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Special educational needs and primary initial teacher education: Student learning experiences in school and university college

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Special Educational Needs and Primary Initial Teacher Education:

Student Learning Experiences in School and University College

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CONTENTS

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Abstract

This case study follows the learning experiences of 2nd Year initial teacher education (ITE) students during a module on Individual Learning Needs (ILN) and the related school based training placement. Much research has been published on student perceptions of special educational needs (SEN) (Sikes et al, 2007; Cole, 2005; Pearson, 2005) and the ITE process (Nind and Cochrane, 2002; Lambe and Bone, 2006; Jones et al, 2006) or specialist pedagogy (Mitchell, 2008; Norwich and Lewis, 2001) however this research examines their interrelationship. Four themes emerged: how schools define themselves as inclusive; perceptions of SEN; whether specialist pedagogy exists for SEN and how, therefore, higher education institutions should approach ITE.

The student cohort engaged in a Free Association exercise to assess their perceptions of disability and SEN which established a baseline for the developments that followed. The case study includes a focus on four students in two schools who provided deeper insight through their experiences. The impact of the ILN module and school based training were measured in a series of questionnaires, interviews and observations, resulting in a series of recommendations for future ITE development.

Findings include the awareness that students are unable to bridge the barrier between University College and school at this stage. The community of practice that is the inclusive school operates in too alien a fashion for these inexperienced teachers to penetrate. Gaps exist between ethos and practice in schools due to conflicting pressures of personalised learning and bidding for resources for children with SEN and this proves confusing for students who then struggle to apply their emerging perceptions of SEN in their own practice. Student perceptions of a specialism to the teaching of children with SEN is then reinforced, despite the ILN module presenting a 'spectrum of needs' / 'spectrum of teaching strategies' approach.

Tables

Abbreviations

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
CPD	Continued Professional Development
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Disorder
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HLTA	Higher Level Teaching Assistant
ILN	Individual Learning Needs
IQ	Intelligence Quotient
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LA	Local Authority
LEA	Local Education Authority
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
QTS	Qualified Teacher Status
SBT	School-based Training/ School-based Tutor
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
TA	Teaching Assistant
TDA	Teacher Development Agency

Pupils in school are referred to throughout as children

Students in College are referred to either as students or as student

teachers

Lecturers from College are referred to as tutors

The mentor in school is referred to as the school-based tutor

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Special Educational Needs and Primary Initial Teacher Education:

student learning experiences in school and university college

Chapter One   Introduction and Rationale

1.1   Introduction and Rationale

The rationale for pursuing this study was personal and professional. On entering Year Five, my son's classteacher – who was experienced and was also the school's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) – expressed a worry about teaching him. Jack is registered blind, but very able academically, so to me did not seem to present a significant challenge. I had expected that as mainstream education had become more inclusive, aiming to make the curriculum fully accessible to children with a range of special needs, children with sensory impairments would not be unusual. I was interested in trying to understand why such an experienced mainstream teacher expressed concern about teaching a child with special educational needs (SEN); was it just sensory impairments that caused teachers to lack confidence or was there a wider issue about inclusive policies?

As a first step, I completed a small scale study for a Masters module (2007) using a questionnaire to a small number of mainstream teachers, with questions related to the teachers' experience of teaching in inclusive mainstream classes; levels of support and training; aspects of the teaching and the impact on these of having children with SEN in the class; and some more general questions about initial teacher education and inclusion. The responses from the questionnaire identified a lack of confidence and a lack of

training as key issues. The teachers highlighted a lack of knowledge of a range of conditions and lack of support as contributory factors. Confidence was not a particularly good measure as it did not necessarily relate to performance, but more important was the fact that the teachers claimed to have received very little training in SEN during their initial teacher education (ITE). The focus on initial teacher education was especially pertinent to my professional role as Head of Department for Primary Education at a higher education institution (HEI). As the teachers in my Masters (2007) study were working in a school that described itself as inclusive – as had Jack's – I identified a need for further investigation into how a school's understanding of inclusion was shared with teachers and how it impacted on their teaching as, clearly for these teachers, there was some feeling of inadequacy. This led to my proposal for further, doctoral, research (2008). At this stage the research themes were the impact of a policy of inclusion on teachers and children and how this related to initial teacher education. To appreciate how far my Masters (2007) research reflected a wider picture and, thus, the validity of my proposed research for a wider audience, it was important to place these themes in a national context.

1.2   National Context

In the newly qualified teacher (NQT) survey carried out annually by the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) (TDA,2010), the respondents' perception of their ability to meet the needs of the range of children in the class had scored low in recent years across the country. The newly qualified teachers who had trained at my institution followed this trend, which itself mirrored what the teachers had recorded in the Masters study I had

undertaken. The feedback from this doctoral study and the national survey responses, therefore, appeared to be pertinent beyond their immediate context of my HEI. Understanding why teachers felt that initial teacher education had inadequately prepared them for the inclusive mainstream workplace could, therefore, have an impact beyond my personal context giving wider purpose to the research.

Towards the end of this study the government published the Green Paper 'Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability' a consultation (DfE, 2011), with special educational needs identified as a national priority for schools and initial teacher educators. This confirmed that reviewing initial teacher education in my institution and identifying any aspects of ITE that students found hindered their understanding or teaching capability in relation to SEN and inclusive teaching, continued to be of general interest to policy makers and practitioners in education. The Green Paper identified several areas for improvement including early identification of need, greater involvement of parents and changes in SEN categorisation leaving schools with more responsibility for meeting the children's needs. Schools were expected to follow a policy of inclusion unless there was a compelling reason not to do so and to aim to meet parental wishes, because schools were expected to and wanted to,

> personalise learning for all children, to make education more innovative and responsive to the diverse needs of individual children, so reducing our reliance on separate SEN structures and processes and raising the achievement of the many children (DfES, 2004, Introduction).

Teachers appeared to have a perception that there was a specialism about teaching children with special educational needs above and beyond 'normal' teaching skills which they did not recognise was reflected in the quote above as 'learning for all'. This led to the third theme for my research – whether there was, in fact, a specialist body of knowledge, or pedagogy, related to SEN that was not adequately addressed in ITE. This perception was, I felt, reinforced by the teaching in ITE where SEN was given special attention and students were often introduced to a range of conditions as if they bore no resemblance to 'normal' childhood behaviour or development. This potentially gave rise to the beliefs that a) any deviation from 'the norm' was regarded as 'a problem' and b) that 'normal' was perceived as 'correct' and deviation as 'needing correction'. This led to a need to examine models of SEN and disability and how far a student teacher's belief system impacted on their teaching – thus the fourth theme emerged during the first year of this doctoral study – how far did a student's values, experience and attitude impact on their initial teacher education and practice in schools? Having established the pertinence of my study to the national scene and the potential value of any outcomes to other practitioners or policy makers, a closer analysis of my particular setting and context was required.

1.3   Local Context

My study was located in a four year undergraduate Early Years QTS degree entitled Primary Education in the Early Years (3-7) (QTS). The course had an intake of c.78 students each year and had been validated in 2007 for September 2007 entry. The students for the study were the second cohort to start the programme.

Although my original intention had been a broad study of the impact of inclusion on teachers, children and ITE: as I engaged in further reading and engaged in discussions with schools a more focused study on the themes became more appropriate and would have more potential impact. As I was the tutor responsible for special educational needs in the Early Years four year undergraduate programme, I had an ideal opportunity to focus on my module on Individual Learning Needs in the second year of the programme to investigate the four themes that had emerged in relation to the module and school-based placement. The module was taught around the school-based placement and was developed from a social constructivist learning paradigm. Social constructivism, in terms of my own teaching was evident in the mode of delivery, where students were introduced to new material, received scaffolding tasks to carry out within their group – drawing on their personal experiences and their experiences as developing professionals – and then assimilated the new understanding through application to case studies and other practical activity. I expected that modelling learning in this way would encourage students to apply similar processes to the children's learning in school, and not expect that teaching children with SEN would follow a different journey, just may have different start or finish points. So it was

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possible to engage in a case study of the student learning experience related to the four themes and the impact on these of students engaged in college-based and school-based learning because the students would be working with me throughout the time period from the beginning of the module, through school-based placement and then returning for the end of the module.

It was my premise that the Individual Learning Needs module in college could promote perceptions of SEN different from those arising from the students' learning in school, due to the context differences and the personnel involved, as well as the obvious differences of application – one academic, one professional practice. As was the case with the social constructivist approach to their own learning I was demonstrating to the students that they needed to apply the theory they encountered in college to the practice in school. However, as they were still relatively new to the initial teacher education process and they had yet to be responsible for planning the learning of children with SEN, I was aware that I needed to understand their stage of development and to explore how students were learning within these particular situations, how their perception of themselves as professionals was developing at the same time as their knowledge and understanding of teaching children with SEN. This related to the themes of ITE, specialist pedagogy and perceptions as well as acknowledging that the schools' varying understanding of inclusion might impact on the student learning experience. Students were not learning from a position of absolute beginners, they all brought with them perceptions, values and attitudes as a result of personal experiences and prior education. Dependent upon the situation in which the students found themselves developing their professional awareness and skills, these perceptions, values and attitudes

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would be challenged or reinforced – which would impact on future learning in their next placements.

That students learn in an environment that develops their sense of themselves as teachers and that relies on social construction of knowledge, skills and identity is described by Lave and Wenger (2009) as situational learning.

> As an aspect of social practice, learning involves the whole person; it implies not only a relation to specific activities, but a relation to social communities – it implies becoming a full participant, a member, a kind of person (p.53).

This is an accurate description of initial teacher education – the purpose of which is to enable students to become members of the school community with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to be a professional participant. Lave and Wenger (2009) describe communities of practice engaged in an apprenticeship model, which is how some schools approach initial teacher education; but it is this apprenticeship that can cause difficulties for student teachers because it does not always provide sufficient insight into the language or rationale behind particular activity for students to 'translate' what they are witnessing. Wenger (2008) classified this as a boundary, with boundary objects such as 'artefacts, documents, terms, concepts' (p.105). In my doctoral research, it emerged that the 'broker' for the boundaries should be the mentor and Link Tutor from college. Brokering includes 'connections provided by people who can introduce elements of one practice into another' (p.105). I had made assumptions early on that the school-based placement itself included sufficient opportunities for students to apply theory into practice without further brokering, but their inability to make the move independently from college-based to school-based learning

emerged as a key element of the themes related to student perceptions, ITE and specialist pedagogy and formed the underpinning of emerging theory concerning how student teachers should develop their knowledge and practice related to children with SEN in mainstream classes.

The many contexts and individual circumstances made the study challenging as the data was not easily attributable to an aspect of the course, but could be due to students' previous understanding and school-based experiences. As the study unfolded, therefore, a holistic perspective of relationships between teachers, mentors, tutors and students was examined to define how an ITE programme could enable student teachers develop an awareness of children as individuals and meet their needs in a mainstream classroom.

So, from the first concern about a teacher not feeling confident about teaching Jack emerged a series of related questions and findings from my Masters study (2007) and from discussions with schools and literature during the first year of this research study. The focus moved from the children and teachers to the process of initial teacher education, the foundation of the practice that was evident in the teachers who had responded to my first questionnaire. The themes developed from this route and formalised themselves into the four questions below as I was approaching the end of my first year and writing my first literature review.

1.4   Themes

The four themes that had emerged from the Masters study (2007) to the point

at which the case study of the student learning experience commenced

developed into the following questions:

1.   How do schools define themselves as inclusive?

2.   How far are student teachers' perceptions of SEN and inclusion

    influenced by a) their previous experiences, b) their school-based

    experiences and c) the individual learning needs module?

3.   Was there perceived to be a specialist body of knowledge, skills or

    pedagogies involved in teaching children with SEN?

4.   How do the above fit within a model of adult learning and effective

    teacher education?

Each theme contributed to the understanding of the student teacher's journey

through the period of their first school-based experience to the end of their

second year placement and ILN module; together they would provide a

rounded view of the processes involved and how these were experienced by

the students themselves. An overview of how this emerged is summarised

below:

1.   Inclusion was defined by the Department for Education in 2011 as

'working in partnership with parents and agencies help(ing) schools

ensure educational provision offers children and young people equal

access and opportunities for successful learning' (DfE, 2011). This is only

one definition of many and it was published late into my research, but it

reiterated the focus for schools on the practicalities of inclusion – that

schools had responsibility for the children and that equality of opportunity

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was expected. It appears to be a clear definition, but for the sake of this study I needed to know whether schools defined themselves this way and how this was manifest in their school. Student teachers would have been introduced to the idea that schools were inclusive of a broad range of children with special needs, some of whom would previously have entered special provision. However, differing experiences in schools may have impacted on the development of these emerging professionals and therefore on their skills in teaching children with SEN. The original question, above, was too focused on the school as an institution, whereas the individual teachers within an inclusive school had demonstrated that the overall policy of inclusion had still resulted in differing perceptions of practice. Thus it became a broader aspect in the case study whereby the school's understanding of inclusion and its application in the classroom was examined as well as the resulting impact on student teachers.

What emerged from this research study was that teachers and student teachers supported the ethos of inclusion and agreed that children with a range of special educational needs should have access to mainstream education. However teachers demonstrated attitudes and practice that did not appear to provide equal opportunities and relied on labelling children in order to receive the funding required for support. Students picked up on this in their observations and struggled to maintain their theoretical stance from the college course.

2.   For the student teachers there was a complex range of attitudes, understandings and perceptions to accommodate from both college and school as well as from their own personal experiences. The belief that

student perceptions are important to their interaction with children with SEN is well researched, as is the development of models of disability into which these perceptions can be categorised. Richards (2010) and Brownlee and Carrington (2000) exemplify the research on perceptions related to SEN that considered that trainee teachers needed to have their perceptions challenged and shaped by practical experience of those with a disability or special need – Richards (2010) as part of a placement in a special school and Brownlee and Carrington (2000) through interaction with a disabled teaching assistant. However, for my study I felt it was more important that students reviewed their perceptions within the taught module and then examined how these perceptions were affecting their practice in the mainstream environment. Richards (2010) and Brownlee and Carrington (2000) both evidenced an improvement in confidence from their students, but the risk was that by employing their methods students would have their perception of children with SEN as a separate and special group reinforced. Brownlee and Carrington's (2000) approach could shame students into feeling guilty about their previous perceptions as they worked with the teaching assistant with cerebral palsy and encourage a sympathetic response rather than a better understanding of their role in the inclusive classroom. Richards (2010) identified one of her own concerns as once students are back in the mainstream environment and are 'later encountering difficulty with pupils this could lead them to remember 'just the place' for them to be sent away to' (p.113). Whilst acknowledging that experience within a special school is beneficial, I believed that it was more important for student teachers in their first experience focusing on individual learning needs to concentrate on relationship building with individual children and thereby encouraging

positivity from the student teacher towards all children in the mainstream setting; which I felt would be more powerful as a message for students that they were able to meet all their needs and that they could be confident about their abilities. In the research, therefore, I explored student perceptions before, during and after school-based training to measure how far this was the case and the influences on them.

Each stakeholder in their development was, at various times, a stronger influence than the others and it was how the student teacher applied these influences in different settings that was of interest as it indicated how far they could rationalise them for themselves. Students were seen as emerging professionals who brought to college their previous experiences, values and attitudes. Models of SEN and disability were explored with the students, as their response to these was perceived to be a good indicator of how they would subsequently approach children with special educational needs in their classroom practice. Their perceptions of SEN would influence their planning, delivery and assessment as well as their relationships with children with SEN. Students' perceptions were considered throughout the study to assess how far the college-based and the school-based elements of ITE impacted on them personally as well as professionally.

3. As could be seen by my original Masters study (2007), experienced teachers could believe that there was something fundamentally different about teaching children with special educational needs or disabilities. This had resulted in a lack of confidence from the teachers that they had the required skills and strategies to meet the

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needs of children with SEN in mainstream classes; perpetuated by a model of ITE that taught SEN modules separately from modules related to general teaching skills. It was my premise that this led to a false assumption that children with SEN could be viewed as a set of symptoms to be cured, rather than individual learners with a range of abilities and needs. This study, therefore, examined how far students believed there to be a specialist pedagogy but also whether these beliefs were held in the schools in which they trained and how far they impacted on practice.

This aspect of the research proved to be the least predictable element as the Individual Learning Needs module focused initially on viewing teaching as meeting all needs; focusing on abilities and continua of teaching strategies to meet these needs. But it appeared that as soon as they went on to complete the block of school placement, students were once again immersed in labels and the perceived need for specialism and they did not yet have the experience to maintain their original perspective and confidence. The power of the school as a community of practice in this respect and the potential barriers to student teachers understanding the rationale behind school practice, underlined the challenges faced by initial teacher education to provide the language for students and to enable them to implement their own strategies during school placement.

4.   The elements above occurred within the context of adult learning and teacher education.

> The 'poor fit' which many novice teachers feel between what
> they have learned about teaching and its application to practice
> is a well-known phenomenon, despite continuing attempts to
> address the issue through various forms of apprenticeship

models and school-university partnership schemes (Day, 2003, p.52).

Acknowledging the challenges identified by Day (2003), the roles of mentors, tutors, teachers and students were considered for how they interacted in order for students to become adept at meeting a range of children's needs. The intention was for an understanding of adult education to be integrated with this to create an effective framework for the development of teachers in relation to the teaching of children with SEN, given the particular professional learning environment of schools and colleges.

However, as Day (2003) suggested, although the stakeholders within the partnership were completing their roles as described in the partnership agreements and students expressed the opinion that the Individual Learning Needs module was meeting its objectives, the students were not able to progress beyond Dreyfus and Dreyfus' (1986) (cited in Day, 2003) category of Novice exemplified by 'rigid adherence to taught rules or plans; little situational perception (and) no discretionary judgement' (Day, 2003, p.50) in relation to the teaching of children with SEN. School and college operated effectively in parallel and where they crossed over it was to moderate judgements against the teaching standards and ensure student entitlement. It appeared that students required a 'translator' for how taught rules or plans could be adapted to suit the needs of individual children; how they could perceive the rationale behind teachers' actions that appeared to be contradicting their ethos and how they could judge appropriate opportunities to implement the strategies they had wanted to practice.

The four themes provided a supportive framework for the research and literature review, but were refined and more clearly focused once data began to emerge. Initially, I expected to describe the school context and examine the student experience within it – however, what emerged was a more intense debate about the difference between ethos and practice, about how the partnership should be working and about ITE as adult learning. The student learning experience was, thus, unexpected in some areas and led to redirection and new understanding that had not been predicted. Key new concepts to emerge included:

- Understanding related to why students needed to be taught in a particular way about individual learning needs so that they were able to apply their understanding to teaching for the full range of needs in the classroom setting; accommodating their previous experiences and supporting them in challenging values and attitudes

- Theory and practitioner guidance related to the inability of students to effectively cross the boundary from college to school in the area of teaching children with SEN at this stage in their professional development, due to the lack of an able guide to support them in understanding the school community's language and conflicts between ethos and practice in relation to meeting the needs of children with SEN

- That a review of the roles and responsibilities of partnership was necessary to better understand the andragogy of ITE, not just the professional skills development, particularly in an aspect as challenging as meeting the individual needs of all children for whom they have responsibility.

1.5 Thesis Organisation

Convention suggests that one should organise a thesis according to literature review, methodology then data analysis. However the complexity of this study and the plethora of data, resulted in a different organisation being easier to navigate for myself as the researcher and for the reader. As a result my thesis is organised according to the four themes. Each theme is pursued through literature review and then analysis of the data emerging from the case study, resulting in focused conclusions to each theme. In the final chapter these are synthesised to create new understanding of the student learning experience in relation to teaching children with SEN; recommendations for other institutions and for further study and consideration of my personal and professional development.

This thematic approach builds a holistic picture of the student learning experience through close examination of one aspect at a time; thus providing the opportunity – once data began to emerge - to guide ongoing data production and to identify further aspects for analysis. An example of this was the way in which the questions for the interviews and questionnaires were influenced not only by previous responses, but also by perceptions emerging from further reading. The thematic approach leads to a fluidity of ideas and thus to better outcomes than would have been possible by attempting to consider the research question as one entity.

As such the thesis is structured so that:

Chapter Two outlines the methodological approach chosen for the study; the research paradigm and the resulting methods of data production.

Chapters Three to Six consider each of the research themes in terms of prior research and data analysis. The data was iterative and 'live' as the student learning experience was being explored as it happened in a short period of time during the students' second academic year on the programme. It was an intense period of time from January to May, which resulted in data informing more than one theme and enabling progress towards a general understanding of the case.

The review of literature led to the design of data production methods – such as the free association exercise emerging from research by Pearson (2005); module design – the use of the continua of needs (Norwich and Lewis, 2007) to consider individual learners and to questions asked to the students and staff. The themes were examined separately, using a range of research methods, so as to create a clearer path through the complexity of the issues and confidence that results could be relied upon.

