine and Jane also believed that it had brought benefits to children. [30, 31, 31a]

### Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
108 single occurrences across 8 research events among 7 participants inclusive of some whole group discussions.

### Validated Data sources
- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
- Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
- Classroom observations

### Discussion
This gives further weight to the suggestion that among the conditions present in this school that was a factor in support students' development was a team ethos and the wider support of the teaching team. This view is supported by Usher, (2010) as being important for student teachers during the practicum in a broader sense. It is notable that students have come to believe that team work and collaboration is a resource for inclusive practice supportive of both children and staff.
Examples from data

Extract from conversation between Lorna and Debs on 6th December 2011 (during phase 2)
Lorna is talking about working with others in her placement class.
'I felt part of the team definitely and I put that on my feedback form that they were wanting to include you and tell you what was going on and make you aware and it also makes you have a sense that all the children matter in that school and you have a sense that they are very concerned about accommodating the needs of different children - somebody like Danny who we talked about, 'Well we know that when he sits here he's not so bad and we know that when he sits over there you know, he's got some difficulty' and we thought about it. Angela has actually suggested to his mum that he goes for glasses so he's having glasses and its people who are concerned about the welfare of the child and how, in many ways, you can move it forward.'

Extract from conversation between Kathryn and Debs on 26th March (during phase 2)
Kathryn is talking about the experience of working with a large team
Kathryn
It scared me to begin with - it terrified me! But the children, it was as if they always have somebody to go to and I think that was nice and everyone knew what they were doing so it wasn't like the classroom was fragmented like it can be sometimes. All the adults knew what they were doing, all the children knew what adults were doing. I think it may have helped to make their learning more, maybe, continuous in a way, I don't know if that makes sense?

Debs
Yeah and when you say it scared you, what was it about it that scared you?
Kathryn
I'd never worked in such a team work environment before - it was - you've got your class and maybe a TAs that pops in every now and that was it - but having the same work as the other three, two classes, having to plan for the TA the people that worked with Mrs R and Mrs B was confusing but it did help, definitely

Debs
How did it help?
Kathryn
Um, it made me more organised with what I wanted the children to learn, having to tell another adult and having to kind of, I also talked to them a lot how do you think I could get the best for this child or what's the best way to do that and Mrs R and Mrs B really helped me with that. They did.

Debs
Yeah so would you say that it was a much more collaborative learning environment or maybe not that?
Kathryn
Yeah
Debs
........than before maybe?
Kathryn
Yeah it's not just teacher telling someone what to do is it? All chip in your ideas, that was good'

[Subthemes 16,17,21]
4.4.4: Special characteristics of the placement school

FINDINGS

TEAM MEMBERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Table 4.4.5: Subtheme (q): Special characteristics of the placement school

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtheme Unit</th>
<th>PHASE 1 (November 2010 - July 2011)</th>
<th>PHASE 2 (September 2011 - July 2012)</th>
<th>Total across both phases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(n) single instances</td>
<td>(n) research events</td>
<td>(n) participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Students remarking on the high level of respect accorded to teaching assistants in the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Students remarking on the noticeable level of professional confidence and independence among teaching assistants at the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. Students perceiving the school as a place where teaching assistants and students are valued.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Students reporting that the shared commitment to meeting children's needs within the teaching team is notable.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Students reporting that the interest in their professional development and the willingness to share expertise was notable in the school.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46. Students commenting on the school's commitment to their professional development in SEN D and inclusive practices - awareness may have been less developed without this.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. This school helped with the development of new perceptions and awareness about inclusion, special needs and differentiation.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. The interest in developing students' inclusive teaching and expertise among the team. Awareness may have remained undeveloped without this.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summary</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students commented that compared to other schools they had experienced, this school demonstrated a high level of respect for teaching assistants - they were more independent and confident in this school than elsewhere and they felt more like equals (Abigail, Karina, Lily, Kathryn [42, 43]). Students also reported that the school's commitment to developing them was notably strong and that this was an important factor in their development (Lorna, Kathryn, Abigail, Karina) [45, 46, 47] and that people in the school worked hard to secure the welfare and wellbeing of all of the children in the school (Lorna and Kathryn). All of the students in the second phase believed that the school had helped them develop new
perceptions and awareness about inclusion, SEND and differentiation. Lorna, Abigail, Lily, Karina and Lisa believed that if the school had not been so interested in developing their expertise in this area (and sharing it), their development may not have been so great [29, 26, 46].

Prevalence of this sub theme across the corpus data
57 single occurrences across 3 research events among 6 participants

Validated Data sources
- Transcribed conversations with mentors, students and teaching assistants
- Minutes of meetings of the whole group or sub groups
- Researcher’s fieldwork and reflective journal
- Systematic evaluations of project actions and their related reports
- Classroom observations

Discussion
This suggests that the placement school has particular special characteristics that have furthered the students’ development and combined with data from other tables this seems to be as follows:
- A strong teamwork culture of mutual support to the benefit of all children
- An interest in sharing expertise and supporting student teachers
- An interest in the wellbeing and welfare of all children
- An acceptance of students as valued, included members of the teaching team
- A culture where TAs are respected and valued
- The operation of collective knowledge of children