The ethics of school-based research during international initial teacher training placements

Dr Elizabeth Hidson

Senior Lecturer in International Initial Teacher Training

@DrHidson | @PGCEIDL

University of Sunderland | Research and Knowledge Exchange

Teachers engaging with research

- The sector is geared towards developing a **research-rich** and **self-improving** educational system predicated on the capacity for teachers to engage with research
- … starts with **initial teacher trainees** and their mentors
- Continues with Early Career Teachers (ECTs) and their mentors
- Professional development
- School improvement

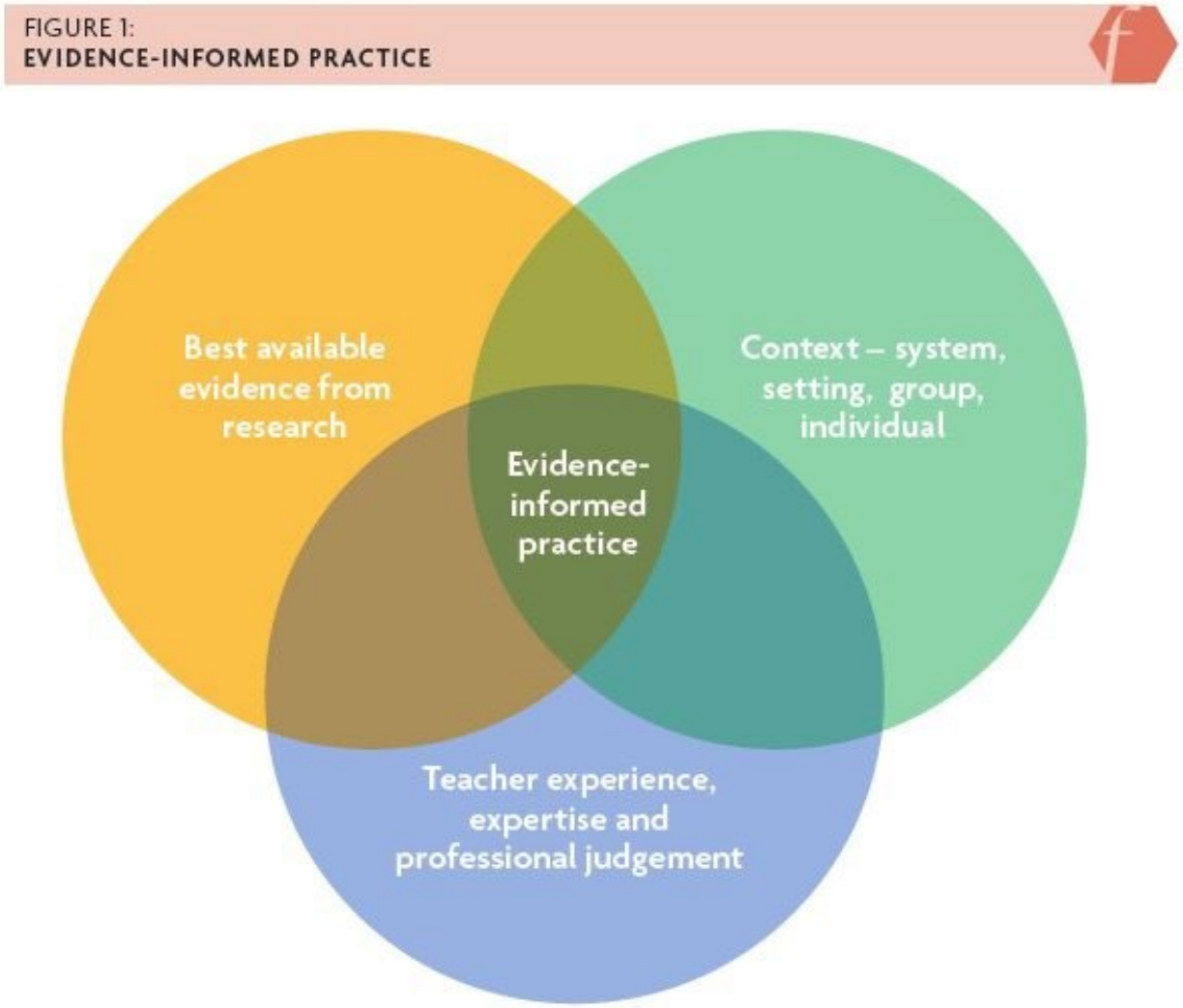


Figure adapted from Scutt C (2018)