Chapter Seven draws on the key outcomes from Chapters Three to Six to assess the data and to develop a theoretical stance in relation to the development of teachers in the area of learning to teach children with SEN in mainstream classes. The chapter reflects on the validity of the study, any potential recommendations for practitioners and similar programmes and what can ultimately be applied to my programme and my own practice.

Chapter Two   Research Methodology

2.1   Research Methodology

As explained in the previous chapter, whilst my review of literature had started during my initial Masters study and continued throughout this research, I decided to organise the presentation of my thesis so that the methodological approach, rather than the literature review was included first as the review of the literature, commonly expected at this stage, would be integrated into the thematically related chapters which follow.

In order to gain an insight into the complexity of the initial teacher education process in the area of SEN and inclusion, I decided to take a case study approach: the case study being the student learning experience during their second year of a four year programme in relation to school-based training and a college module on Individual Learning Needs. 'Case studies frequently follow the interpretive tradition of research – seeing the situation through the eyes of participants' (Cohen et al, 2007, p.257), which supported the intention of evidencing the interaction between college and school from the students' perspective and therefore creating a more rounded view of their learning experience. The department gathers a lot of quantitative data throughout the academic year from external surveys, Link Tutor reports, module evaluation and questionnaires, but there had been no in depth reflection on the relationship between school and college experiences specifically focusing on their professional development in relation to teaching of children with SEN. As such this research offered a qualitative view on the learning experience from the perspective of the students and the schools in

which they gained their experience and had the capacity to identify any possible tensions – or facilitators – between the two aspects. The case study initially took a broad view of the cohort of second year students and school staff; honing down to the specific experiences of four students and their placement schools. This provided a good opportunity to produce different types of data from different sources for both students and schools which gave a richness to the data set and gave the potential for application to other year groups within our own institution and, possibly, to other institutions. The student learning experience was complex so a range of data gathering methods provided opportunities to focus on specific elements and perceptions as they emerged.

With the complexity of their learning situation where perceptions, previous experiences and college-based study combined with college- and school-based learning, it was appropriate that the 'story' of their development was told from the perspectives of key stakeholders in ITE – the students, the classteachers, the school-based tutors. This was to be achieved by focusing on the Individual Learning Needs (ILN) module and second year teaching placement. I focused on second year Early Years students as these were the ones to whom I was teaching the module on Individual Learning Needs and who had a staggered period of school-based placement, during which they could reflect on how their understanding of SEN was developing and how their school-based experience was influencing them.

In addition to this broad-based view, I chose to focus on two schools and the four students within them for their perceptions of the issues related to college-based and school-based experiences. The research process was

designed to gain initial perceptions of inclusion and teaching children with SEN in mainstream from both the schools and the students; then to focus more closely on the lived experiences of the case study students as they embarked upon the module and the school experience, compared at each stage with the whole cohort's perspective.

Holliday (2005) described the use of one piece of broad data to inform the development of others, in this instance observation and interviews informing questionnaires, as 'progressive focusing' (p.107). In my research I used progressive focusing when I used initial analysis of the staff questionnaires to structure the questions for the School-based tutor (SBT) interviews and then analysis of the student questionnaires to inform the case study student interviews. This allowed for deeper discussion of trends within the data or analysis of unexpected outcomes. In this way the questionnaires indicated dominant views and trends and helped to inform aspects for closer analysis in the collection of qualitative data. This focusing was supported by integrating the literature reviewed into the research process. As an understanding of each theme emerged from the literature and the data production, the methods became more refined. For example; the emerging awareness that stakeholders' influence on the development of the students in school needed further understanding, prompted me to include the questions on influential individuals in the Perceptions Survey and Mid Module Review.

2.2   Research Paradigm

The choice to include students from the second year of the ITE programme, where they were expected to apply their developing knowledge of individual

learning needs to their school-based training, reflected my belief in the constructivist paradigm – that knowledge was gained through an active engagement with the social and cultural world. From experience of initial teacher education, I had seen how students developed their understanding of effective teaching through relationships with other students, teachers in school, tutors in college, children and parents and how they re-evaluated their original perspectives as much through taught sessions as through practical interaction with others. Ontologically speaking, 'constructivists believe that there are multiple, constructed realities … that it is impossible to distinguish causes from effects' (Lincoln and Guba cited in Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p.85) which challenged the research methods to identify how far developing knowledge was due to the design of the programme, the location of the students, the interaction of the individuals within them or a combination of these.

This was a challenge I had recognised early in the study as student perceptions, attitudes and experiences impacted on their understanding of SEN and inclusion and it was difficult to assess how far these arose from the taught programme; school experience or from their previous life experiences. However, the exploratory case study approach allowed for these perceptions to emerge and enabled a reflection on how they developed and changed during the school based placement experience. As the case study was the student learning experience, there was no pressure to create the perfect training model as a result of this exploration, but to develop a theoretical stance on what constituted an enabling learning environment and relationship between school-based and college-based learning.

Naturalistic research asserts that participants are influenced by the context in which they find themselves, so this research had to take account of the contextual influences in analysing the data. One of the contextual influences was my role within the research, as tutor and researcher,

> researchers are in the world and of the world. They bring their own biographies to the research situation and participants behave in particular ways in their presence. Reflexivity suggests that researchers should acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research, seeking to understand their part in, or influence on, the research (Cohen et al, 2007, p.171).

I believed that my own knowledge in this field had been constructed from my experiences as a mother of a child with SEN; from my experiences as a primary school teacher in inclusive settings with extensive experience of teaching children with mild to moderate needs and from my lecturing in the subject. Whilst this helped me empathise with the social constructivist paradigm it also led me to acknowledge that part of the narrative in this study was, potentially, the impact of my presence on the data emerging from students and schools. I was aware from the beginning that this could be an issue, and by acknowledging the potential difficulties that could arise from this, I put contingencies in place: for example by not observing the tutorials myself, but by having them videoed.

2.3 Methodology

A case study of the student learning experience utilizing a range of data gathering methods was ideal to create a rounded view of the situation and to balance the views of all students in the group and all teachers in the schools with the particular perspectives of the case study students and the school-

based tutors and students' classteachers in the case study schools. In this way it was possible to choose data production and analysis approaches that best suited the individual questions, where the methods ran parallel at times, but also sequentially - for example, when I wanted to use the questionnaire data to inform the qualitative interviews. The numerical data emerging from the questionnaires was analysed with the narrative data to establish a general perspective within a focused study; this allowed me to narrow the focus as the study progressed to the key elements of the school and college-based study. But more importantly, being open to the use of a range of data gathering methods allowed for a reflection on the iteration of data and the opportunity to identify an appropriate method to respond - for example discussion with the focus group that emerged organically from the module teaching provided valuable context to the learning.

'Case studies can be described as particularistic, descriptive and heuristic' (Gay et al, 2009, p.427). The particularistic element was complex with multiple players, settings and influences so that the descriptive element identified and elaborated upon the roles of those involved as well as how the ITE process was perceived and experienced by them, before it was possible to focus down on the specific case study of the student learning experience. 'New insights into the way things are and into the kinds of relationships that exist among participants in the study' (Gay et al, 2009, p.427) provided the opportunity to reflect on the community of practice the case study students found themselves within and the influence this had on their confidence and competence in teaching children with SEN.

This approach ensured that the complexity of the students' position and the process of initial teacher education emerged. It fitted well with the notion of naturalistic inquiry where 'behaviour and, thereby, data are socially situated, context-related, context-dependent and context rich' (Cohen et al, 2007, p.167) but equally recognised that looking at the perspectives of the students and schools as a group placed this behaviour within a wider context than just the two case study schools. Whilst the case study was context specific, there was an element of inference transferability, which Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) describe for mixed methods research as – 'the degree to which the conclusions from a mixed methods study may be applied to other settings, people, time periods, contexts' (p.27). By examining data from questionnaires with the contextual qualitative data, the overall picture of initial teacher education in this particular circumstance could resonate with other providers in such a way that they could probably infer a meaning from the outcomes that could be trialled within their programme, even if the exact nature of their course were different.

According to Yin (2009)

> you would use the case study method because you wanted to understand a real-life phenomenon in depth, but such understanding encompassed important contextual conditions – because they were highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study (p.18).

So, allowing the participants in the case study to describe their experiences of the ITE programme, to explore their perceptions of SEN and inclusion and probe their thoughts on the ITE programme resulted in a broad range of data which, through a process of analysis, resulted in an in depth view of the whole experience of teacher development in relation to SEN in our context

and signposted ways forward. Opie (2006) also considered the notion of case study as 'real situation, with real people' but added that it was often in 'an environment familiar to the researcher' (p.74). The challenge, therefore, was for me to allow the voices of the participants to emerge without personal interpretations and influence arising from the fact that I came to this research with a range of 'hats' on: subject leader for SEN early years; head of department; mother; former primary teacher; progress tutor. This was why I needed to consider the ways in which I could address the issues related to insider research.

2.3.1 Insider research

It was obvious, though, that this study was insider research as I was using my own practice for part of the study. It did, though, carry some risks, not least a preconception of what one wanted to happen within the research and, therefore, an interpretation of data that favoured this vision. Robson (2002) described the disadvantages as

> insider problems: the insider may have preconceptions about issues and/or solutions. There can also be hierarchy difficulties … and possibly the 'prophet in own country' phenomenon (i.e. outside advice may be more highly valued) (p.535).

But in terms of advantages, he went on to say that

> you will have pre-existing knowledge and experience base about the situation and the people involved … practitioner insights and role help in the design, carrying out and analysis of useful and appropriate studies (Robson, 2002, p.535).

To overcome the potential negatives of conducting insider research, I informed both students and schools about the nature of my research and

their role within it and much of the student data production occurred within the ILN module so it fitted with the themes being discussed. Orland-Barak (2009) suggested that different forms of practitioner – enquiry 'move us away from the narrow definition of inquiry as a particular set of methodologies into a more encompassing view of practitioner inquiry as a paradigm for change' (p.112). This suggested a power that overrides the potential disadvantages and helped me as a practitioner – researcher in the endeavour to understand the perspectives of others to highlight aspects of the programme that worked effectively in their development and those that they considered to be less influential.

Drake (2010) described the difficulties in her research due to her position as a practitioner – researcher as how to interpret different messages from the same participants. When participants were speaking with her they were projecting different ideas from when she asked them to write a response, due to her presence in the interview situation. She warned that because practitioner – researchers often come to their study after years of experience of the issues under study, they were too close to the subject and the participants and could be tempted to influence the outcomes. This also related to Robson's (2002) earlier comments on hierarchy. Students may have felt that there was a 'right answer' and presented me with this rather than their genuine perceptions. One of the ways to alleviate these issues was to use a range of methods to gather data, so students did not become fatigued with continual questionnaires or surveys along similar lines, but were discussing the relevant areas in the module to understand the language and concepts being examined and were used to presenting data as part of the module.

A range of methods were employed to gather data: free association, interviews, journals, observations, questionnaires, focus group; with a range of participants both within the case study population and more broadly. These are explained in more detail later in this chapter. Whether these were applied in parallel – for example the questionnaires in sessions and those in school – or sequentially – for example the questionnaires with students followed by the interviews with the case study students – the purpose was to provide a broad view of the range of experiences within ITE and a specific focus on teaching children with SEN. The context in which the research took place and the choice of two case study schools resulted in a lack of generalization, but it could be possible for other researchers to infer a meaning for themselves.

But what about the other 'hats' – mother and former primary teacher? The insider – outsider roles were not so clear here, but could still impact on the interpretation of data. There was a point in his education when I really had to fight to keep Jack in mainstream education so, as Plowright (2011) pointed out 'personal reactivity may impact on the research as a result of the responses to the researcher as a person rather than as a researcher' (p.71). I would not like it personally if students stated that children with a visual impairment should be in special schools; but I had to accept as a researcher that it would be a piece of data, not a statement for me personally. As for my role as primary teacher and headteacher – I held those roles for ten years, so I understood some of the challenges that the case study schools would be facing and I appreciated some of the hurdles that developing teachers had to overcome; however I did not know these schools and had not experienced

my programme as a student teacher, so this experience was to some extent irrelevant – it helped me understand the nuances and the language, but not the particular circumstances.

2.3.2 Ethical considerations

I gained verbal agreement from the headteachers of the schools prior to approaching the school-based tutors to engage in the research as the headteachers were less likely to feel an obligation to me as one of our partnership schools and could objectively reflect on the potential impact of the research on the school and the teachers involved. I decided not to involve children in the research as I did not want to either adversely affect the classes the students were working within or for my research to impact on the students' opportunities to succeed in their school placement. I did not believe that children's testimony would be necessary for the case study as it was predominantly on the students' perceptions of their learning experience. I discussed the purpose of the research with the case study students (Appendix N), once I had agreement from the schools (Appendix N), in one to one meetings following an explanatory email. The students may have felt some compulsion to take part as I was their Head of Department, but the meetings were open and friendly and I did not detect any obligation in their manner. To reinforce this, I asked the students before and after each interview whether they were happy for the data to be used and were in agreement with further involvement. I had a good relationship with the students prior to the research, so did not feel that they would have been reticent in expressing their concerns. All participants from schools and college were reassured at each stage that their identities would not be

released and they all received the sections of the thesis relevant to them to confirm that they were happy this had been maintained. I did not receive any concerns from the students or staff that the data analysis or conclusions regarding how their data had been expressed or analysed, nor about the conclusions that had been drawn, even when these had raised questions about the training process.

> Researchers must recognize the right of any participant to withdraw from the research for any or no reason, and at any time, and they must inform them of this right. In all such circumstances researchers must examine their own actions to assess whether they have contributed to the decision to withdraw and whether a change of approach might persuade the participants to re-engage (BERA, 2011, p.6).

School B withdrew from the process after having completed the questionnaires, although there was no formal communication to this effect. However, as I had followed BERA guidelines to reassure all participants that they had the right to withdraw, I knew that this was an aspect of the research I needed to accommodate. This potential outcome had been anticipated in the use of two case study schools and I still received valuable data from the students within this school and from the staff questionnaires.

Apart from the obvious risks to any reliability of my data if I influenced it, there was an ethical consideration that I must allow the student teachers and the schools to speak with their voice and not to be influenced by mine. Stutchbury and Fox (2009) developed an ethical framework from Seedhouse's (1998) ethical grid and Flinders' (1992) work on educational ethics, which they applied to educational research. The original grid was represented by a pyramid with four layers: external, consequential, deontological and relational. This was adapted to create four layers focusing

on ecological, utilitarian, deontological and individual; with twenty four sets of questions overall. Analysing my own research using the four broad areas, I found the following:

1. **Ecological:** I had given due consideration to the culture within which I was working and the potential impact my research could have. This was one of the reasons I had not included the students' classroom practice and children's perspectives in the study – I did not want to impact on their placement unduly.

2. **Utilitarian:** potentially my research could have a good outcome for the next cohorts of students, even if the cohort included in the study would not feel an immediate benefit. All of the students in the cohort would, however, have been encouraged to become more reflexive around their teaching and in these issues in particular.

3. **Deontological:** From the beginning all participants – including those taking part in the questionnaires rather than the focused case study, had been aware of why I was asking them to complete questionnaires, surveys etc. I had included data production within taught sessions, so that it could form part of the discussion and reflections, thus ensuring that it was not an onerous task on top of the module expectations. However I also informed students at the beginning of the module about my research and requested that they completed the questionnaires as part of this process.

4. **Individual:** I had worked with the case study students and teachers individually so that I could reassure them as I produced data. In some cases the questions I used were too specialist, so in a one-to-one situation it was not embarrassing to break them down. For example one of the case study classteachers had not heard of models of SEN and disability, so I was able to expand on the initial question so she did understand and was therefore able to answer it.

The purpose of my research was to explore the student learning experience in initial teacher education related to the teaching of children with SEN. To have authenticity, the study needed to pursue the production of data without overly influencing it. Therefore, the students would be allowed to pursue their course without interference and neither schools nor students would be judged for their views or practices. Flick (2008) evaluated the ethical implications of conduct in educational research where she defines 'four principles of research ethics .... Autonomy ... beneficence ... non-maleficence ...justice' (Flick, 2004, p.123) which Green and Thorogood had applied previously to health ethics. Autonomy needed to be guaranteed in an environment where 'people, unlike the objects of the natural world, are conscious, purposive actors who have ideas about their world and attach meaning to what is going on around them' (Robson, 2002, p.24).

On a practical level autonomy was assured by valuing the opinions of these actors and not criticizing their view of where they came from and the values they held. Beneficence and non-maleficence was at the heart of the normal practice of ITE stakeholders so – providing the students and schools did not feel that the research was distracting them from their normal pattern of work

– this was maintained. Rigour was maintained throughout in these regards and I think it was a measure of student interest in supporting the research that they formed a focus group at the end of the final session of the ILN module to talk further about their experiences. This proved to be valuable data and the similarities to the case study students' reports added to the reliability of my data.

2.3.3 Case study

A case study approach was chosen for its capacity to explore the complexity of a particular circumstance from a range of perspectives using a variety of research methods. The case under study was the learning experience of the students particularly that part of their learning experience that revolved around their second year school placement and the Individual Learning Needs module that wrapped around it. The use of a case study approach provided the opportunity to investigate the impact of those who interacted with the students during this period of time and the perceived effectiveness of strategies used in their school and college professional development. By focusing on the Individual Needs module I could incorporate research exercises and questionnaires into the module time so students were not inconvenienced and had the opportunity to seek clarification. In addition, as the students were undertaking a module in Individual Learning Needs they expected to focus on SEN and inclusion in the school-based placement so, again, the research did not impose an artificial demand on the students and schools. Together this placed the debates we were having in class and the application of theory into practice in school into a research conversation. Students generally, not just the case study students, were being encouraged

to become reflective practitioners particularly within the aspect of teaching children with SEN throughout the module and school-based placement, which helped my research and encouraged students to engage in the surveys and questionnaires.

2.3.3.1 Case study overview

To gain a clearer picture of how the elements of the case study fitted together, the following provides an overview of how each of the strands of the research methods related to my research questions and aims.

Aim: To explore the student learning experience in relation to school and college- based learning focusing on the teaching of children with SEN.

In College	Early Years second Year Students	63
	of whom Case Study Students	4
	School-Based Training Manager	1
	ILN Tutor and Researcher	1
In the two Schools	Teachers and Teaching Assistants	36
	School-Based Tutors	2
	Case Study Classteachers	2

The data above highlights that in some cases populations overlap so, in the case studies, the students were also part of the cohort of Early Years students. I was keen that the case study schools were different in their catchment areas and population because I could then compare outcomes and assess whether any variation was due to circumstance or whether approaches were similar. I devised a set of criteria for school choice to ensure that a range of factors were considered in sampling:

Selection criteria for the Case Study Schools:

- From the complete population of partnership schools involved in 2nd Year school-based placements, the case study schools needed to be at least good in Ofsted ranking in order not to put an unnecessary pressure on a school that might be experiencing challenges. Once the population was reduced by the application of this criterion, I selected those remaining schools which had two Early Years students (many only had one). Finally, of the remaining possible sites, I identified those which had two students who were graded at 1 or 2 in their first placement. 1 and 2 grades indicated a high level of proficiency across the range of the Standards, thus identifying students who were already more confident teachers and, thus, less likely to be adversely affected by the research. Once these criteria were taken into account, there were only about 4 schools remaining – the final two were decided upon as their profiles were similar in Ofsted terms, but involved different catchment areas.

- Both schools had experienced school-based tutors (SBTs) who had been assessed by Link Tutors as providing high quality ITE. The criteria used for this assessment were meeting the entitlement for students in terms of number of observations, tutorials and timetabled lessons; moderation of assessments and external moderators' views where applicable. I also used experienced school-based tutors so that they were less likely to be adversely effected by the demands of the research. The tutors I approached were confident that they could fulfil the research requests.

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Table One below shows the overall design of the study and how each research method was used to help address one or more of the research questions (Q1-Q4). It demonstrates that there was sufficient opportunity for a range of data to relate to each question as well as the opportunity for school colleagues to respond across the research questions, too.

Table One: Research methods and their relation to research questions

Research Method	Q1. SEN and inclusion	Q2. Perceptions and attitudes	Q3. Specialist Pedagogy	Q4. Initial Teacher Education
All Early Years Students				
Free Association Exercise	✓	✓		
ILN Perceptions Questionnaire	✓	✓	✓	
Mid-module Review	✓		✓	✓
End of ILN and L1b SBT questionnaire	✓	✓	✓	✓
Focus Group				✓
Case Study Students				
Pre SBT interview	✓	✓		
Journal One		✓		✓
Journal Two	✓	✓	✓	✓
Paired interview	✓			✓
Research Method	**Q1. SEN and inclusion**	**Q2. Perceptions and attitudes**	**Q3. Specialist Pedagogy**	**Q4. Initial Teacher Education**
Schools				
School Staff Questionnaires	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pre SBT interview	✓			✓
Classteacher interviews	✓		✓	✓
Video observation of tutorial session	✓			
Post SBT interview	✓			✓
Other				
SBT Manager Interview	✓		✓	✓

Table Two demonstrates the range of research tasks undertaken by the students taking the Individual Learning Needs module, the timescale within which that occurred and the specific focus of each activity.

Table Two: Individual Learning Needs Module related methods:

Date	Method	Instruction	Focus
January	Free Association Exercise	Immediate response to words: inclusion, individual learning needs, special educational needs and disability. Students to write 3-5 words for each within a 2 minute time scale	To identify unconscious perceptions of these key themes prior to the beginning of the module
January	ILN Perceptions Questionnaire	Series of questions using Likert scale, comments, 0-10 scale responses	To identify previous experience, confidence levels, initial perceptions of teaching children with SEN
March	Mid-module Review	Likert scale responses, comments and 1-5 ranking	To identify how far students are confident that the objectives of the module are being met and any improvements they would make to either the content or delivery of the module
May	End of ILN and L1b SBT questionnaire	Comments Likert scale 1-5 ranking scale	Analysis of ILN and the Year 2 SBT. Confidence levels, professional development. Perceptions to assess any changes since the baseline questionnaire
May	Focus Group	General, minimally prompted discussion	General comments on ITE and student learning methods

Just like Table Two, Table Three outlines the methods used during the school-based placement period and the purpose of each of these.

Table Three: School-based Placement related methods:

Date	Method	Instruction	Purpose
January	Staff Questionnaires	Series of questions using Likert scale, comments, 0-10 scale responses	To identify previous experience, confidence levels, initial perceptions of teaching children with SEN and ITE
January	SBT Interview	Semi-structured relating to questionnaire feedback and general issues	To explore issues arising from the questionnaires such as differences of opinion and to expand on some of these topics
January	Student Interviews	Semi-structured introductory interview	To discuss early perceptions of teaching children with SEN on SBT

February And March	Student Journals	Students were given prompts to respond to – the first journal entry was during the 2 week preparation period; the second was during the block SBT	To identify any discussions they were having re. SEN and teaching; to discuss feedback they had received and any incidents that they had witnessed
March	Tutorial Observation	Videos of two tutorials with the SBT and students	To analyse the dialogue between the tutor and student in relation to an observed lesson with particular emphasis on SEN and inclusion
May	SBT post SBT interview	Semi-structured	To explore wider issues related to the school's role in ITE
May	Student paired post SBT interview	Semi-structured	To reflect on their professional development during SBT and their views on SEN and inclusion
May	SBT Manager interview	Semi-structured	To discuss the management of ITE and suggestions for improvements to the programme

2.4 Data Analysis

Whilst the case study method had been decided prior to commencing the research and the general research methods chosen, the development of each stage of the study – the questions asked and their connection to those explored via other methods – emerged as the case study progressed. This presented the opportunity to review the data gathered and ensure that the breadth and depth required was assured. One of the challenges to consider was the perspectives from which respondents were coming to the questions and to form a view on how far their personal context would influence their responses. For example, when asked how confident they felt teaching children with SEN, a student and a class teacher may both respond with 5/10 but what they meant by this would not necessarily indicate the same level of confidence and competence in actual practice. Their own personal experiences of SEN and disability, their subject knowledge and their personal self efficacy as a teacher can result in different concepts of what a confidence level at the middle of the scale

might look like. The data can still be compared as the research is a qualitative case study of the respondents' experiences and it does not present a challenge to the authenticity and validity of the results:

> if we wish to do justice to the complexity of our subjects an interpretative approach is unavoidable. It can also be fair, democratic and not patronising, as long as this approach to knowing people through their accounts is applied to the researcher as well as the researched; as long as researchers are not seen as neutral vehicles for representing knowledge in an uncontaminated way (Hollway & Jefferson, 2009, p.3)

As such, therefore, I acknowledged my insider role, but interpretation of the data would go further than this in that my experience as Head of Primary Education would also influence how I coded data – by making some assumptions based on my professional understanding of students, school based training and schools.

In order to provide sufficient opportunity to ensure the quality of the data, I used a range of methods and developed question strands across staff and student data gathering to allow more than one opportunity to reflect on an issue. For example, both staff and students were asked similar questions about inclusion; but students were also provided – via the range of questionnaires – to demonstrate a changing perspective as their school-based training and ILN module progressed. In this way it was possible to explore the effect of their current experiences and compare their response to the class teachers' responses. With the questionnaire and interview combinations it was also possible to explore the research themes in more depth. Using different methods across the themes not only provided an opportunity to reflect on whether the responses were similar but, more importantly, on how perceiving similar themes from different perspectives enhanced the understanding of the theme. In this way

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triangulation does not produce congruent or contradictory representations of an object, but shows different constructions of a phenomenon – for example, at the level of everyday knowledge and at the level of practices (Flick, 2008, p.52).

These different constructions was a key tension to emerge from the research, how one's theoretical belief could be upheld in practice. In this section, therefore, I will examine the methods chosen and how the data was gathered and analysed.

1.   Free Association Exercise:

Free association is a method used in Freudian psychoanalysis designed to disclose to the analyst the patient's subconscious response to a particular stimulus. It is described as 'the disclosure of something that has just then occurred to him, that is not yet understood by him, that may prove to be of no lasting significance' (Bollas, 1992, p.113). It is believed that this response would be the most honest one as the patient is not given time to monitor or compromise their responses; 'free association is the heart of Freud's psychoanalytic method of investigating repressed unconscious processes that determine the form and the two-layered structure (manifest content and latent content)' (Lothane, 2010, p.156) of, for example, dreams. Free association, for my research, was the unconscious response to words presented to students in order to gain an understanding of their perceptions of SEN and inclusion prior to any input during the module, therefore prior to any feelings of 'correctness' in terms of words chosen or opinions held. Free association was used by Pearson (2005) in a similar context to my own when she explored the underlying model of perception used by Secondary PGCE students in defining disability. In the same way as a Freudian psychoanalyst, the process is twofold in that the 'analysand'

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or student presents their word associations and the 'analyst' or researcher provides the coding of these responses.

The free association exercise was the first exercise with the students and they had not even had the module booklet at this stage so could not be influenced by anything I had put before them. The students received a sheet of paper showing four boxes labelled respectively: individual learning needs; special educational needs; inclusion; disability. They were instructed to write three to five words that immediately came to mind on reading the words within a two minute time span. The advantage of free association in psychoanalysis is the spoken response, which will be more spontaneous than the written one. However, with about 33 students per group, writing the task was the only feasible way of managing it.

In analysing data emerging from the free association one is 'dictated by unconscious rather than conscious logic. Our method aims to facilitate moves from the former to the latter, in the belief that researchers' understanding of experience, meaning and identity will be enriched' (Hollway & Jefferson, 2009, p.153). One of the challenges of coding the free association was that I had requested words not a narrative and I did not have the opportunity to follow up the students' initial responses and get clarification of them. As such, I was presented with individual words or phrases from which to draw meaning. My initial coding was a simple topic coding where I organised the words according to whether they indicated a medical or social model of disability. Thus, words such as 'extra support' or 'specialist help' were coded as medical because they reflected a belief that the problem lay with the child and words such as 'differentiate' and

'individual abilities' were coded as social as they reflected a belief that the environment should accommodate the child. In the analysis process I was looking for any evidence of students responding from a particular model of disability which would act as a baseline for the subsequent questionnaires and exercises related to perceptions.

Coding looked, initially, a straightforward process, but as Hollway and Jefferson (2009) argued in their use of free association interviews, researchers were often looking for a coherent response from participants whereas 'free associations defy narrative conventions and enable the analyst to pick up on incoherencies ... and accord them due significance'(p.37). I found that I needed to reclassify my data from a simple medical/social differentiation because of the complexity of perceptions related to disability and inclusion. I discovered through my literature review that these simplistic differences of medical and social presented the idea that there was a dichotomy of views of disability. In fact, classification of perceptions was more complex than this. During the process of analytical coding, therefore, the data was reassessed and it required 'considering the meaning in context, and creating categories that express new ideas about the data' (Richards, 2009, p.102/3). The literature review (see Chapter 4) suggested broader models of functional – perceiving disability as a loss of a particular function or functions – and transactional – perceiving disability as the relationship between a person and their environment. Within these models, six submodels emerged – three per model – and I used these submodels to further categorise the data. I presented both coding exercises at a conference and gathered useful feedback on how well understood the categorisation was and the possibilities offered by the resulting broader

analysis of perceptions for my study. There remained some words and phrases that remained unclassified as I believed that I would have to offer too much of a personal interpretation to make them fit the categorisation.

Once the coding was complete, I was able to graphically represent the data and demonstrate strength of perceptions in each of the four groups. This presentation of data led to a better understanding of one of the key elements to emerge from the research – the challenge of ethos versus practice as can be seen in the data analysis section of chapter 4.

2.   Questionnaires:

I decided to administer questionnaires to students and staff as they allowed for an anonymous response to broad based questions that formed the baseline for follow up interviews and data gathering methods. A face to face situation can make a respondent feel as if they are required to provide a particular politically or socially acceptable answer, particularly in a field such as special educational needs where people fear the use of inappropriate terminology or unacceptable viewpoints. Obvious risk areas with questionnaires are the fact that people may not complete them – something that happened with the school population – and they may not understand the questions. The latter issue was solved with the student group as they completed the questionnaires in my ILN teaching sessions so were able to seek clarity.

For my research, I employed anonymous questionnaires to gather opinions and values regarding inclusion and initial teacher education; interviewing

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was then used to clarify the data and enhance understanding regarding why such responses might have emerged. Ideally

> the researcher's values, conceptualizations and knowledge frameworks should not ... enter into the collection of data. Truth is therefore understood as free of those relations that characterize human activities: value disputes, differential ordering of roles, stratified positionings and the like (Scott & Usher, 2010, p.99/100).

This is one of the advantages of using questionnaires in an interpretative case study. Whilst the questions might have been designed by myself and offered a structured approach in terms of generally including a range of answers rather than being totally open to the respondents' own words or interpretation, the value of the questionnaire to my research was the opportunity to view strength of feeling unhindered by my presence or by a need to be perceived to offer a 'correct' or acceptable answer.

I piloted the staff questionnaire in the first year of my study with a school unrelated to the final case study schools and gained useful feedback on how to word questions more effectively and consider the value of the emerging data in relation to the research themes. The result of this pilot was a reduction in the number of questions and being aware that teachers tended to respond with 'it depends ...' if the question was too vague – this was a result of teachers considering their experiences with a particular child rather than the question more generally. As this did not occur in the final questionnaires, I was satisfied that the questions were more focused and provided data that could be analysed within the samples of schools and students and enough opportunity for comparisons between school staff and students.

For staff and student questionnaires I chose to present a range of question types reflecting the nature of the data required, for questions relating to facts I chose closed questions - for example age or length of service; however most of the questions were opinion based utilizing rank order, Likert scale and rating scales.

> Questionnaires supply standardized answers, to the extent that all respondents are posed with exactly the same questions ... The data collected, then, are very unlikely to be contaminated through variations in the wording of the questions ... There is very little scope for the data to be affected by 'interpersonal factors' (Denscombe, 2007, p.169).

These 'interpersonal factors' can occur in interviews. The range of question styles served two purposes; firstly ensuring that the most effective method was employed for the type of data required and, secondly, it ensured that the respondent focused on the question rather than assuming a response type. A disadvantage – which occurred in one case on the staff questionnaire – was that respondents did not always interpret the instructions in the way intended. So for one question where I wanted the respondents to only use numbers 1 to 5 once each to rank particular issues, some staff used numbers twice resulting in them having to be removed from the analysis.

The school questionnaire was designed to elicit general views regarding the impact on a school of having an inclusive policy and how inclusion was experienced by the teachers in planning for the children in their care. I used the school inclusion policies to select some phrases that might be familiar to staff who had read them, to compose the questionnaire. The statements used from the policies were on occasion rephrased to assess how far staff agreed with the original statement or with the rephrasing. The rephrasing

was done because some language is used so interchangeably that it becomes meaningless to some practitioners so agreeing with the policy statement did not necessarily mean that the teachers held these perceptions once it came to teaching. One particular example is with the words 'equal' and 'same'; children may need significantly different resources or support to engage in the curriculum so providing equal opportunities is not the equivalent to treating children the same. However, the choices staff made about with which phrase to agree, provided an indication of their perceptions of SEN and teaching children with SEN in mainstream. It was this perception that would then be pursued through interviewing and with the students in their questionnaires and interviews.

Grbich (2007) questioned whether the qualitative data emerging from questionnaires is as rich as through other data gathering methods. I was aware that this might be so, but these initial questionnaires to staff were used to inform the questions asked in interviews, as the general data from questionnaires was then elaborated upon to provide the 'story' behind the numbers. School data was, therefore, analysed as School A and School B separately as one of the intentions of the research was to consider differences in the two schools and the impact of this on student perceptions and progression; this separation of data proved significant as trends were different in the two case study schools. In analysing the data emerging from the staff questionnaires I initially employed a simple tally of responses which provided an overview of strength of feeling in each aspect questioned. The next stage was to identify patterns of response and inconsistencies between responses to similar questions, which were then discussed in interview and compared with student data. Finally, variables

were used to identify trends related to length of service and school role which was significant in the theme related to perceptions of inclusion and aspects of specialist pedagogy analysis of which appears in Chapter 3.

Student questionnaires were used at various points throughout the research from the First Student Questionnaire to the Perceptions Survey and Mid Module Review to the End of Level 1b and SBT Questionnaire. The purpose of questionnaires at each of these stages was to measure opinions and perceptions as the module and the school-based training progressed. Questions related to confidence, inclusion and initial teacher education were repeated through the questionnaires to identify factors that influenced changes of opinion from the beginning to the end of the study. In addition, though, ongoing data analysis throughout the study provided the opportunity to develop questions that filled gaps in data and understanding. For example, as it was becoming evident that there existed a challenge of applying ethos to practice, I included questions in the End of Level 1b and SBT Questionnaire related to understanding values, issues and teaching skills and how these had been developed via the ILN module compared to school-based training. I also developed the final questionnaire to include questions that had been presented to the staff to provide better comparable data. The challenges that students faced crossing the boundary from college to school emerged towards the end of the research period, so I also included questions to assess the influence of people around the students in their developing understanding of and competence at teaching children with SEN. Data analysis followed the same structure as for the staff questionnaires, but developed more gradually from considering questions and issues individually in the first questionnaire to identifying patterns and

gaps across the questionnaires which were pursued through interviews, observations and through the design of the later questions.

Whilst fundamentally a qualitative case study, data from the questionnaires to staff and students provided a baseline of strength of opinion in questions across all four research themes. In quantitative research the questionnaire results would have sought to validate a hypothesis, in my study, though they were one of the first stages of 'explicitly (trying) to generate new theory and new explanations' (Gibbs, 2009, p.5) for how students experience developing their professional understanding and practice in relation to teaching children with SEN.

3.   Semi-Structured Interviews:

Whilst a lot of data can be gained from an interview, its value is dependent upon the quality of the questions (related to the core research questions) and the relationship with the interviewee. I chose a semi-structured interview approach as I found that allowing participants flexibility on where they chose to take an answer provided insight into what they considered to be of greatest importance. It also allowed me the flexibility to prompt – this was important with the student interviews as they were quite nervous of the process. An effective 'research interview is an inter-view where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee' (Kvale, 2009, p.1). At times, I found the interaction between myself and the interviewee resulted in greater insight into the issues – a real 'inter-view' of key issues and problem solving approaches. This was

particularly the case with the school-based tutor who was supporting the students with the balance of theory and practice from the school perspective. Her interest in the research and experience with students and class teachers during school-based training supported me in developing new insight via her interviews. However, there were also times when I felt pursuing an issue with an interviewee was less appropriate – particularly with the students and the classteachers. In these instances, I was more cautious, trying to nurture a relationship with the interviewee to ensure a sound, if basic, response.

The interviews were designed to serve various purposes: providing context; elaborating on the quantitative data from the questionnaires and to gaining more in depth personal perspectives related to the research themes and at key stages of the study. The style of interviews was conceptual where 'the questions will explore the meaning and the conceptual dimensions of … terms, as well as their positions and links within a conceptual network' (Kvale, 2009, p.71). My research concepts of inclusion and SEN were viewed variously by the participants in the study as was apparent through the questionnaire results and those from the free association exercise. The interviews provided an opportunity to explore the variables which influenced this conceptual spectrum and to develop a better understanding of relationships between ethos, understanding and practice. 'To interpretative constructionist researchers, how people view an object or event and the meaning that they attribute to it is what is important' (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.27). Questionnaires present a range of terms as decided by the researcher to be significant, but do not provide the opportunity for respondents to construct their own understanding via dialogue which can

happen in what Kvale (2009) describes as an 'inter-view'. So within each of the interviews there were questions related to clarifying opinions presented by the interviewees and others; questions related to the respondents' understanding of key terms and concepts; questions aimed at trying to take the research forward in terms of new information regarding the themes and opportunities for the respondents to expand on their original responses providing new insight into their lived experiences of inclusion and teaching or teacher education.

For the class teachers' interviews similar questions were asked and supported by one of the SBT's interviews; for the students the same occurred, where the interviews were repeated in similar format across the four students or in pairs – which resulted in comparable responses even where questions had not been asked in exactly the same format or where supplementary questions had taken a particular interview in an original direction. In addition interviews were carried out with the SBT after the placement and with the SBT Manager at college to supplement this information and to add context. As can be seen in Appendices B and H, the interview responses were organised according to key questions related to the research themes to aid the interpretative analysis. What then occurred was 'a 'cascade' approach: from representing the whole interview in full in an edited format; to identify themes within it; to carry out a stage structure analysis and ... a narrowly or broadly based categorical analysis' (Gillham, 2005, p.130). Appendices B (pre-school-based training student interviews) and H (staff interviews) exemplify how this occurred. Firstly, the transcribed interviews were organised in themes related to the key questions asked, this eradicated superfluous data; secondly they were further categorised

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according to individual responses in relation to the research themes and emerging sub themes; finally the emerging concepts via the stage analysis led to the interview related data for analysis in, for example, chapters 3, 4 and 6. As the research themes were complex, the stage analysis was not a simple chronology of ideas, however it was possible to identify within various themes whether respondents were identifying a preferred sequence of events or whether one idea was emerging from a previous one. For my research, though, a more relevant final stage of analysis was Campbell and Gilroy's (2004) final analysis step of theory generation, which could include – as it did in their research into initial teacher education - 'dilemma analysis' which 'can be useful to give an extended understanding of the complexities presented in the data' (p.141) and is evident in the stage analysis section of Appendices B and H.

The value of the interview is the resulting view of SEN, inclusion, ITE through the eyes of the participants, using their own language and experiences. This is explained by Schostak (2005) in relation to interviews about experiences in schools:

> If I accept and understand that a given word – school – can refer not only to many possible schools but also to many ways of defining and experiencing schools, then there is the possibility that I can be open to another way of 'seeing' school, both *my* school and some more conceptual way of perceiving school as an 'idea' through the ways another person talks about it. That is I can free myself from my own view of school (p.30).

The patterns of thought, dilemmas and experiences of the participants in my case study were instrumental in developing new theory and ideas for practice in SEN, inclusion and ITE.

4. Observation:

The two school-based tutors were asked if they could record their tutorials with the students after they had carried out one of the lesson observations. One school-based tutor videoed the one-to-one tutorials with each of her two students, the other was unable to. Video recording was the preferred method of recording as I wanted to examine the non-verbal cues and any expressions of frustration, confusion, joy. Observing the tutorial supported my data production around the issues of how students were supported in their reflections on teaching and the development of professional practice. In relation to issues of SEN and inclusion I could see how far this featured in the feedback on a particular lesson and analysed the dialogue related to these issues from both perspectives. However, this was one of the research methods where I had to beware of demonstrating prejudice or subjective analysis. A video recording did not speak for itself in that the physical movements, tone of voice, hesitations, emphasis and relationship displayed are all analysed alongside the actual words spoken. As Rapley (2009) described; 'how I come to understand certain moments of interaction can at some moments depend on my ability, as a culturally competent member of a specific community' (Rapley, 2009, p.103). In my case I had been a teacher and I was teaching the students so I had a perception of the tutorial process as both the tutor and the tutee; I had a place in both communities. This was an advantage in that I knew the language they were using and could spot any tactics being employed by the tutor to draw out particular responses from the student. Rapley (2009) cautioned analysis of what he calls 'perspective-display sequence'. This was common in dialogue after a lesson observation because the student would be hesitant to expose

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their perspective before the tutor had expressed their verdict – if the tutor said the session was good first, the student would be more forthcoming than if they were unsure of the tutor's view. This led to quite complex analysis of the psychology of the conversation:

> discursive psychologists are also focusing on how apparently psychological concepts like emotion, memory, attitude, and so on, are deeply social affairs, locally and collaboratively produced in and through action and interaction rather than just embedded in individuals' cognitions (Rapley, 2009, p.75).