International initial teacher training

- 25,000 schools in total in the UK → half a million teachers → 9 million pupils
- Over 13,180 English-medium international schools → 571,228 teaching staff → 5.8 million pupils
- Around 6481 British-oriented international schools → 282,600 staff → 2.9 million pupils

Statistics from GOV.UK and ISC Research (2022)

PGCE → four modules → 120 credits

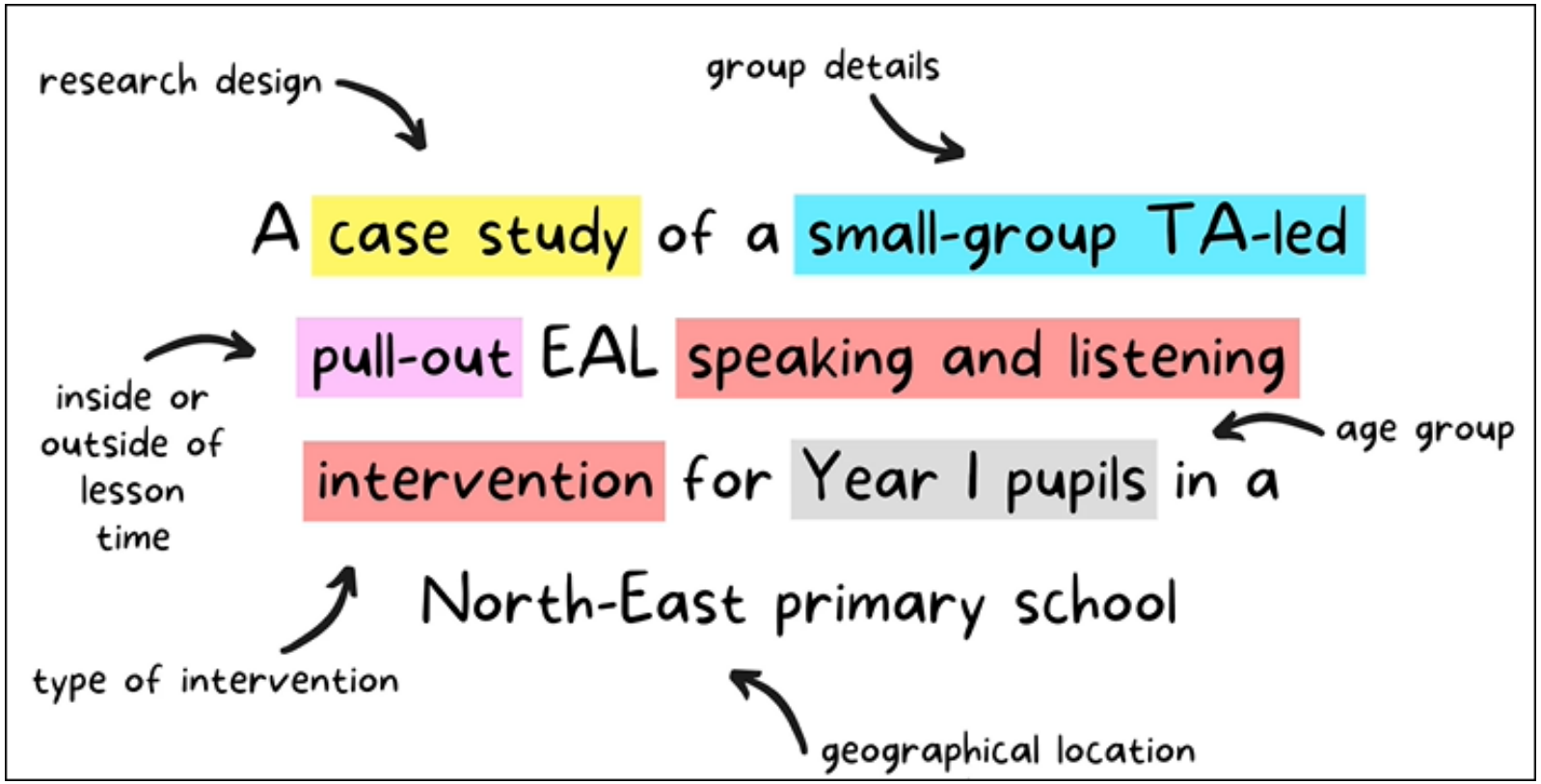
TEACHING EXPERIENCE

SUBJECT STUDIES

CASE STUDY

ACTION RESEARCH

Development of learning: “The Case Study”



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Contexts

Ethical approval

Doing no harm

Insider research

Anonymity

Criticality

- Adhering to **ethical approval** → not interviewing pupils (or parents!)
- Doing **no harm** e.g. when and when **not** to observe
- The role of the **insider-researcher**, and/or participant observer status
- **Anonymity** – the ethical use of collected material, photos, video
- **Criticality**, not criticism – use the literature for debate

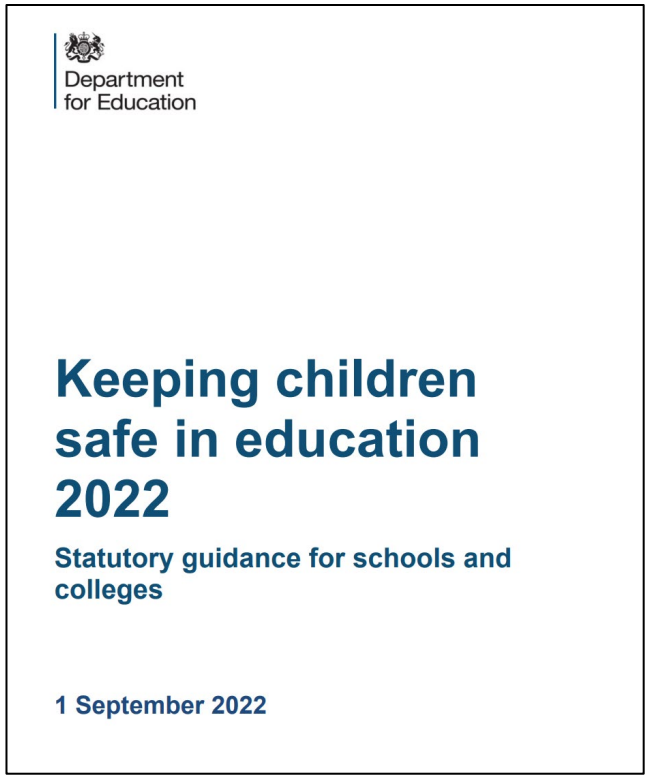
Dilemmas

Aligning research ethics with professional responsibility

- Linking to the wider duty of care
- School policies
- Local and regional policies
- Teachers' standards
- Part Two: Personal and professional conduct

Department for Education

Teachers' Standards


Department for Education

Keeping children safe in education 2022

Statutory guidance for schools and colleges

1 September 2022

Work in progress / challenges

- Dialogic assessment and wider discussions show that trainees **understand** but may lack the ability to **write** about ethics in an informed way
- Currently reviewing the way ethics is **written** about by trainee teachers to link it more closely to professional practice

References

- British Educational Research Association [BERA] (2018) Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, fourth edition, London. https://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethicalguidelines-for-educational-research-2018
- Siddiqui, N. and Wardle, L. (2020) 'Can users judge what is `promising' evidence in education?', *Research intelligence*, 144. pp. 20-21.
- Scutt, C. (2018). 'Is engaging with and in research a worthwhile investment for teachers?' In: Carden, C. (ed) *Primary Teaching: Learning and Teaching in Primary Schools Today*. London: SAGE, pp. 595–610.