So ultimately the observation yielded data related to the nature of the relationship, even acknowledging that they could have been behaving differently due to being recorded, and the quality of the dialogue as well as the information on ITE, SEN and inclusion.

5.   Focus Group:

Although a focus group was not initially planned, I found a group of students in the ILN module who were particularly interested in my research and we started to discuss it. The focus group formed at the end of the final teaching session of ILN and a reasonably informal discussion took place. The value of this spontaneous focus group was the students' interest in the topic and their willingness to express their opinions, even though they were not all complimentary about the programme.

> It is from the interaction of the group that the data emerge … they are unnatural settings yet they are very focused on a particular issue and, therefore, will yield insights that might not otherwise have been available in a straightforward interview … (Cohen et al, 2007, p.376).

So, although it might have been better if I had been able to organize the setting and timescale, this group emerged organically so may have acted as a good measure against the data produced by the case study students.

> To interpretive constructionist researchers, how people view an object or event and the meaning that they attribute to it is what is important ... Constructionists expect people to see somewhat different things, examine them through distinct lenses, and come to somewhat different conclusions (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p.27).

This, for me, was the value of the case study. These students were bringing their own experiences, perceptions, values and attitudes to the process willingly and without influence from me. An obvious risk with using this data was that it was provided by those who wanted to speak, rather than the whole cohort, so was self-selective and could be just those who wanted to air a complaint or a worry. However I still felt that it had validity and enhanced my understanding of student perceptions of ITE. By using the selection criteria I had to select the four case study students, I had restricted the generalisation of the data from them, but the focus group provided some potential balance to the case study students' perspectives.

6.   Journals:

In Bain et al's (1999) study of the use of journals in teaching placement in Australia, they discovered that student teachers were able to reflect effectively on their experiences whether adopting a theory to practice context, or a personal experience context, which is one of the reasons I had included journal writing as one of the data gathering methods. The idea behind the journals in my study was that the four case study students would reflect on what they were hearing and experiencing in school and respond to these on paper. This was to provide me insight into their classroom and

the wider school population as this was not possible in the other methods chosen. Initially I just advised the students on how they could compose their journal, what evidence they could use and thoughts about how they could begin to analyse that evidence. However, the students did not produce reflective journals in the two week preparation period in school, although when I spoke to them they were able to think of examples of incidents that could have gone into the journal and could have been discussed. I had not wanted to produce a writing frame for the journals as I felt this would limit the students to just answering questions; however, for the block placement this was what I did. I agree with Bain et al (1999) that

> students come to the journal writing task with a wide range of reflective skills and attitudes. Some, especially more mature students, are able to engage in sophisticated reasoning and analysis of events and issues with very little assistance, while others struggle to progress beyond the level of description and simple response (p.69).

The case study students were not mature students and only in their second year where the academic work had yet to demand critical analysis; so I was probably expecting too much of this form of data production.

In summary, the methods described above would not be adequate to provide a broad picture of the whole student experience but were sufficient for my focus on the second year of a four year programme and related to the development of student teachers to teach children with SEN. In essence this was a narrow focus, but one that could have an impact on how we taught students in the future. The methodology had to respond to the challenge of exploring the complexity of initial teacher education, where students learn in two main settings and interact with tutors in college and teachers in schools as well as bringing their own experiences to the

learning process. A constructivist paradigm, for me, required an approach that gathered data from these two settings, but also explored the student perceptions prior to this engagement and throughout a period of college and school education. It was expected that the taught course in college would have an impact different from the practical experience in school and that the different agents of their education would have their own influence. Therefore a case study approach seemed most apt, with the opportunity to gather a range of opinions from schools and students and an insight into how the various factors within ITE interplay. As each of the research themes was considered in the upcoming chapters, therefore, it was with a view, initially, to understanding the nature of the wider environment via literature review and then to analyse the data gathered from my research.

Chapter Three   Inclusion and Inclusivity

In the opening chapter I expressed surprise that in what I had understood to be an inclusive school Jack's condition was unfamiliar and caused concern. I, therefore, wondered whether it was a misunderstanding of the term inclusion – and the staff would therefore have expected Jack to be taught in special provision – or a result of inclusion that teachers were unable to adjust to all children with SEN who may be in the school. In this chapter, therefore, I will be discussing the use of the term inclusion and the impact of the policy of inclusion on school experiences. This then turns to ITE and how the schools' understanding of inclusion would impact on the development of student teachers as well as how far students' understanding of inclusion affects their professional growth.

3.1 Literature Review

In this section of the study, I will present definitions of inclusion and inclusive education that reflect different perspectives resulting from varying political and educational viewpoints. It was apparent on reading these definitions that a range of factors influenced from where a definition arose and the effect it had on practice.

> It is important to remember that special education is a product of social and political frameworks – the ways people think at a particular time frame their views about what is good for children and how education should be made to happen (Thomas in Hick et al, 2009, p.19).

3.1.1   The development of inclusion

One starting point for this discussion could be the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) as it was the first occasion when the term special educational needs was used to describe children who had previously been termed 'educational sub-normal' and it moved education away from a categorisation of special need by medical diagnosis, thus refuting the belief that some children were uneducable – a category that had been officially abolished in the Education Act 1970. The Report has had a lasting influence on the debate around inclusion, as it suggested that mainstream schools should adapt for children through differentiation of curriculum, teaching approach or teaching organisation. The resulting Education Act 1981 moved the notion of difficulties as a medical issue where the emphasis was on treatment, to the notion of 'special educational need' or 'learning difficulty' where there was a requirement for educational provision tailored to the child. The Warnock committee believed that 'The purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same' (1978, 1.4) i.e. independence and increased knowledge and understanding. This, Warnock stated, could be achieved through three forms of integration: 'locational integration' as a unit or special class within a mainstream setting or a special school on a mainstream school site; 'social integration' with some socialising via shared trips, physical education, art for example and 'functional integration' 'where pupils with SEN are taught for part, or all, of the timetable in mainstream classes' (Smith in Sharp et al, 2007, p.144).

The language then was of integration but as it was understandable that placement of children was the first consideration. The Committee had moved thinking along from the idea that there was a group of children who were the responsibility of medical services to the point where all children were the responsibility of education. Warnock herself stated (in Visser & Upton, 1993) that this led to children with needs losing out, but asserted that 'we are not as prone as we were in the early 1970s to think of 'the handicapped' as a particular weird class of persons' (xi). Her statement here suggested that there had been progression for children with SEN and disability; however the language did not reassure that the medical model of a deficit within the child had been overcome.

Inclusion into the full activities and curriculum of mainstream schools had become a stronger imperative as time progressed until it was considered as 'a process in which schools, communities, local authorities and governments strive to reduce barriers to participation and learning for all citizens' (Hick et al, 2009, p.2-3). This policy of inclusion continued until schools were expected to accommodate all children unless there was an exceptional reason otherwise as had been stated in the Salamanca Statement (1994):

> we call upon all Governments and urge them to adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise (UNESCO cited in Thomas and Vaughan, 2005, p.128).

However there was a sense that this may have gone too far with David Cameron, Prime Minister (from 2010), stating that he wished to 'end the bias towards the inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream

schools' (Naughton, 2010). Farrell (2006) interpreted this as optimal education where all centres of learning had equal value and the goal was not inclusion in mainstream but the best for the child. Cameron's speech also suggested that policy may move towards a greater choice for parents of children with special needs and special provision having a higher profile as one of the genuine options in education.

There has been an assumption in what has so far been written that inclusion is the ideal and that in a sense it takes the moral high ground. The more children a school could accommodate whatever their abilities and needs the better. Politically, though, there had been a move. From the 1970s to 2000s, from labour to conservative to new labour, policy had impacted on the rationale for and value placed on inclusion. Thomas and Loxley (2007) described the journey as initially 'a departure from consensus about welfare provision for those who were assumed to be disadvantaged' (p.96) which linked to the move from viewing a group of children as uneducable and therefore the responsibility of the health system to the right of all children to an education, with special schools taking children with challenges. This moved to the notion of 'some 'natural order', whose maintenance is necessary to the coherence and stability of society, then it is invidious to impose threats to this order in calls for inclusion' (Thomas and Luxley, 2007, p.97); which related to the Conservative view of the time that the state could outline the family and societal values that were to be upheld. There were layers of education for different groups in society e.g. selective education for the best able; comprehensive education for the majority and special education for those who were unable to reach this

level. That was the natural order and government did not see itself as a body that should challenge that.

Finally, with New Labour came the idea that responsibility lay within the community not the central government. This led to an increased role for the local education authority – then local authority – to finance and organise inclusion, with power given to parents to choose the most appropriate route for their child. Whilst education was constantly changing, the perspectives of the people within it may not have – this could impact on how the various members of a school's teaching population viewed inclusion and inclusivity and, thus, the impression they would pass on to new teachers of how inclusion should be manifest. We have teachers in the system who have trained during each of these political eras; some of whom may have been waiting for education to catch up with their view, but equally some who may still mirror the 1970s perspective and struggle with the inclusion that has emerged. This was explored in my study and compared to those views of the students, to whom the value of inclusion was a 'given'.

3.1.2 Characteristics of an inclusive setting

Florian (in Topping and Maloney, 2005) provided a definition of inclusion – drawn from Inclusion International 1996 – that was explored through the research project and which focused on an 'opportunity ... to participate fully in all of the educational ... activities that typify everyday society' (p.32). This definition was a working model for schools in designing systems and processes that enabled a child to be included in education, in terms of day-

to-day activities in school be they formal activities or social opportunities, as a preparation for their role in society. Thomas et al (2000) explored another aspect of inclusion from a cultural view that 'celebrates diversity and promotes fraternity and equality of opportunity' (p.5). Whilst evaluating the implementation of a particular inclusion project, Thomas et al (2000) set within this an analysis of general principles. They concluded that 'inclusion … specifically shifts the focus onto the school rather than the child' (p.12), therefore it was an institutional response to the needs of all children. This was not a definition without political agenda as there existed a dichotomy between the competition for schools to top league tables as a result of meeting national academic expectations – with a partial nod in the direction of 'value-added' – and the desire to offer equal opportunities to all.

Falvey and Givner (2005) explored the characteristics of an inclusive setting from a particular US perspective concluding that 'inclusion is a belief system' (p.5) where 'all students must experience quality education that meets their specific educational needs in the context of political and social justice' (p.9). This took inclusion beyond being just an educational policy, to one that would impact on the child's life, because they had a fundamental right to the same learning experience as their peers. This also required of the teachers a perspective beyond the classroom, realising that ensuring the educational environment included all children and supporting them in reaching their potential would enable those children to access wider society beyond school. In my study this would result in the student teachers needing to explore the values implicit in the practice they experienced in school, the ideology informing a categorisation of special educational need and then the use of this categorisation in their development of practice. It

was of relevance for student teachers to consider Clough's (1999) argument that teachers 'mediate policy through their activities in and out of the classroom, through their participation in the realization of curriculum' (p.67) as they were expected to operate within a system that was not quite as secure in a shared understanding of the value of inclusion as appeared from the legislation and guidance.

This was the focus of Rix et al (2005) who explored 'values into practice'. In Benjamin's article in this text, the notion of 'valuing diversity' for defining inclusive practice was evaluated in light of current policy and practice. The underlying difficulty with the use of the term, according to Benjamin (2005), was the notion that 'only a few students can be allowed to be diverse, when diversity implies inability to access the dominant versions of success' (p.187). This, in effect, resulted in groups within groups in classes and across schools. These inner groups were identified by their having a particular need that resulted in them requiring adaptations in order to enjoy the same learning opportunities as their peers. In an inclusive school this would be achieved by being conscious of and overcoming environmental barriers. Even the term 'special' – which could be seen to be expressing positivity in its use – precluded effective inclusion as it defined a group who could not be accommodated within the normal restrictions of curriculum and general practice. In schools this 'special' group were often withdrawn for 'special' attention, further indicating a challenging difference rather than a welcome diversity. This could lead to a clash between ideology, policy and practice which presented a clear dilemma to educational institutions, legislative bodies and the children described as having special educational needs.

So, how does one find out how a school defines itself as inclusive – was a prospectus or inclusion policy sufficient, should one look to the leadership of the school, or was it something tangible in the way the school was learning together? Could it be that in order to be inclusive those within a school would have a shared endeavour to be inclusive with a shared understanding of what that may be, so they can work collaboratively to achieve it?

Skidmore (1999) evaluated the move towards shared understanding and consensus as a significant feature of school effectiveness. Within the parameters of inclusion as an ethos and practice within schools, such a view would suggest that for inclusion – as defined by the senior management of a school – to emanate through the school community effectively then the staff needs to share the original view. Skidmore's (1999) research examined consensus for an SEN initiative in a secondary school. The methodology and focus were not particularly congruent with my proposed research; however Skidmore's conclusion that 'it may not necessarily be the case that consensus on shared goals has to be established as a condition of any successful development of provision' (p.662) was. In fact, in another (1999) paper, Skidmore proposed that 'open ended dialogue between contrasting discourses of teaching and learning is vitally necessary to the fostering of a dynamic school culture' (p.19). In interviews with the school-based tutor and classteachers, it was relevant to establish how far discourse within the school believed consensus to be of any significance in demonstrating the inclusive intentions.

There was potentially a juxtaposition of ideal versus practical which was recognised in the findings of Abbott (2006), who conducted research in Northern Ireland into headteachers' perceptions of inclusion.

> Those interviewed were indisputably committed to inclusion, but still believed that the enrolment of pupils with particular educational needs should be contingent upon a school having not only the right culture and leadership, but also the appropriate human and physical resources ... as well as prompt, sustained support from external agencies (p.640).

This was quite a list of conditions upon which to base a support for inclusion, but it could be a realistic one and it was of interest to my study, when examining how student teachers formed their perceptions of, and gained confidence with, inclusion, to see how far they meet this perception and the impact it made. One might have assumed that the view of the headteachers was likely to pervade the school environment, colouring the ethos and vision, affecting positively or negatively the implementation of the SEN and inclusion policy. As a result, it was of value to explore within my study how far the school policy was embedded in perceptions and practice and how far consensus was viewed to be a positive influence on school effectiveness in this area.

In this chapter the range of factors influencing a definition of inclusion, its permeation through a school and its impact on students has been considered. As a result, and as I embark upon the data analysis, the following issues are of value to include in the discussion of literature and data:

- What definitions of inclusion exist within the teachers in the school

- What characteristics teachers outline as significant in an inclusive school

- How far student teachers' and school teachers' views were similar

- How significant consensus of opinion was deemed to be by the schools and by the student teachers

3.2 Data Analysis

3.2.1   Case study schools

Responses to the staff questionnaires distributed to the two case study schools (Appendix A) were received from 13 members of staff from School A out of a possible 32 (40%) and including eight out of 18 teachers and seven from School B out of a possible 25 (28%) including four out of 12 teachers. In both cases the majority of respondents were classteachers; with 1 senior manager for School B and 4 for School A. The profile of the two groups differed with teachers in School A having been qualified on average 20 years and six out of eight of the teachers working at the school since its opening in 2000 (10 years). For School B, in contrast, teachers who responded had been qualified on average for 11 years but had only worked for the school on average for four years.

In order to understand the outcomes from this data, I will offer a short explanation of the models of SEN and disability, although I will return to it in more detail in the next chapter, when the focus is on perceptions. If one focuses on a fault within the child; the resources or support that was

required to 'normalise' the child or one feels the child's disability was a 'tragedy', a functional model of disability is being followed. This could be demonstrated by a teacher commenting that a child has ADHD and the symptoms of this include that they are naughty. In contrast a transactional model looks for barriers in the environment; or the abilities the child has or a range of physical, cultural, social or political barriers to learning so would endeavour to create an environment where the child with ADHD was enabled to join in and comply with reasonable expectations – even if these were different from expectations of others in the class.

The statements in Q9 (an inclusive school :) of the questionnaire to school staff emerged from the schools' inclusion policy or statement. I manipulated some of the questions so the statement was the opposite of what was originally stated to challenge assumptions. Many phrases about inclusion have become so overused that they have become like clichés; people overlook the real meaning of what they say – so, for example, treating children as equals becomes treating children the same. They sound similar, but treating children the same would actually deny children with SEN equality of opportunity.

Table Four: Staff Questionnaire question 9

An inclusive school:
treats all children the same
Meets the needs of all learners
acknowledges that there could be something wrong with a child that could be classified as a special educational need
recognises that children whose needs persist despite help may not be suited to the mainstream environment
recognises that there may be barriers to learning in the school environment itself
is one where everyone shares the same opinion about inclusion

School A n=13   School B n=7

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The answers to the first (treats all children the same) and second (meets the needs of all learners) statements of Q9 (see Table 4) I think demonstrated this issue. In both schools' responses to statement one there was for School A an even split and for School B an almost even balance between agreement and disagreement. However, for statement two, all of the School A staff and all but one of the School B staff agreed – the majority agreeing strongly – that an inclusive school meets the needs of all learners. Extrapolating from these contradictory responses, if staff believed that the inclusive school met all learners' needs then they would not advocate treating all children the same; more providing them with equality of opportunity. From this one might assume that the cliché issue has occurred and staff members have read 'same' as 'equal', or there was a genuine confusion about how to be inclusive or they do treat the children in their class the same and believe that was meeting their needs.

However, there was a difference, too, in the responses to statements three (acknowledges that there could be something wrong with a child) and five (recognises that there may be barriers to learning in the school environment). Statement five was worded so that agreement would demonstrate a medical model perception of SEN and statement five a social model perception. The results were surprising with ten out of 12 of School A staff demonstrating agreement – seven of these strong agreement – with statement three and six out of seven of School B staff – four of these strongly. But, equally, all of School A and B staff agreed with statement five. This demonstrates that using a medical or social model was not necessarily helpful in this analysis. The staff appeared to believe

aspects of both of them. They appeared to believe that there could be something wrong with the child – this could relate to the use of labels as shorthand to identify the child's needs e.g. Dyslexia as opposed to outlining what capabilities and challenges that child has that cannot be fully encapsulated in the label dyslexia. Their responses to statement five, as well, indicated that they recognised some of the challenges the child has with dyslexia may experience were to do with how the learning environment was organised and this was something of which they could take ownership.

To explore these responses in more detail I decided to compare some of the responses in each School to the statements the staff made about inclusion in question six (was one where everyone shares the same opinion about *inclusion*). I chose the most experienced member of the senior management team in each school; a teaching assistant (TA) or learning support assistant (LSA); and for School A one classteacher as there were more responses from this school. I tried to vary the experience of each by as much as possible to represent the range of staff who responded to the questionnaires.

In School A, the headteacher had 34 years teaching experience and had been in the school for ten years – since its opening. In Q6 the headteacher emphasised 'removing barriers', 'providing every child with the opportunities to develop' and 'celebrating the qualities each child possesses'. He was working within a capability model of SEN and adopting an inclusive approach that aimed for all children to share learning

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opportunities. In Q9 statement one highlighted a distinct difference between the more experienced and less experienced teachers and TAs. Although the head did not respond to this question, I examined the responses from the rest of the senior management team of the school and they responded 'disagree' or 'disagree strongly' as did the senior management team member of School B. However the less experienced teacher responded 'agree' even though her statements in Q6 had also been more social model with 'being included in the same activities as other children through differentiation etc.'. The TA also responded 'agree strongly' as did the LSA from School B. It appeared from this more in depth look at these questions that those members of the senior management team who completed questionnaires were aware that children should not be treated the same and attention should be paid to the environmental issues in the school to enable it to become an inclusive school.

There was a difference between the schools, though, when comparing statements three and five. In School A, both the classteacher and the headteacher disagreed with statement 3 and agreed with statement five – rejecting the functional model and adopting the transactional, in synchronicity with their comments in Q6. However in School B, both the senior management team member and the LSA agreed with both statements. For the LSA, agreement with statement three was not a surprise as she had written the statement 'able to access all curriculum areas at their own level no matter what special needs problems they may have'; I found it interesting that someone with a job that required working with children with special educational needs would view them as problems.

It was of interest to see if there were continued differences between the two schools when other factors were addressed.

When looking at a broader picture of the school responses the staff, when asked how they would define inclusion for children with SEN (Q6), respondents from School A responded predominantly within the transactional model with 11 comments referring to inclusion being 'access to the curriculum'; 'differentiation'; 'equality of opportunity' and 'achieve their potential'. All the comments related to the positive qualities of all children, with just two comments related to additional support or resources required by children with SEN. I found it interesting that the last comment was 'continuous school improvement' as shared vision was considered a very important element of school improvement in the literature and these responses were broadly indicative of a school that worked together to meet the inclusion agenda.

The majority of the comments from School B, nine out of 12, were similar to School A's, relating to 'ensuring everyone was valued'; 'children working alongside their peers' and 'providing access to all areas of the curriculum'. However two out of 12 were negative, referring to the children's 'special needs problems' which sat within the medical model. This language was not suggestive of a whole school approach to inclusion as in School A. This was reinforced by when staff had last received training relating to SEN and/or inclusion (Q13). In School A 11 out of 13 had received training within the academic year, whereas the majority (four out of seven) of School B's

staff said they had last had training either 'one year previously' or 'not in the last three years'.

Table Five: Staff questionnaire question 10

Priority
Utilizing a range of teaching strategies
Having a knowledge and understanding of specific needs, e.g. dyslexia, ADHD etc.
Having specialist teaching skills related to SEN
All staff sharing an opinion on inclusion
Having additional support staff

School A n=13   School B n=7

When prioritising for effective inclusion the two schools in Q 10 (see Table 5) shared priorities, although only three staff answered 'correctly' in School B so the data was limited. For School A the highest priority was having 'knowledge and understanding of specific needs', for School B this was equal first with having 'additional support staff'. It appeared in this section that the more confident statements from Q6 were not carried through the questionnaire. There was a difference between what they defined as inclusion and even what they identified as an inclusive school and what they believed they needed to accomplish it. This was pursued later in the study when I looked at perceptions and practice.

When examining the questionnaires in more detail from the same selection as earlier, I found it very interesting that the headteacher in school A put 'consensus' as the highest priority, especially as it was the lowest amongst the staff who had answered the question correctly. Neither the TA nor the LSA had responded to the question in the way I intended, by which I meant

using all five numbers, one for each statement; they had used just numbers one and two, so their responses were not considered. Consensus was something that was picked up in later interviews as it was interesting to see why the staff may not have viewed it as significantly as their headteacher.

The classteacher in School A rated 'having knowledge and understanding of specific needs' the highest and 'utilising a range of teaching strategies' as second highest which, along with having 'additional support staff', mirrored the rest of the School A respondents. For School B the classteacher/senior management team member scored having 'additional support staff' as most important, with 'teaching strategies' second and 'sharing an opinion on inclusion' third.

There were a range of issues in these staff questionnaires which were picked up later in the study, but key themes seemed to be:

- How far staff in school were operating within functional or transactional models of SEN and disability – which will be explored further in the Perceptions chapter

- Contradictions between statements, including potential contradictions, between beliefs and practice

- Whether differences between staff was an issue in terms of consensus of opinion or·shared practices

- How far differences between the schools make a difference to student teachers' development

3.2.2 Case study students

The notion of inclusion and what constituted an inclusive school was first addressed with the case study students prior to their school-based placement in their first interviews (Appendix B). Both pairs of students had been in the same schools for their first year placement, so may have developed some opinions from that first year experience, but I also asked them to think from their own personal experiences prior to joining the college. From their initial interviews the case study students – students one to four – displayed broadly similar ideas on inclusion. Student one described inclusion as 'how the teacher can adapt for that child'; student two as 'just to include everybody and to plan around that individual rather than take him out of the class'; student three's was very similar with 'every child was involved in everything'. Student four's understanding was different, though, because on the one hand she talked about 'tasks and activities should be differentiated' and on the other hand she talked about the fact that 'they ... should be treated the same as all the other children, but they just might need that bit of extra support and help'. Students one to three displayed a simple, ideal view of inclusion but with the overall aim of involving all children in learning. Students one and two appeared to be thinking about an individual child with needs rather than the inclusion of all children which was expressed by student three. Student four initially

appeared to hold a mature awareness of inclusion, stating that work needs to be differentiated for all; but by then suggesting all children should be treated the same, student four had deviated from the all-inclusive nature of her differentiation comment even as she followed it up with 'a bit of extra help'. It was clear that the students had picked up some messages from school and college but had not yet got the experience to fully understand inclusion. Their first year school placement did not require these skills as the students were working alongside their classteacher.

3.2.3 Early Years student cohort

At a similar point in time, I started to teach the second year module on Individual Learning Needs. The free association exercise (Appendix C) was the first activity in the Individual Learning Needs module and was completed by 53 students. It demonstrated their immediate response to the words: inclusion, disability, SEN and ILN. Whilst an activity designed to provide research data, students were also asked to keep a copy of their responses to reflect on later In the course to assess how far their views had changed and why. On a very simplistic level, the exercise was designed to establish whether students instinctively adopted a functional or transactional model, but when examined more deeply it revealed more subtleties around resource issues and children's rights. So when it came to categorising the results I did not just use functional and transactional, but within the functional model I included medical/deficit; tragedy/charity; and resource/support submodels and in transactional, I included social-capability and socio-political/bio-psycho-social submodels. As this exercise occurred prior to any teaching, I

was able to measure preconceptions within the broad traditions of the functional and transactional models. I was able to use the three functional submodels: medical/deficit; tragedy/charity and resource/support and the three transactional submodels: social; capability and socio political; to sort the vast majority of the responses, however there were a small number of terms that were not possible to categorise such as 'self awareness' when it was unclear whether the word related to children or teachers; 'attention' that needs to be contextualised and 'children' where it was impossible to assess the intention. For the purposes of this chapter only the responses for inclusion are included, but the other three groups were considered in more depth in the chapter related to perceptions.

Students made 83 responses to the word inclusion, including multiple phrases. The most frequent phrase was 'everyone involved' with 11 responses, which fell within a socio-political paradigm, as did 'everyone' with seven responses. The responses within the medical/deficit model used in this category mainly related to labels: 'SEN', 'EAL', 'Gifted and talented' or a resources/support submodel with treating children the same and the need for support – 'TA', 'same', 'same amount of support'. 58 out of the 83 responses met the criteria for the transactional model including 'equality', 'fair/fair opportunity', 'allowing all to achieve' and 'schooling for all children'. The students appeared to have embraced the ethos of inclusion and had some understanding that it meant endeavouring to create the circumstances for all children to be included in the breadth of learning experiences. They demonstrated some naivety in phrases such as 'fun experience' and 'children' but that was to be expected as some would not have met the term

much previously. In their first school-based placement the students were just taught about why teachers group children in different ways and would have discussed the diversity in the classroom including gender, religion, ability etc. but not in detail and they would not have had full responsibility for meeting all these needs. In the chapter on perceptions, I compared these responses to those in the other three categories to determine whether this pattern continued.

On completion of their school placement, students completed a questionnaire (End of Level 1b SBT and ILN module questionnaire, Appendix D) focusing on their experiences generally but also specific to SEN and inclusion. 41 out of the 61 student respondents stated – Q4a – that their school was inclusive, only one student stated that their school was not; 19 stated to some extent. This looked positive, however, as 19 students – Q14 – stated that including children with SEN in a mainstream class was detrimental to the opportunity for other children to reach their potential; I would question whether the messages these students received mirror those given by an inclusive school. Of course, it could have been their misconception of what they had seen and heard. This was pursued in the perceptions theme and with the case study students.

Given that the free association exercise was undertaken prior to the ILN module starting, I wanted to ask the students what they had learned from the module and from their school-based placements in relation to inclusion. For Q5 (I have gained a better understanding of ...) of the questionnaire, statement nine, 60 out of the 61 students who responded stated that they

had gained a better understanding of the issues surrounding SEN and inclusion as a result of the ILN module; 45 stated that they had learned more from the school placement. Considering the ILN module had involved school-based activities including planning for the inclusion of the diversity of children in their class, I was surprised by the difference between the two. For statement ten (my own values in relation to SEN and inclusion) in the same question, 58 out of the 60 who responded stated that they had gained a better understanding of their own values in relation to SEN and inclusion; 49 out of the 58 who responded stated that they had a better understanding of their values on the school placement. I was pleased that the students felt they had reflected on their values during the period from before the module to after school placement and that they had a better understanding of them. Of course the students had not been asked to exemplify their responses here so it was not clear what these may be. However, it was clear from responses to both statements that the ILN module had more impact than the school placement in regards to development in inclusion and SEN. This was pursued in the chapter on initial teacher education and the aspects of which that have the most effect on student teacher development.

Key themes that had been identified in this review of student data included:

- How students described their understanding of inclusion

- How students' descriptions fit within models of SEN and inclusion

- What aspects had an influence on student understanding of issues related to inclusion and SEN

3.3 Discussion

On completing the literature review for this theme, there were four elements I was looking to examine in the data. The first was the definitions of inclusion. In the literature, differing epistemologies led to variations on the definitions one would use for inclusion. Looking at the data it would appear that the majority of the teachers were using a cultural view as exemplified by Thomas et al (2000) where the emphasis and responsibility lay with the school – thus within the social paradigm. Although the majority of the words the students used also sat within the transactional model, they focused a bit more on the child with 'everyone', 'unique child', 'involvement in an activity', which was to be expected as they had been required to focus on the children in their class to date not consider a whole school perspective. Inclusion, as an ethos, appeared to be accepted from a psychological perspective at a policy level. It would be worth comparing this with the data on perspectives in the next chapter to see if this view was sustained when examining particular aspects of SEN and inclusion. This could also highlight one of the issues raised at the end of the analysis of the teachers' data – any contradictions between beliefs and practice.

When evaluating the second issue – what characteristics teachers outlined as significant in an inclusive school – there were elements that would become more significant as the study continued, for example, the notion of a specialist pedagogy. The priorities for the teachers were 'knowledge and

understanding of particular conditions'; 'more support' and 'utilizing a range of teaching strategies'. There was a dichotomy here between the words used in the explanation of inclusion and these priorities. In their definitions of inclusion, the teachers were using phrases such as 'ensuring that every child, regardless of personal, social, emotional or physical need has appropriate access'; 'being included in the same activities'; 'seeing every child as unique'; it was the TA and LSA who separated the children with special educational needs from the others in their descriptions. So, if teachers viewed all children within their class as accessing the same curriculum in their own way – why then worry about knowledge of particular conditions and specialist teaching skills? On the one hand they had acknowledged that they were working towards all children achieving; on the other they were suggesting that for children with special educational needs this might be something different. This was worth pursuing in the perceptions chapter and that on specialist pedagogy – was it also something of which the student teachers become aware?

Unfortunately I did not get the opportunity to pursue the issues with the TAs and LSAs as they were not included in the research brief, but it would be worth investigating separately their perspectives as they work very closely with the children with special educational needs and with our student teachers so their view of their own role and that of the teachers in relation to a policy of inclusion would be worth evaluating.

The third issue – how far student teachers' and the staff's views were similar had been partly addressed in the first element regarding definitions of inclusion, but as the research continued, the questioning of both groups

became more similar so would reveal more. The one aspect that was of interest here was the fact that students stated that they had learned more from the ILN module than from school placement. I found that surprising as the school-based placement was when the theoretical should have been applied to a practical situation and, therefore, become truly meaningful to the student teachers. In a later chapter on initial teacher education this could be pursued. However, the student teachers' comments that they had gained a better understanding of their own values in relation to SEN and inclusion did resonate with Falvey and Givner (2005) who underlined the importance of a set of values related to the rights of children when considering inclusion. Student teachers who were able to examine their beliefs and values in this area, and teach according to a system where the child's rights are central to their teaching, would be at an advantage as they would examine the impact of their actions on the children and strive for equality of opportunity. They had not all got to this point – it was still early in their development – but it was good that they felt they had started.

Consensus was the fourth issue and one that would reappear in later chapters. At this stage it only seemed to be important to the headteacher in School A; the rest of the teachers placing it as their least important priority in inclusion. Later interviews outlined why this might have been when considering perceptions. An issue that arose within the literature was whether teachers with longer careers would share the same views as their less experienced colleagues. Although this did appear to be an issue with the questionnaires when talking about treating children the same or equally, on the whole, the differences were greater between the teachers and the

TAs and LSAs not between length of service. When examining the other issues within the questionnaires this pattern was explored further.

Overall, how a school defined itself as inclusive fell predominantly within a social paradigm with a psychological, cultural epistemology. There was not necessarily consensus on the finer details of priorities and definitions – but overall it appeared to be an accepted policy. The priorities seemed to be out of synchronicity with the definitions, but this was explored in more detail with the focus on perceptions and could be related to the difference between an overall policy and theory and the practical application in the classroom.

Chapter Four   Perceptions of SEN and inclusion

As was evident in the previous chapter definitions were value-laden and rooted in epistemologies of disability or inclusion. How teachers operated within the classroom was influenced by their perceptions of the children within their care and their role in that environment. Student teachers – especially at the beginning of their development – would often assume that their classteacher was who they should emulate, even if their classteacher was not evidencing the practice they had expected from what was taught to them in college. It was of value to my study, therefore, to consider the influences on teachers' perceptions of SEN and inclusion and to evaluate the impact of these on student teachers. It was also important to gain an awareness of how student teacher perceptions were influenced and the potential impact that these had on their development as a teacher. In this section, therefore, I will be examining models of SEN and inclusion; studies into how perceptions influence practice and the way in which students may develop perceptions during school-based practice.

4.1   Literature Review

4.1.1 Models of disability and SEN

It became evident that the medical model: 'referring to 'handicapped' children by reference to what was wrong with them' (Warnock and Norwich, 2010, p.125) or the social model: 'disability or SEN is seen to be defined mainly by social barriers and prejudice' (Warnock and Norwich, 2010, p.90) were too simplistic in their entirety and more subtlety was required to

describe the challenges facing teachers and student teachers in the classroom. The data presented in the last chapter demonstrated that teachers and students did not respond from within just one tradition – transactional or functional. Their thinking was more complex than that. Teachers' and student teachers' descriptions of inclusion as an ethos, where they agreed with the desire to include all children who would benefit from mainstream education, demonstrated an ability to reflect on the role of the teacher and environment; however, when discussing the practicalities of inclusion or teaching children with SEN, practice did not match ethos. This related to the functional model – the description of what was wrong in order to find a cure, to which the medical submodel belongs – and the transactional model – where one or more elements combine to cause an issue for the child, to which the social submodel belongs.

Within the functional model, for my research, I focused on three submodels: deficit/ medical model; tragedy/charity model and resource/ support model. In the functional model 'the individual is not able, due to disability, to perform his or her functions or roles … disability is viewed as a pathology, abnormality or deviance' (Ferri et al, 2005, p.6). Student teachers or teachers who followed this model were likely to want to look for symptoms of the special need and try to treat the symptoms rather than seeing the child as a whole. They might adopt a charitable stance where they viewed themselves as carer rather than educator and would focus on the level of support the child required to enable them to function like the 'norm' expected for their age group.

In contrast, the transactional model suggested that 'disability is not only created and maintained by non-supportive environments, but is also caused and sustained by problematic social relationships' (Llewellyn and Hogan, 2000, p.162). Within the classroom those adopting this model would look for barriers to learning and address these rather than suggest there was something within the child that was faulty. Within the submodels used for my research for the transactional model – social; capability and socio political/Bio-psycho-social – the capability submodel would encourage teachers to find what the students could do and build on this rather than what they could not. The socio political/bio-psycho-social model

> does not deny illness or the need for medical intervention;
> rather, it offers a lens that brings a clearer understanding of
> barriers created by society's attitude toward disabled people and
> how these barriers affect them (Loewen and Pollard, 2010, p.9).

It was these two submodels that I would promote most in my teaching, wanting the students to understand that their pupils may have an identified medical condition, but that their special educational need did not, therefore, need to be categorised in the same way and require them to adopt a medical response. I wanted them to see the positives within the children and respond to these and, thus, nurture the abilities of their pupils rather than trying to 'cure' the areas of weakness.

Terzi (2005) recognises the dilemma between different beliefs based on context and recommends

> a philosophical framework, based on the capability approach as
> developed by Amartya Sen ... (through which) considerations of
> human diversity in terms of interrelation between individual,
> social and circumstantial factors are central in the evaluation of
> people's capabilities (p.445).

Her premise was that medical models of SEN – where deficits were viewed as within the child – or social models of SEN – where deficits were viewed as within the system – had clouded practitioners' awareness of the abilities of individuals. These abilities were also the focus of Florian (2008) who related inclusion to an ability to participate unrestricted by a need to conform to imposed measures of success. However, with national assessment tests and league tables, the success of children with SEN was not always recognised, as the aim was for the whole year group to reach a certain level and those who could not reach the level brought the whole cohort down. These measures discouraged teachers from celebrating the capabilities and encouraged them to focus on driving children towards an external measure of success. If, however, teachers were able to adopt the capability model, 'disability' and 'needs' as terms would become less meaningful and the teacher would look at the child as an individual. Reindal (2009) supported Terzi's (2005) capability model in principle, but stated that even this with its social justice aims and view of children with SEN as children with abilities, had limited scope. There could be obstacles in the way of the child with the impairment or SEN due to the way the environment had been designed. So the teacher or student might identify what the child could do and plan for this, but if they ignored the aspects of the SEN or disability that made inclusion a challenge for that child, they could still be disabling them. Reindal stated that this model needed to be set within a transactional model of disability - in fact a particular social-relational model. In the social-relational model a reduced function (i.e. impairment) was merely a necessary condition that had both personal and social implications for the individual.

However, a disability is contingent upon sufficient conditions brought about by social, cultural, environmental, and religious mechanisms that restrict and hinder the individual's pursuit of vital goals and achievements in life' (Reindal, 2009, p.162).

So a teacher should, therefore, be aware of the abilities of the children, but equally be aware of their influence on these abilities from the environment they establish and their awareness of the other needs of the children. In my study I was trying to establish how far this message was given to students in terms of teacher and student perceptions of meeting needs.

One of the challenges implicit in this was that

from an inclusive perspective, SEN categories can be seen as a form of terminological separation and exclusion. From this dilemmatic perspective, the challenge is to provide appropriate and individually relevant provision, while minimising stigma and devaluation (Norwich, 2008, p.61).

This is a complex distinction for students to understand and may lead to them confusing the usage of categories within school. Sikes et al (2007) pursued this with teachers and teaching assistants who used a language for inclusion and a language for the practicalities of the classroom. They talked of a right to education but did not necessarily equate this with education in a mainstream setting; they discussed the difficulties of a policy of inclusion resulting in including children who made the learning of others a challenge due to behavioural or social difficulties.

Whilst policy, structure, and culture might shape the broader social and institutional contexts in which teachers and teaching assistants operate, it is their personal interpretations and understandings, their day-to-day enactments, how they perform inclusion, their agency which determines how the policy is formulated and re-formulated in practice (Sikes et al, 2007, p.366).

This reinforced the problem identified above that teachers may appear to adopt a transactional model of SEN when discussing inclusion, but a medical one when talking about individual children because this was related to the way that we relied on in categorising children in order to entitle them to mainstream provision. Teachers were conscious that for some elements of their provision, the child needed to have a label, even if in the classroom they did not. If they were involved in the statement-making process, for example, the teacher may well have to apply the labelling to the child – 'dyspraxic' etc. – rather than the setting – 'inclusive', 'lacking resourcing' – which still firmly places the child's 'problem' at the root of provision.

The arguments above lead us to consider a discourse of disability and SEN that will clearly influence teacher and student teacher practice and school identity. The discourse includes notions of their own roles and circumstances; whether they have to obtain resources or support for a child and whether the environment in which they practise is accommodating and supportive for children with SEN to reach their potential, fully included in the learning environment. This leads to dilemmas for teachers and student teachers in that they may have a strong desire to adopt a particular model of SEN and disability but feel restricted by the various pressures upon them.

4.1.2 Perspectives on the education of children with SEN

Cole (2005) would argue that we are a long way from concluding this philosophical and political dialogue. She outlined in her research the

perspectives, and struggles, of mothers/teachers of children with SEN. The definition of inclusion here emanated from the political arena which

> refers to the education of all children, particularly those with SEN, in mainstream schools and requires schools to consider their structures, teaching approaches and use of support in order to respond to the needs of all children (p.333).

By researching the experiences of mothers who were also teachers, Cole's research provided an interesting 'insider's' view of policy and practice with a maternal sensitivity to the needs of particular individuals. I had sympathy for this approach and focus as it mirrored my own motivation for pursuing research in this area. It was an openly acknowledged personal interest in Cole's research where she appreciated that a 'value-neutral' perspective was not possible in this case. Whilst not within the remit of my research proposal, Cole's depth of exploration into why her case studies revealed such strong feelings regarding inclusion, were pertinent in considering how I assessed how an individual within the study had developed their own perceptions of SEN and inclusion. In Cole's study the strength of feeling emerged from being a mother and teacher to children with SEN. In my study, perceptions of SEN and inclusion could equally be influenced by personal experiences rather than education or teaching development. How I analysed this in questionnaires to school staff or through the journals, interviews and questionnaires with students required careful consideration. Education and school placement do not happen in isolation, they occur within the framework of the individual's lived experiences and are coloured by them.

How students might have viewed themselves, therefore, impacted on the data they provided. In the Perceptions Survey (Appendix E), students were

questioned about whether their beliefs had been influenced by having a disability or SEN themselves although with only approximately 20% of students who had declared a disability in the Early Years cohort, this was naturally a small response. Matthews (2009) discovered that this may not be a full declaration. In her study she discovered that students with 'invisible' disabilities did not always declare them, through a sense of wanting to cope with higher education; through not wanting to be labelled, or for the stigma that might be attached. With my students this fear could be exacerbated by going into school – it was not long ago that I remember students being advised not to teach if they had dyslexia, so the fear that this might have been viewed negatively was a justifiable one. Matthews recommended creating a learning environment after careful consideration of all student needs, advocating a social model of disability which would support many disabled students and students with or without SEN. However it was a dimension worth considering that the students' self-efficacy would impact on their approach to teaching and to their view of themselves as a teacher. If they had struggled with their own needs or were still hiding them, this may have made their approach to an inclusive classroom very different to their peers, either due to their greater insight or due to their fear of disclosure.

Much of the students' identity would be gained from how they viewed themselves as a teacher within the partnership school.

> The duality of participation and reification ... is a fundamental aspect of the constitution of communities of practice, of their evolution over time, of the relations among practices, of the identities of participants, and of the broader organizations in which communities of practices exist (Wenger, 2008, p.65).

Into this complex system student teachers were going to have to not only learn to participate in the teaching aspect of schools but also get to grips with the reification of events through self-evaluation and through observations and reports of others. They encountered perceptions of every event in school – one teacher's interesting class was another teacher's nightmare; one student interprets the inclusion policy as a misguided approach, another an ideal to aspire to. So not only do students bring to college their previous life experiences and perceptions; but they also bring with them their way of interpreting what they see, hear and experience in school. Wenger recognised the challenges facing students in finding an identity in school as he stated that teachers they encountered would be in their teacher role – the one they have to be for the children. Students would not be able to enter this community of practice fully unless they encountered teachers as adults:

> this type of lived authenticity brings into the subject matter the concerns, sense of purpose, identification, and emotion of participation ... This principle suggests that being an active practitioner with an authentic form of participation might be one of the most deeply essential requirements for teaching' (Wenger, 2008, p.277).

There was a responsibility on schools to be aware of this and to adopt a whole school approach to student teacher development, with college providing students some of the tools they needed to recognise their views, perceptions and values when evaluating what they are experiencing. These may include an ability to communicate with teachers about their role as teachers, not just about the children in the class and to provide them frameworks for evaluating their own thoughts and to recognise from what model or perception they were functioning.

4.1.3 Student perceptions

Students needed to recognise their own perceptions and values, placed within a theoretical framework related to the classification of special educational need, prior to being able to practise teaching within the inclusive setting. They might have had to face the fact that legislation at the time and practice were not congruent with their value system; they may have wanted to adapt curricula and strategies to meet their own agenda for inclusive practice; but fundamentally they were going to have to rationalise intellectually this potential dilemma of difference. To be able to ascertain how far this range of perceptions was impacting on student experiences and learning, was one of the key purposes of my research. Pearson (2005) used the free association exercise that I adapted for students on the Individual Learning Needs Module although with Secondary PGCE students. The outcome for her students was that a predominantly medical model of disability was expressed and with only a one-year course this was a challenge to overcome. However, in my research it was possible to examine any changes in perceptions from the ILN module and school experience. Whilst my research occurred over a very short timescale, having students focus on their perceptions and how far these were met or otherwise in schools was possible.

As well as consideration of the impact of their values in relation to inclusion on student teacher perceptions, there was also value in considering the impact on the focus child or children's self-perception. Cambra and Silvestre (2003) investigated a Spanish context and found that 'the teacher may be seen as a model in his/her attitude towards special needs students'

(p.204) and that 'teachers, in turn, may be influenced by the climate reigning in the school with regard to integration' (p.204). Student teachers were particularly susceptible to these climate influences as they were on the periphery of the community and trying to model what they were experiencing. They also moved from school to school so were acutely aware of any differences between settings and the impact this had on their emerging practice.

Kelly and Norwich (2004) qualified their research findings with the caveat that special schools had been accused of being unrealistically positive about pupil capability, but despite this the notion of the potential negative impact of labelling – bearing in mind the previous research that indicated students tended towards a medical model of disability and SEN – had significance to the development of programmes of study for trainee teachers in this area.

> Teachers with and without experience and training with pupils with various levels and types of special educational need might have very different perceptions and expectations, self-confidence and self-efficacy, resulting in very different effectiveness in teaching and learning (Topping and Maloney, 2005, p.6).

This was the thread of my research where I aimed to examine the most effective ways to use the Individual Learning Needs and school-based placement to develop awareness, confidence and practice in teaching children with special educational needs in mainstream settings. This, according to Cambra and Silvestre and Kelly and Norwich, needed to be combined with professional values. Teaching children with SEN in an inclusive setting was not, therefore, just a set of knowledge and awareness;

this went hand in hand with professional values and attitudes in relation to inclusion.

Perceptions and models of inclusion and SEN were, then, complex issues. In the research it was apparent that the range of models of disability and SEN could impact on the experiences of teachers and children in schools which, in turn, had an effect on ITE. For discussion of the literature and data, therefore, I wanted to examine the following issues:

- Whether the students' self-identity impacted on their perception of children with SEN

- How far students and teachers expressed views from within one model only

- How far teachers' perceptions impacted on the students' views

- Whether the students had considered the impact of their perceptions on the children they teach

4.2   Data Analysis

Students are engaged in a developmental process and will be at different stages of awareness, dependent upon their previous life experiences. For the purposes of this research, where the aim was to understand the ITE programme, it was key to gain an understanding of how student perceptions

influenced their experiences of school placement and ILN module and how they gained an insight into the influences upon their perceptions. This data was subjective; however, it had value for me as the students were drawing on their personal influences across a wide range of partnership schools.

4.2.1 Early Years student cohort

Free association (Appendix C): As in the last chapter, this exercise had interest because students were asked for their immediate response to the words. They were only given a couple of minutes to respond with three-five words for each, which ensured that they were really drawing on their first perceptions.

Table Six: Responses to Free Association Exercise – raw data

	Functional Model			Transactional Model			Unclassified
	Medical/ deficit	Tragedy/ Charity	Support/ services	Social	Capability	Socio-political	
Inclusion n=72	7%	0%	4%	11%	10%	60%	8%
ILN n= 66	1%	1%	13%	23%	24%	3%	1%
SEN n= 83	10%	2%	55%	17%	1%	7%	7%
Disability n= 73	31%	7%	26%	14%	3%	15%	4%

Table Seven: Responses to Free Association Exercise – line chart
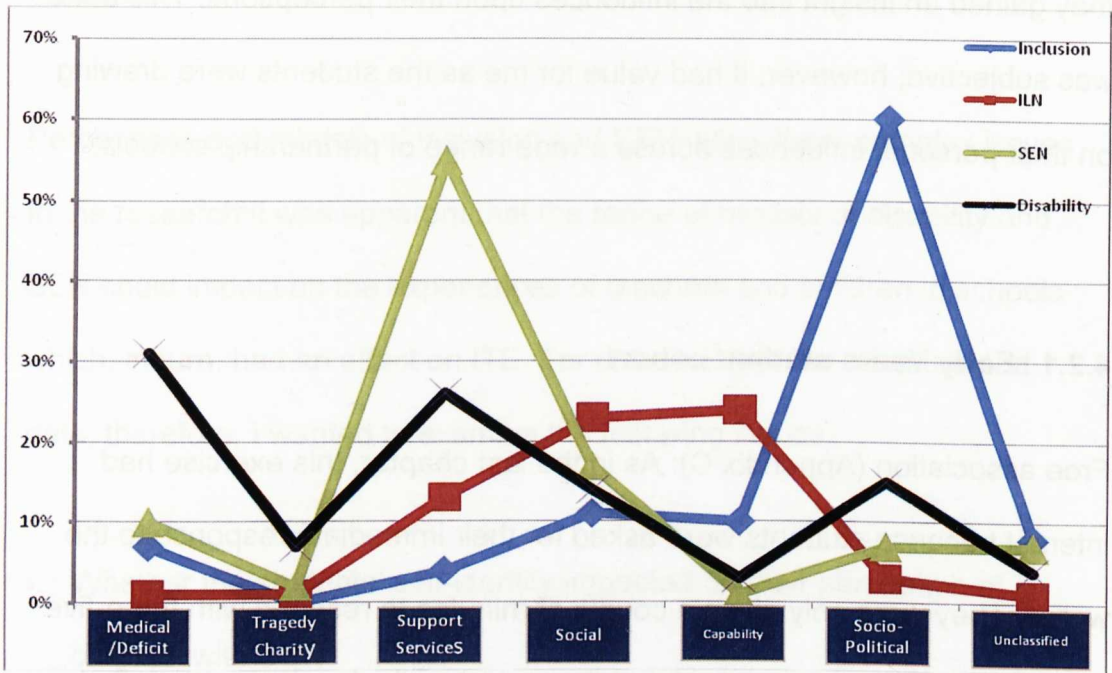
Inclusion n=72   ILN n=66   SEN n=83   Disability n=73

Broadly speaking the terms inclusion and individual learning needs prompted a transactional model response and the terms disability and SEN prompted functional model responses (see Tables 6 and 7). Overall, the responses were slightly more towards the functional. When the students were operating within a functional model they were often using single word labels – 'mental', 'impairment', 'medical' – but when they were operating within the transactional model they used phrases more related to the rights of children and how they could be enabled – 'allowing all to achieve', 'meeting everyone's learning needs'; 'fair opportunity'. I had not expected such a difference between the four statements, but it appeared to me that the inclusion and individual learning needs were more ideological labels and disability and SEN more to do with labelling. If that was how the students had viewed them, then it was no surprise that the more ideological would be more within the transactional model and the other two the functional. In their first

placement schools, students may have experienced the use of terms to describe the children with SEN that identified a condition rather than how they are enabled. This was pursued further in the students' first questionnaire (Appendix F) and with the case study students (Appendices B).

The purpose of the first questionnaire to the students was to measure perceptions of SEN and inclusion and their level of confidence to teach in mainstream inclusive classes. I used confidence as a scale because I wanted to see how perceptions changed over the course of the module and school-based placement. In essence it was not a measure of competence, but just how students viewed themselves at a given point, but as the module 'wrapped around' the school placement it was useful to identify changes from the module perspective and from the school perspective. This occurred with other elements of the questionnaires, too, where some questions were repeated. In the first questionnaire a baseline was created from which to identify changes.

Although about half of the students had some (25 students) or 'extensive' (five students) experience of social, emotional and behavioural difficulties with most of the other categories of need, students had limited experience. The first year placement did not demand any particular focus on inclusion and the students taught with support from the classteacher; therefore, this would not have provided significant experience of planning for inclusion.

Table Eight: First student questionnaire question 9: average responses

9. Please rate your confidence with the following aspects of teaching as they relate to teaching children with SEN in mainstream classes/settings on the 0-10 scale used in question 5 with 0 = no confidence at all, 10= highly confident:

	Score
Planning for the whole class including the children with SEN	4.6
Behaviour management in a class/setting with children with SEN	5.8
Meeting the targets of a child with an individual education plan (IEP)	4.5
Working with assistants in meeting the needs of children with SEN	6.1
Assessing the needs of children with SEN	4.3
Assessing the level of attainment reached by a child with SEN	4.7
Subject knowledge related to an understanding of common conditions and disabilities	4.3

n= 58

This lack of experience was evident in the students' current confidence score of 4.9 average out of 10. One of the focuses of the research was to ascertain how the school and college elements could work together effectively to ensure high levels of confidence. When examining their confidence in particular aspects of planning and teaching – Q9 (see Table 8) - it was apparent that certain areas offered more challenge than others. Confidence was lowest with 4.3 out of 10 for assessing children's needs, which was not surprising as it was a high order skill and one where they would have been presented the information in the first placement rather than having to assess it for themselves. In contrast, the students responded with 6.1 on average for working with assistants. This was understandable as students were often encouraged to work with their classroom assistants to support the children with particular learning needs in order to make their teaching more accessible. This was fine for the first placement, but during this module and school placement the students would be expected to make progress with assessing the children and meeting their needs through whole class

responsibility. This also accounted for the other low scores of planning for all pupils (4.6) and meeting Individual Education Plan (IEP) targets with a child (4.5). It was extremely unlikely that a student would have worked with an IEP in their first placement. However, in this module they had a school placement task related to familiarising themselves with any IEPs for their class. The task led to an assessment where they observed how their teacher met the needs of a particular child and then they planned for how they would respond when they took responsibility for the class on school placement. This could include meeting the targets from an IEP or simply maintaining the status quo where they believed the child was well included.

Table Nine: First student questionnaire question 6: responses

Mainstream schools should include children with ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Physical disabilities	44	14	1		
Sensory disabilities	31	24	1	1	
ADD/ADHD	25	31	2		
Autism	29	28	1	1	
Asperger's syndrome	24	28	5	1	
Down syndrome	24	27	3	5	
Emotional Behavioural disorders	30	28	1	1	

n=58

Question six (see Table 9) related to inclusion for children with particular conditions. Given the outcome of the free association exercise where the students demonstrated a predominantly medical model I anticipated more variation with their responses. However, for overall 'agree strongly/agree' score the vast majority of students supported the inclusion of children with physical, sensory disabilities; ADD; autism and Asperger syndrome; Downs syndrome and EBD. The only conditions that the students had slightly different views about were Asperger syndrome and Down's syndrome where

six and eight students respectively either expressed no opinion or disagreed with them being included in mainstream. This reflects their likely experience in schools where most schools included children with ADD/ADHD, autism and EBD but students may have seen fewer children with Down's syndrome and students may have lacked understanding of the children's needs. Children with physical and sensory disabilities were often statemented, so students would have experienced them working with a support assistant who helped to adapt the learning to suit the individual needs of the child based on the teacher's planning. Children with other diagnoses were often placed at School Action or School Action Plus where it was the classteacher's responsibility to plan for their needs.

Table Ten: First student questionnaire question 7: responses

Children with special educational needs ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
learn better when withdrawn from the class	1	14	10	33	1
require teaching by specialists	9	26	13	10	
learn best in mixed ability groups	1	36	15	7	
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	25	30	3	1	
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	10	33	9	7	

n=58

There was less consistency on some of the elements of teaching children with special educational needs – Q7 (see Table 10). This section reflected more of the understanding, or lack of understanding, related to meeting the needs of all of the children in the class. Fifteen students were of the opinion that children with SEN learned better when withdrawn from the class, with 34 disagreeing. Students would have been told in professional studies that they should cater for the needs of all children, but may have experienced classes where this did not happen. Thirty five students believed that children with

SEN required teaching by specialists with ten disagreeing. This appeared to be in contrast to the previous question where students supported the view that they should be managing the learning of all the children. This is pursued in the next chapter, when the notion of a specialist pedagogy is explored.

Thirty seven of the students believed that children with SEN learn best in mixed ability groups, but 55 stated that children with SEN needed the help of support staff to reach their potential and 43 felt that children with SEN may do better when in a class that matched their level of attainment rather than their chronological age. This again appeared to be contradictory. Students may have experienced ability grouping with support staff with the 'SEN group', which is a common organisation for literacy and numeracy lessons in many classes. However, if there was a mixed ability organisation one would expect the teacher to manage the learning of the class, without the necessity for support staff with the children with SEN as they would be catered for through differentiation and group organisation. This related, I believe, to their previous comment that children with SEN required specialist teaching – there was a belief that there was something 'different' about children with an SEN label that required additional resources and skills beyond the norm. At this stage this must have related to what students had experienced in schools, but needed to be something we addressed in Year One as it would be better for their placement in both the first and second years if they had a more refined understanding of differentiation and meeting the full range of needs in a typical classroom. Whilst the actual skills would be developed over the four years of the programme, it would be good if the students could have a prior awareness of what these skills were. But again, this is considered later in the study.

The next stage was to try and ascertain from where these perceptions had emerged, which was achieved through a mid-module review and perceptions survey (Appendices J and K). Students were asked to rank the influence of a range of people in their development of their opinions about children with SEN, the ranking was one for being of no influence to five for being extremely influential (see Table 11).

Table Eleven: Student perceptions questionnaire and mid module review question 1: responses

Parents	2.52
Siblings	1.48
Teachers	4.3
Peers at school	2.72
Having special educational needs yourself	1.76
Media	2.43
Reading about SEN	3.86
Peers at university	3.54
Tutors at university	4.77
Children you have taught in school	4.22

n=22

The highest ranking group were tutors at university with 4.77 out of a possible 5, closely followed by teachers from school with 4.3. This was interesting as it demonstrated how quickly influence could be felt as this was only half way through the module and before the block placement. I had anticipated home influences to be stronger at this stage, but parents only scored 2.52 and siblings 1.48. Peers at home only scored 2.72 compare to peers at university at 3.54. I expect that this was due to the immediacy of university tutors and peers to the module being studied and the school placement – they are talking with people who were sharing their experiences and questions and who faced the challenges of university and school

together. Having SEN themselves was predictably variable, with most scoring 1 but those with needs scoring it at four or five; the overall score was 1.76, but this was not an accurate reflection of how significant this was to those who had a special educational need themselves, as predicted by the literature reviewed above. After tutors and teachers, though, the highest scoring area was children they had taught in school. Just prior to this survey, students had been on a two-week preparation placement completing an assignment related to the learning needs of their forthcoming class. This may well have influenced these scores as they had been encouraged to build relationships with the children in order to assess need and then plan for them.

The students explained this in response to the questions on the survey related to children with SEN in mainstream classes and how their perceptions of this had changed. Seven made the comment that teaching children with SEN in a mainstream class was challenging; 4 stated that it would require support from others and the other comments ranged from 'I thought SENs had one-to-one'; 'I was scared at the thought of planning' to 'would mean your planning has to change according to their needs' (student perceptions questionnaire Q2). It was apparent, even at this stage, that students were not yet fully confident with the notion of managing the learning of the whole class on their own. The views expressed were negative and demonstrated that the ideals they expressed with inclusion were not yet realised in their teaching.

Where the students' perceptions had changed were around what they were expected to do as eight students responded that they had more knowledge about how to meet children's needs related to SEN; and the other comments

reflect the flexibility required as they stated: 'not set in stone', 'they are not as scary to teach as I thought', 'always a way round problems', 'I feel more at ease and I am looking forward to getting stuck in' (student perception questionnaire Q3). These responses were encouraging - more so than in the previous question. Students were demonstrating a willingness to have a go; to learn about all the children's needs; to engage with differentiation and variety.

Confidence was demonstrated in the score of 6.7 out of ten compared to the 4.9 at the beginning of the module. This half of the module had been directly related to their experiences in school and preparing for school placement, so it should have raised confidence as it challenged their fears about meeting the needs of all pupils and had involved practical planning and role play activities to demonstrate this. Eighteen of the students commented that they felt more confident since starting the school placement – the preparation placement. No student commented that they felt less confident, the remaining four remaining the same. This was encouraging as it indicated that the structure of theory into practice had been effective – there had been a clear link between the teaching in college and what students were asked to do during their school placement preparation phase (see Table 12) and they had been able to start to draw together the two.

Table Twelve: Student perceptions questionnaire and mid module review question 5: mid module review responses

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
I am satisfied that the module so far has addressed the objectives	16	6			
My understanding of individual learning needs has increased	19	3			
I am more confident about planning teaching to address individual learning needs	11	11			
I am more confident that I will be able to teach children with individual learning needs	10	12			
I like the way the module has been delivered	14	8			

n=22

When examining the ITE theme it was valuable to consider how to accommodate these differing perceptions and to assess how best to incorporate personal constructs into professional development in college and in school.

4.2.2 Case study students

After completing the free association exercise (Appendix C) and the first questionnaires (Appendix F), the four case study students engaged in their first interviews (Appendix B). These occurred before the students went into school for the preparation phase. The interviews focused on basic introductory information and then some time spent on how the students had gained their perceptions of SEN and inclusion.

Although parents had not featured too highly in the perceptions survey completed by the student cohort (Appendix E), with these four students the influences of their parents were strong. We discussed who had influenced them in terms of moral behaviour, how to conduct oneself socially, and political views and for all four students these are rooted in their upbringing by their parents – for Students two and three more particularly in their mothers. When asked about inclusion specifically, two of the students referred directly to their own experiences; one had ADHD and felt her needs had not been accommodated; Student three commented that she had been identified as gifted in art and had received additional attention for this, which she felt had not been fair on others. She also highlighted what she considered good practice for her brother in college where, due to his dyslexia, all the students in his group got their work on coloured paper. She was beginning to identify differences between what she considered good and bad practice in inclusion based on her lived experiences.

When talking about the school-based placement in Year One, Student four stated that 'there was a young child with Autism and he had his own special helper with him, but I felt like the classteacher didn't really work with him at all and I thought why was she not working with him?' The student appeared to be making a judgement here about what she would have expected to happen in the classroom for that child. Student two demonstrated the same when she said 'based on my last placement …we did a lot of things that didn't really interest them and a lot of the behavioural issues were because of boredom'.

The students were demonstrating an awareness of the consequences of a teacher's actions on the children and Student two had evaluated this episode to conclude that they needed to change the activities and include all children. As they were participating in their first placement, the students did not feel confident enough to ask about these issues and gain the teachers' perspectives; but it demonstrated that students were making judgements concerning what they saw and this was influencing their own views on how to engage in effective learning and teaching for children with SEN.

After school placement two, the students were interviewed in pairs (Appendix B) according to the schools they had attended for placement – Students one and two were in School A and Students three and four were in School B. They were interviewed together to give an overall impression of the school and their placements rather than specifics related to individual classes. The technique worked well as the students supported each other and developed initial thoughts further. The students in School A both agreed that their school placement had been different from the one in the previous year and described it as 'amazing'. They commented that their confidence had increased around SEN and their perceptions had changed – one of them had worked in the Foundation Stage and had got frustrated with a three year old having an individual education plan (IEP). The student's perception was 'personally I don't think you should have, I didn't understand the reasons because he was a three year old, he's hyperactive, he does not need an IEP'. This demonstrates a maturing from the initial interview because, even if the student was wrong and the child did need an IEP, it demonstrated that the student was not prepared to take these things at face value and would

question what she saw given her own observations. She did acknowledge, though, that it could be challenging: 'I read up all about it and I've done it in my assignment but in practice it was different'. This related back to the original differences between perceptions in the free association exercise – when it came to ethos, students were mainly within a transactional model; when it came to practicalities they were in the functional model. These students were experiencing the challenges of having a strong view on how children with SEN should be included – and here even questioning the whole notion of labelling a child as having SEN in the first place – and the practicalities of the classroom. The school, too, may have struggled with these realities with this child and decided that in order to get the resources they required they had to create an IEP. Students see the outcomes of the decision, but not the decision making process and it would have been good for the student to explore this with the teachers.

The students in School B had a very different experience. Although they said the school was very good and did not have many children with SEN or with English as an additional language (EAL), they could cite individual incidents that had clearly affected their views of how schools managed inclusion.

They made comments such as:

- 'I thought teachers would be more involved with them'

- 'I thought they were quite isolated really'

- 'I thought the teacher would have more of an input into their learning'

- 'I didn't feel that they had a bond with the child, the teacher at all. Just only with their mentors really'

- 'I just felt like because they had helpers then the teachers thought oh well they're with them and I never saw her go up to him and say how's he doing?'

These responses indicated that they had been conscious of how the teachers were responding to children with SEN and they were beginning to draw conclusions from what they had seen.

They discussed teachers across the school and the strong focus on children of higher ability. Both students stated that their perceptions of inclusion and SEN had not changed, but they had seen more of how the school tried to achieve inclusion. They had experienced children with SEN being supported by TAs and learning support assistants (LSAs) rather than the teachers. They inferred from what they saw that the teachers were not planning the material for the TAs and LSAs to use with the children and were not interacting with the children throughout the learning sessions. It was possible that the teachers did, in fact, have planning sessions with the TAs and LSAs which the students had not witnessed. But over the course of their six week placement, they had clearly perceived that children with SEN in the school were isolated and that the teachers were comfortable with this. They had not discussed this with the teachers or the TAs, so had not sought to understand the decision making process that went behind the decisions; but their conclusion from what they had seen was 'I'd like to be more involved in the

learning'. They saw their role as 'when you are in school I think it was your responsibility to find out about a child. No one's going to come to you and say this child needs this, this and this, you need to find out'.

This appeared to be a positive approach as thoroughly understanding the children as individuals would enable the students to establish where their learning could start and would result in them being involved and responsible for the learning of all the children in their class. However, one comment in particular, indicated to me that the students had not fully laid down the functional model as they said 'there's only one little boy who wasn't really special needs, he had his IEP, but <u>he was alright inside</u>, he was just working at a lower level'. The underlined phrase could have emerged from the student's perceptions of the child or from what they had heard at the school. But this indicated that the student still perceived a special educational need as something within the child as opposed to potentially the environment requiring some adaptation to enable him to learn. Language for SEN and inclusion was revealing and the students had expressed some nervousness at saying the wrong thing, but it appeared here that the students in School B still had some confusion around ethos and practicalities and that some of this could be related to their observations of what the teachers in the school had done.

The case study students also completed journals during their time on school placement (Appendix I). I had initially intended these to be structured by the students so that they could emphasise what they viewed as important.

However they struggled with this approach, so I provided them with a writing frame. They were not required to complete the journal at set times, but to identify when something significant had occurred related to SEN and inclusion and to write about this.

Student two had a placement in nursery, so no children were formally identified as having SEN. This worked well as she felt that she had to get to know all the children and plan according to their individual needs. However, she stated that she 'found that a lot of children who were classed as 'lower ability' were in fact extremely capable and it was other factors holding them back. These factors included their shy personalities ....'. She tried different teaching strategies from those of the classteacher and different grouping and was praised by the school-based tutor for the outcomes. The student had been given the freedom to try her own assessments and organisation of the class and had benefited from this experience. She appeared to be developing an understanding of inclusion as involving all children and had identified a range of factors that might influence a child's learning and progression that would not normally be considered special educational needs.

Student three described her class as good with some boys who were 'hard work'; the class also accommodated one statemented child with a statement for autism, who was not included in the daily routine but works with an LSA. She did not discuss her activities to include the children but she did comment on the visit by an autism specialist who was very negative about the progress

made by the child: 'I was shocked by this especially when I heard how upset the teaching assistant who puts all her energy into helping this pupil was'. Although she stated that the child worked separately from the rest of the class, she had been positive about his progress and about his increased independence in life skills following his individual curriculum. She was clearly positive about this experience and was disappointed that it was questioned by an 'outsider'. I found this an interesting response as she expressed opinions in the interviews that children should be included in activities and yet this child was not; when the approach was questioned by the visiting professional she was supporting the teacher's approach. This demonstrated again the students' difficulty in maintaining a single view of inclusion and SEN – once they were in the classroom they changed their original views and the practicalities overrode the ethos.

Student four was mostly concerned with the number of children of high ability. She had children working up to two years above expected levels and she struggled initially with meeting their needs. She, too, commented on the lower ability children being taught by TAs; but did not make any comment about whether she agreed with the policy or not. She had been praised for her use of resources for both groups and felt more confident that she was able to differentiate for a wide range of needs. This was a practical demonstration of what she had espoused in her interviews, that it was the teacher's responsibility to know the needs of the children in the class and to meet these. Unlike the others, there did not seem to be such a difference for her between ethos and practice.

The results for the student data identified key themes as:

- The fact that students appeared to operate from more than one model of SEN and inclusion

- How their perceptions had been generated and the influence of personal experiences and school-based experience

- Student perceptions of what they had seen practised by teachers in school

4.2.3 Case study schools

These themes were pursued with teachers in school as two classteachers were interviewed in School A (Appendix H). Unfortunately School B did not enter into interviews so it was not possible to identify whether they would have agreed with School A or with the students who had been placed in their school.

Classteacher one in School A stated that she expected a teacher's perceptions would be influenced by their experiences of teaching children

with SEN, as she said 'sometimes it was right and it was great to have special needs children in your class, ... whereas other people might be thinking with more extreme cases where you can have your whole year's worth of teaching disrupted ...'. She had experienced a child in her class on the autistic spectrum who they had worked hard to include, but who was making limited progress. She describes one of the influences as 'a personal fear of the unknown', but a willingness to endeavour to find the resources required and the strategies to help children be included. She had a balanced presentation of why this may be the case and how it was manifested in practice as she discussed how difficult it was to meet some children's needs if resources were tight, but, equally, she said that 'you need to feel what they are feeling sometimes so you know how to deal with them', suggesting a real desire for empathy. Through these approaches, the classteacher appeared to be presenting a good model of inclusion for the student teachers.

Classteacher two had experienced teaching two children who were unable to cope with mainstream and who had progressed to special school. She described not being able to give them what they needed from within the school. This may have influenced her comments on confidence: 'I think having less confidence was probably good because it makes you take a step back and think about the child. Whereas if you walked in thinking everything was fine you might overlook that there could be a special need there and the need not recognised'. This would be a positive attitude to share with the students and mirrored what the students were told in the ILN module - namely that the students should get to know the children individually rather than respond to a label.

The SBT summarised the classteacher's perceptions when she thought 'at different stages in your career you have different opinions and you can see things differently' which corresponded with the classteacher's comments that perceptions related to a teacher's experience. She supported this notion by stating that in the particular case of a child on the autistic spectrum who 'could display some very difficult behaviours and if less experienced members of staff have seen that and wouldn't know themselves how to deal with it. They might think, no it was not right for here'.

The classteacher's comments on labels were interesting as she suggested that they could work well in enabling teachers to prepare for a child with special needs but could equally lead teachers to treat children inappropriately due to the label. There was an acknowledgement here that there might be consensus about the ethos of inclusion, but that practice might present challenges. The SBT's comments on confidence appeared to reiterate this as she said staff were self-critical, often not realizing how effective they were and she stated that 'so much of what we do is integral to our teaching that staff don't realise that actually that has already made a difference'. It would apparently take significant individual needs with a child before they would feel overwhelmed or unable to meet their needs. However, because she stated that the teachers may not know how good they were, this may result in them underestimating how well they were including all children. The impact of this was apparently a supportive staff who helped each other when strategies

proved ineffective. This would be a good model for students to experience as the SBT was describing a reflective staff who drew on each other's expertise.

From the staff members' responses the key themes appeared to be:

- That the teachers wanted to uphold an inclusive approach, but found that there were children who had been included in mainstream for whom they were unable to cater

- That the school-based tutor surmised that teachers could find labels misleading which could result in negative responses

- That teachers often did not appreciate how competent they were with all the children within their care

4.3 Discussion:

Summarising the literature review led to four aspects for consideration within the data analysis. The first of these was whether the students' identity as a teacher in a mainstream setting impacted on their perception of children with SEN. Data would suggest that predominantly this was so. OfSTED (2008) stated that 'the most effective new and recently trained teachers seen had a firm grounding in the pedagogy relating to learning difficulties and/or disabilities'(p.5). For this to develop student teachers needed to gain the confidence and competence to identify children's needs and meet them

through their teaching. In order to do this the students had to become familiar with their own perspectives on SEN and disability so that they could reflect on how they were approaching the inclusive classroom. The two students who had experienced special educational needs themselves suggested when in school that all children should be included. They reflected a socio-political submodel of SEN and disability, with some awareness of the rights of children to be included and have their needs met they recognise that in this approach 'the 'problem' of disability is the lack of civil rights and unequal opportunity' (Ferri et al, 2005, p.7). This would lead to an approach to teaching that would promote the rights of the children with SEN, to take responsibility for their learning and to seek strategies that would work for them.

However, Student three expressed some confused feelings in the actual school-based placement where she supported non-inclusive treatment of one child. The other two case study students were equally aware of some 'ideal' inclusive ethos, but that school-based experiences were not always within these parameters. They struggled with the idea that there was one approach to teaching children with SEN, one model of disability. Teachers did not express their views and experiences in terms of models and frameworks, but they described their desire for inclusion and their struggles to make it happen. Data suggests that perceptions of SEN and disability do not always match the approaches in the classroom.

> Models are useful as a tool to aid understanding of different aspects of disability for research and clinical purposes, but there is a danger that if models are adopted unchallenged then implicit definitions will presuppose answers to questions (Llewellyn and Hogan, 2000, p.164).

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This can be an inhibitor to the student teachers as the Individual Learning Needs module would need to support students expressing their views and models and understanding where they come from and how they would affect their teaching. This also impacts on how student teachers interact with teachers in school, who may hold different perceptions and, therefore, be teaching in a fashion that the students do not recognise from their learning in college.

It appears from the journal evidence that the students were prepared to try their own ways of doing things, even if it appeared to contradict what they were hearing from the teachers, but they were affected by what they were told by teachers and how teachers work. 'If a practitioner has been trained to view disability as solely a clinical concept, he or she will conceptualise the necessary response to be clinical treatment' (Smart, 2009, p.3). So students were placed in a difficult position of potentially adopting a more clinical approach themselves, even if this did not match what they would naturally be inclined to do or what they had learned in college but to please the practitioner with whom they were working.

One of the issues that emerged from the data was that classteachers could have been trained when different policies and practices related to children with SEN were in force. If they were practising more functional approaches, student teachers may have found this challenged their own views of inclusive practices from their own learning experiences and from their college courses. Reflecting on the impact of this on the children was quite a high order skill, but there was some evidence – in what Student two said for example, that she recognised that behaviour could be handled better and that it would

impact more positively on the others' attainment. This would put the responsibility for integrating what they were experiencing with what they wanted to practise with the SBT and the college link tutor, who would need to talk with the student teachers about their engagement with the class and with the teaching approaches being used. Without this student teachers' views on a notion of something different about teaching children with SEN could be perpetuated, as explored in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five   Specialist Pedagogy

If student teachers were given the idea that there was a distinction between special and mainstream provision, then there was the potential to create a mystique about special schools – special teachers, special pedagogy and so on. So when a child with SEN had a place within a mainstream setting, student teachers then believed that they would benefit from these specialist pedagogical skills. In this chapter the issues around whether there existed a specialist pedagogy for children with SEN or whether student teachers and teachers perceived there to be were pursued. This was pertinent to the overall purpose of the research as it had been seen in the data in Chapter Four that student perceptions impacted on their practice and teacher perceptions impacted on what student teachers considered to be the norm. In order to consider this fully, during this chapter I outline inclusive teaching as far as it may relate to specialist pedagogy; then I consider special school provision for a view on whether a specialist pedagogy exists for children with disabilities and SEN before examining teacher and student teacher perceptions of pedagogy appropriate for children with SEN. This provides the overview against which data gathered from school and students was reviewed.

5.1   Literature Review

5.1.1   Inclusive Teaching

The National SEN Specialist Standards published by the Teacher Training Agency in December 1999 '… are specifically designed to support the developing role of teachers in an inclusive environment' (DfES, 2001, p.4). It

would be reasonable to assume, therefore, that if the teaching of children with SEN required specialist standards, there was something specific within the pedagogy that needed to be learned. The Standards themselves assert that

> The wide spectrum of SEN, their inter-relatedness, and the specific needs associated with particular types of impairment, mean that some teachers will need highly focused knowledge and skills drawn from one or more of the (Standards) headings. Others will need integrated knowledge and skills drawn from more than one of the headings, or from those standards relating more specifically to particular types of special educational need (TTA, 1999, p.5).

The standards were designed for all mainstream teachers, with extension standards for those in special provision, but each of the sets of standards was introduced with 'Teachers with specialist knowledge, understanding and skills in this area will show they: ...'(p.11). There are confusing messages here about whether teaching children with SEN is specialist or not. If government and teaching agency documents created the potential for confusion, then it was not a surprise if teachers were unsure of what was expected of them. So what was inclusive teaching? Was it teachers training further to meet additional Standards, or was it an extension of their usual approach?

O'Hanlon (2003) defined inclusive teaching as the 'qualities to be realised in the way teachers interact with and treat their pupils in learning situations, rather than extrinsic products of such interactions' (p.10). Mitchell (2008) would disagree as he promoted '24 clearly specified teaching strategies that have been shown in controlled research to be effective in bringing about desired outcomes in a delineated population of learners' (p.1). There

appeared to be a tension here related to how one would define success in teaching children with SEN. O'Hanlon focused on the quality of the teaching; Mitchell on the quality of the outcomes. The child in these models had different roles – O'Hanlon emphasised the role of the child in the interaction and resulting knowledge; Mitchell the role of the teacher, the child being passive. These differences mirrored the approaches student teachers and teachers took in Chapter 3 when defining their perceptions of SEN and disability. Within my study, therefore, I bore in mind that their beliefs about the potential of the child with SEN, as a result of their models of disability and SEN, may have impacted on their beliefs in a specialist, inclusive pedagogy.

On investigating how to teach children from a special school and children with SEN in a mainstream school together, Griffiths (2009) identified the need to focus on individual abilities within a capability model of SEN and disability. This approach would encourage the children to identify similarities between themselves rather than differences, providing a safe and non-threatening environment in which to engage in a flexible, individually focused curriculum. However the children themselves felt different due the location of their usual education, even though they were meeting the same learning objectives. One of the children, George, said 'But we didn't need any more help than they did. I think we're just as clever as those (mainstream pupils)... they (mainstream staff) should treat us the same'. He also said 'I wouldn't mind doing that again, just visiting them (pupils in the mainstream setting) because that was good, but I wouldn't want to go there myself' (p.217). So although the children were being taught in an inclusive fashion with personalised learning opportunities, there was still something different about the special school pedagogy. It was not just the size of their special school setting, but also

ways of teaching. As one child said 'they say stuff over and over until you've got it. They don't give in when they've said it once' (p.217).

So should mainstream schools look to special provision for more effective pedagogy – have the children identified a specialist approach that we should be introducing to our student teachers?

5.1.2 Special Schools and Pedagogy

To identify whether this specialist pedagogy existed, one had to consider why special provision might have to take an alternative approach to learning and teaching than mainstream; perhaps their priorities were different, or the curriculum aimed to achieve different outcomes for the children or the principles for learning and teaching had a different focus. It was understandable that learning outcomes may well have been different when working with children who had profound and multiple learning difficulties and disabilities – one was seeking small changes, based on a response to stimuli. In mainstream and special provision, though, children with SEN who were capable were expected to follow an academic trajectory even if it was in a different way or at a different pace from their peers. Norwich (2008) questioned whether there still was a role for special schools in inclusion, since the growing demand for inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. He stated that

> to improve our understanding of the tensions that arise over
> separate settings ... is to consider some of the values that drive
> the organisation of school systems ... educational provision to

meet individual needs, and instilling a sense of belonging and acceptance in ordinary schools (p.138).

Analysing a national and international perspective Norwich concluded that the mainstream versus special setting argument endured. However an easing of views was emerging which led him to suggest that 'issues of identification, placement, curriculum and level of governance' (p.141) should be considered. This leads to a continuum of needs met by a continuum of provision. This more flexible approach included a view of inclusion where the location of the child was not the measure of inclusivity but how far children were prepared for inclusion in society after education. In this model 'inclusive practice is one which comprises a flexible continuum of provision' (Garner, 2009, p.133). This would suggest that there was not necessarily a specialism about teaching children with SEN and disability, but that because all children's needs and abilities ran across a spectrum how and where they were taught had a spectrum from full inclusion in the broad mainstream curriculum to special provision. Mirroring this, one would suggest, ran a range of teaching and learning strategies based on pupil need – this might have included whole class strategies to individualised ones where a child required a particular approach. Using Norwich's (2008) four issues above the continua were multi-layered and multi-functional to meet the identified needs of children. Norwich and Lewis (2001) argued that whilst

> approaches at either end of the continuum may be quite distinct, good practice would be exemplified by strategies that flowed through the continuum dependent upon the needs of the individual pupil. For example, a child with a specific SEN may require intensive support or common teaching approaches at some times, but some distinct kinds of teaching at other times (p.325).

I pursued these ideas in my research, but I also needed to recognise that it would be challenging for student teachers in their second year to decide where on the continuum an individual child might be, so this would need to be modelled by the classteacher. So again one came back to the importance of the teachers within a school to model inclusive practice and be able to recognise what they were doing and teach their student teachers.

5.1.3   Teachers and inclusive teaching

Nind and Cochrane's (2002) study focused on the role of teachers within special provision. The secondary teachers who participated in their 'Intensive Interaction' project in special schools described themselves as subject teachers, where their focus would be on delivering subject knowledge alone. In Nind and Cochrane's (2002) research they were encouraged 'to see themselves also as teachers of children and as teachers of learning ... rather than thinking about what the pupils would produce they would think about the active processes they would be engaged with' (p.192). This would turn, for many teachers, the process of planning lessons on its head; they were encouraging teachers to be child-centred rather than drawing exclusively on the teacher's subject specialism. The teachers needed an understanding of effective teaching strategies for children across a range of needs and abilities that would enable them to engage with the subject studies in the best way for themselves.

Student teachers also needed to consider these strategies which were seen as an extension of good practice so therefore they needed an understanding

of what 'good practice' might be. OfSTED (2010) described outstanding

teaching in reading as

> It showed total clarity about what children should have learnt by
> the end of each phonics session; was very well matched to
> children's attainment; was fast-paced, varied and engaging;
> constantly reinforced knowledge to consolidate understanding;
> was highly consistent in approaches: across groups, classes
> and the school as a whole; incorporated continuing formative
> assessment. The teachers taught perceptively, with enthusiasm
> and were extremely well prepared. The pupils worked at a good
> pace; they too understood the purpose of what they were doing.
> In the very best teaching, the pupils were captivated by what
> was going on, repeatedly tasting and celebrating success and
> feeling positive about the progress they were making (Ofsted,
> 2010, p.34).

Whilst this related to literacy teaching, the factors identified could be applied

to teaching across the curriculum. This matched well with the continuum of

approaches above and did not relate to one particular setting or other; it

focused on the best approaches for all children. There was no suggestion

here of specialist elements that teachers would require special training in

order to produce, but what Corbett and Norwich (in Nind et al, 2005) would

describe as 'pedagogy ... (which) needs to be considered in terms of the

relationships and balances between practices which are common to all,

specific to some and not others and unique to individuals' (p.17).

Norwich (2010) recognised that an approach based on a social model,

removing barriers to learning and inclusion could be so successful that the

notion of special needs would be irrelevant and unnecessary. However, a

'commonality (stance) can lead to overlooking individual needs and

inadequate provision' (p.17). By suggesting that teaching all children was

possible for all teachers and just required a few strategies and identification

of needs along a continuum, there was a danger that children with special needs would not have all their needs met as teachers were not necessarily able to recognise and meet medical, social, emotional or behavioural challenges. So 'when does treating people the same become insensitive to their difference and likely to stigmatise or hinder them on that basis?' (Minow, 1990, p.20). There was a need to recognise the differences between children in order to enable them to reach their potential and, perhaps, the push for inclusion had failed to acknowledge that 'same' – as in setting or aspiration – did not necessarily make things equal for children.

The complexity of these issues may have impacted on student teachers as they engaged in teaching children with special needs, particularly for children whose teachers or SENCOs may have expressed the view that the appropriate resources or support were not in place. This may have led student teachers to the opinion that they faced an impossible task with the child as there was some resource or support or specialist provision required before they could be taught. Particularly for the cohort of students within my research, who were only in their second year of a four year course, these sorts of experiences could be very unsettling.

A conclusion that teachers within all settings must use a continuum of strategies to meet the learning needs of children, may have been a relief to those who were concerned that there was a mystery to teaching children with special educational needs. However, it had significant implications for initial teacher education as it required student teachers to gain confidence in recognising when a child was requiring them to move along the continuum and provide intense support and when general provision was sufficient. It

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also required of them recognition of what 'intense support' looked like for a child with a particular need at a particular time. This was fundamental to my research. Within the Individual Learning Needs module and school-based placement, it would be necessary to find ways to build the students' confidence and competence in this area with the background knowledge to judge an appropriate approach for a particular individual. This was integral to the purpose of the study in finding whether certain elements of the programme were creating particular perceptions, or whether the various elements of the programme were recognising the perceptions student teachers brought to college from personal experiences or from their school-based placements; and whether schools and college were working together to review and develop these perceptions.

5.2 Data Analysis

Examining student perceptions in Chapter 4 indicated that students believed there to be a specialism related to teaching children with SEN which had, potentially, been exacerbated by the fact that ITE programmes delivered separate modules on SEN and schools could treat children with SEN as a separate group within the setting. In the data analysis I reviewed how far these perceptions impacted on students' self-perception and how far their college-based experiences related to the experiences they had in school.

5.2.1 The ILN module and the Early Years cohort

In the first student questionnaire Q6 (mainstream schools should include students with ...) (see Table 13) students demonstrated that they supported

the inclusion of children with individual needs – including those with physical disabilities, ADD, autism and EBD – within the mainstream setting. They had some disagreement – five out of 51 – with accommodating children who have Down's Syndrome in the mainstream population; however this could relate to the very low population of children with Down's Syndrome in mainstream. The students, therefore, demonstrated a commitment to the principle of inclusion, but there was also evidence that they considered inclusive teaching to be a specialist skill.

Table Thirteen: First student questionnaire question 6: responses

6. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Mainstream schools should include children with ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Physical disabilities	44	14	1		
Sensory disabilities	31	24	1	1	
ADD/ADHD	25	31	2		
Autism	29	28	1	1	
Asperger's syndrome	24	28	5	1	
Down syndrome	24	27	3	5	
Emotional /Behavioural disorders	30	28	1	1	

n=58

Table Fourteen: First student questionnaire question 7: responses

7. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the teaching of children with special educational needs: (tick the box):

Children with special educational needs ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
learn better when withdrawn from the class	1	14	10	33	1
require teaching by specialists	9	26	13	10	
learn best in mixed ability groups	1	36	15	7	
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	25	30	3	1	
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	10	33	9	7	

n=58

In Q7 (children with special educational needs ...) (see Table 14), 15 students agreed that children with SEN learned better when withdrawn from the class, compared to 34 who did not, suggesting that there was some conviction that children with SEN required specialist provision that could not be provided with the classroom or curriculum. This was reinforced by the 35 students who expressed the opinion that children with SEN required teaching by specialists compared to just ten who did not. Students were not asked who they thought such specialists might be, but 55 out of 59 stated that children with SEN needed the help of support staff to reach their potential. This could also relate to students' perceived confidence in these areas, Q9 (rating confidence related to teaching children with SEN); they expressed low levels of confidence in assessing the needs of children with SEN and subject knowledge of common conditions and disabilities. This could be due to the higher order of these skills which students developed later on in the course; or because students believed there to be a specialism to SEN teaching that

they had yet to be enlightened about. This was supported by Q8 (rating statements related to training teachers to teach children with SEN) where all of the students stated that trainee teachers needed to learn different teaching strategies related to children with SEN and yet they all held the contradictory view that students were not given enough advice in school on how to teach children with SEN; although they were more confident about advice given in college where 46 agreed and 15 disagreed that it was sufficient. Perhaps it was an indication that schools and college needed to work closer in meeting students' needs in this area.

Q10 related to comments regarding what should be included in a four-year programme related to the teaching of children with SEN. There was evidence that the students believed in a specialist pedagogy. Many of the students commented that they wanted a placement in a special school for 'strategies to deal with SEN children' and to 'allow comparisons to be made'. The statement initially looks innocuous; a placement in a special school would be a good experience for students and one they could take up in their third year. But equally within that alternative placement they could go to a museum, or school abroad, or sports programme, because they were carrying out research into learning in an alternative setting to that for which they were currently studying. But these students were suggesting that the skills they would learn in a special school were necessary to help them 'deal with' or manage children with SEN; they were expecting something other than the effective practice seen in mainstream. Obviously there are children in special schools for whom learning is particularly challenging and where teachers are looking for small signs that progress is being made - it would be

naïve to suggest otherwise. However, I am certain that the teachers who facilitate learning with these children would not say that they 'deal with' them; they would see that as a deficit model of the work that they do. Perhaps that was one indicator of a belief in a specialist pedagogy, that it was part of a deficit model of SEN – the teachers in special provision are somehow working towards a 'cure' for the symptoms these children present.

Despite the module intention to introduce individual learning needs – rather than disability and SEN – student comments related predominantly to learning about the 'different conditions' and 'what should be done to manage it in planning and teaching'. Some described it as 'how you can alter teaching' – which was a proactive approach to teaching children with SEN – others as a 'focus on different SEN problems' – which related back to the deficit model of the previous comments. This was not a big surprise as the free association exercise (Chapter Four) had indicated that at this stage of the year, most students held a medical model of SEN and disability. The mid-module review would indicate if these views changed as the students engaged in learning on the ILN module and the introductory weeks of their school-based placement.

When asked their perception of teaching children with SEN after their first two planning weeks in school and half way through the ILN module, students were demonstrating a change in attitude. About three quarters of the students made comments and their views were fairly consistent. When writing about their feelings before teaching they expressed the view that:

- 'it was quite worrying'
- 'Challenging'
- 'I was scared'
- 'Was perceived as a huge challenge, and at some point quite impossible'
- 'Seen as a huge problem, and in some cases impossible' (student perception questionnaire Q2)

These were very strong feelings – the fact that a student teacher was scared of teaching children with SEN probably resulted from a lack of experience in their first year placement. But that feeling could prevent a student teacher from moving forward in their teaching – it was clearly something that needed to be addressed by the first half of the module, perhaps using the continuum of needs as a model. Once students embarked on the placement, a few commented more positively that 'it was interesting and difficult but even more rewarding when you get a positive outcome'; 'not as scary to teach as I thought'. But still expressing some concerns with 'I didn't know how to go about teaching SEN'; 'requires support from lots of different people' (student perception questionnaire Q3). All these statements failed to see the child, just the special educational need, for as long as they discussed children with SEN as 'it' or 'them', they would be holding the view that something different was required and they would be looking for an answer elsewhere to the child. If they formed a relationship with the children, they would realise that they were more than 'it was one big label' (student perception questionnaire comment). Perhaps the questionnaire completed at the end of the module and school-based placement once they had spent a sustained period with the children, would demonstrate a development of opinion.

Table Fifteen: End of Level 1b and ILN student questionnaire question

10: responses

Mainstream schools should include children with …	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Physical disabilities	37	19	2		
Sensory disabilities	32	28	0		
ADD/ADHD	32	28	1		
Autism	33	26	1		
Asperger syndrome	32	27	1		
Down's syndrome	27	31	1		
Emotional /Behavioural disorders	34	25	1		

n=61

Table Sixteen: End of Level 1b and ILN student questionnaire question

11: responses

Children with special educational needs …	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
learn better when withdrawn from the class	0	5	10	42	3
require teaching by specialists	5	34	7	13	1
learn best in mixed ability groups	3	37	16	4	0
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	19	33	3	4	0
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	6	28	14	12	0

n=61

In the end of school placement questionnaire, students demonstrated their development of thought in these areas. At the end of the school placement all students agreed – except for seven 'no opinions' – that all children should be included in mainstream schools (see Table 15). Five out of 50 disagreed that children with SEN learned better when withdrawn from the class (see Table 16); which may have demonstrated a higher level of confidence with inclusive

teaching. However the notion that children with SEN required teaching by specialists remained strong, with 39 agreeing compared to 14 disagreeing, which was a proportionally stronger feeling than before school placement. This, together with the fact that a very similar proportion of students stated that children with SEN 'need the help of support staff to reach their potential' suggested that there was still some concern held that teaching children with SEN was more specialist than general mainstream provision.

When asked in Q4b why they had described their school as inclusive students described inclusivity as:

- 'Good communication'

- 'Every child had the same opportunities as each other'

- 'Every child was treated individually'

- 'Differentiation' – this was mentioned by a number of students

- 'Keep up to date with research/new ideas'

As the majority had stated that their school was inclusive, these comments were typical of most. The language here had changed from the first questionnaire. There was not the distance between teacher and child that existed in the first questionnaire. They also recognised in 'differentiation' that they were expected to work with children with SEN and that, in fact, these children did not require a totally different curriculum, but a differentiation – which they would also do for other children in the class. Where students had expressed the view that their school was to some extent inclusive or not inclusive, their comments also demonstrated a change in understanding from the first questionnaire. Most of the comments were related to particular

children: 'I didn't feel they included a child with autism enough in the class'; 'there was one child in Reception with severe learning delay who I did not feel was included as much as she could be'. However some related to broader issues: 'had a rigid structure for SEN rather than getting to know the individual child'; 'there was no planning for differentiation'; 'some teachers stuck in old routine, not willing to change' (student end of Level 1b questionnaire Q4b). These comments demonstrated that students were more aware of the barriers to inclusion, including teacher confidence or awareness and understanding; separating children with SEN to focus on the rest of the class and lack of relationship with the children. However, the notion of specialism emerged with one student stating that their school was inclusive because they had 'specialist' training and for another that 'SEN children were well cared for' – a charity model of SEN and disability. These were only a couple of comments out of many, which demonstrated that most students were moving away from the notion that teaching children with SEN required a specialist pedagogy.

5.2.2 The Case Study Schools

The two schools responded differently to questions related to specialist provision, skills or pedagogy. Whilst almost all teachers agreed that children with SEN needed the help of support staff to reach their potential, there was a difference of opinion on their need for specialist teaching. Eight out of 13 respondents in School A disagreed, but teachers in School B stated the opposite with five out of seven stating that children did need specialist teaching. This may have related to the teachers' perceived confidence in

meeting the needs of children with SEN in the mainstream setting – in School A they graded their confidence as, on average, 7.3 out of ten compared to School B where it was 5.7 out of ten. These scores did not relate to any actual ability to teach children with SEN, but to their perceptions of their confidence with it.

Classteacher One from School A described inclusive teaching as something students learned from experience and when they felt more confident they realised that

> the teachers ... who have done what I would subjectively think as being really good, they have had to make the least changes to the way that they practice because good practice that ... reaches special needs children, a lot of that is already there in a good practitioner's daily practice.

There was a clear message here that Classteacher One did not view teaching children with SEN in mainstream as a specialist activity but as good teaching and she expected that students who witnessed this on placement would be able to gain this understanding for themselves.

Classteacher Two acknowledged that there may have been some children who could not be catered for in mainstream because they 'need something extra, different, that we cannot give in school'; but she was talking of children with extensive needs, who moved on to special school. When it came to her usual practice she stated that teaching children with SEN was not a specialist skill but 'it is good teaching. I also think that sometimes it is just ... some teachers work better with high ability groups and some teachers work better with lower ability groups'. This was interesting as it suggested that teaching children with SEN might not be possible for all teachers. She went on to say

'it is just a personal trait that people bring to the job and other people have to learn it more'. She explained that there were administrative tasks such as IEPs that needed to be understood, not just in terms of how to complete them but also the 'theory behind it all, for when you get in the classroom'. This might have been something that could be taught but the review of ITE needed to include consideration of the notion of a 'personal trait'. With Early Years teaching it might not have been possible for teachers to choose to teach children with SEN or not as the children were too young to work in ability groups. As this was also the age at which many children had not had their needs identified, it would not be appropriate for teachers to separate children for different teaching. Relating this to ITE, I felt it would be detrimental to our student teachers' development to suggest that some of them may not have the ability to become teachers of children with SEN, as the vast majority of them would be working with a broad range of needs during their early teaching career.

The SBT and Inclusion Manager explained that she felt that 'there is an element of some specialism' in working with children with SEN in mainstream classes. 'I think you are always working with or against people's own experiences aren't you? ... anything you don't know about is very scary and it is very specialist'; this mirrored classteacher two's perspective. The SBT was very experienced and, as Inclusion Manager, she spent a significant amount of time providing training to teachers in supporting children with SEN. As such, she understood the perceptions of teachers and student teachers. She demonstrated here an appreciation that to those with little experience teaching children with SEN in mainstream settings the confidence and ease

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that more experienced teachers displayed could appear to be a specialism. This, I think, was an important point and related to the change in comments made by the students; it appeared at first to be 'scary', 'too much', but as they completed their school-based placement and the ILN module, they appreciated that it was an extension of their usual teaching. The SBT believed it to be just good teaching informed by experience. In this way it was possible for trainees to be effective teachers for children with SEN in mainstream, but maybe their confidence and range of effective teaching strategies grew with experience. This was explored further within the ITE theme.

5.2.3 The Case Study Students

In their interview before their school-based placement, student one expressed the opinion that in her experience a lot of children had specialist assistants who took the children out for sessions. She did not suggest that there was a specialist pedagogy, unlike Student two who talked about wanting to experience 'a specialist school ... and see how the teaching is different' and even though she was studying the individual learning module she felt it would be beneficial to 'do a module or something like that about conditions and disabilities'. This suggested that she perceived there to be something particular about teaching children with SEN that she would not learn from regular school-based placements and the ILN module. Student three thought differently; she talked of teaching children with SEN as 'having to make sure you understand the individual child and what they need as someone might need something a bit different'. There was no suggestion here that this would not be manageable within a normal class with good

teaching, rather than with some specialist skills. Student four used more of a charity dialogue when she talked about a child with Down's syndrome: 'I've been around him a lot. I've looked after him a lot. I just think it is nice that you feel rewarded with what you are doing'. Although this was not a child on her placement but a friend's sibling, it suggested pity for the child and a crusading approach to interactions with him that would not be suitable if transferred to the classroom. She also talked of a 'special helper' for a child with autism, which again suggested a slightly charitable perspective that describing the 'special helper' as a learning support assistant or teaching assistant would not.

In their interviews after school-based placement the students in School A talked of the whole school approach to SEN in terms of addressing all children's emotional and social needs through a supportive environment. They talked about how with a child with behavioural issues could have a situation unrelated to SEN:

> it is not necessarily a behaviour issue it is the fact that they don't get the attention that they need at home … they don't have the routine and the parental support that they need in terms of education and nurturing …it really worked well, giving them the environment that they need.

This suggested quite a development from their initial ideas about the separate nature of teaching for children with SEN. One of the students also said that the ILN module had helped clarify her thoughts on the negative impact of labelling.

'It just completely changed the way I think about things, my planning, my attitude towards it as a teacher, whether the child has SEN or not, you know, I just think you take it as individuals'. These thoughts combined with her experience on school-based placement in the comment 'but you actually know the child, so you can figure it out really'. The student had progressed from a view of teaching children with SEN as a specialist activity to one where all children could be included by starting from a point of getting to know the children as individuals.

The students from School B had observed teachers segregating children with the classteachers not engaging fully in their learning: 'I thought the teachers would be more involved with them ... she didn't do anything with him ... it was separate in my class ... I didn't feel that they had a bond with the child ... she just wasn't really bothering'. This attitude apparently had an impact as the students talked about the number of children of high ability who presented a challenge in differentiation. She said 'You never really think of them as a problem until you have these children in your class ... you think they're going to be all good well behaved children'. This was a more negative opinion than they were expressing prior to school-based placement, but it was also tempered by comments that suggested the students were keen to learn from their observations as they also said that they tried to use the teacher's comments to learn: 'There was one teacher ... she was quite hard really ... but sometimes, with her especially, the pressure. I'm thinking I'm only a 2nd year you know ... This was probably my first real good experience at teaching really'.

The students were evaluating their experience and realised that 'when you are in school I think it is your responsibility to find out about a child'. This demonstrated that despite what they had seen, the students recognised the necessity to get to know the children as individuals.

After her lesson observation, during the tutorial with the SBT, Student One expressed the opinion that the structure of her lesson – where children had been 'playing' with magnets – had suited all the children. There was some generalisation from both Student One and the SBT with phrases such as 'lower abilities struggle more' and 'high ability children all fight to be first', which indicated that individual children were not considered at times, but homogeneous groups; as if all the children in those groups exhibited the same learning styles and needs. However there was also evidence that Student One had observed particular children responding to her choice of mixed ability working in the activities:

> R in particular really, I don't know what he would have done like
> in a lower ability group, but he found the magnet sticks with
> someone else and the little bowl and he was going round, really
> 'cooking' with it.

This evidence that a child normally considered 'low ability' could engage fully with the task and provided evidence of meeting the learning objectives, had clearly surprised her, but could now provide valuable information for how she could work with him in the future. It also could be a good indicator for Student

1 that the children with SEN did not require a different activity, just the opportunity to engage with it in their own way.

For Student Two, Nursery had provided a range of challenges, especially with organisation of the children, who tended to choose for themselves what activities they wanted to take part in. However, in this tutorial, she felt that she had achieved what she had set out to in the learning session, partly because the 'resources I used were good for all of them', 'I integrated it into the theme of the week' and 'I like the relationship I have with the children'. Student Two still talked about 'high level, medium level and low level'; but instead of ability she was discussing the level of support given in that particular activity. She discussed why the children within these levels might change as: 'I think because they are so young and with their concentration level as well, when you do an activity they may just be tired or be having a bit of an off day'; so their engagement with an activity would change. She had reflected on her assumptions with regard to ability and children with particular needs. She had noticed a child with English as an additional language (EAL) and low attendance and she stated that she would have automatically put that child in a low ability group, but in fact, when working with the child she had noticed that she was not low ability at all but just did not have the vocabulary to express all her understanding yet. This movement in language from low levels of support to low ability was indicative of a lack of concrete understanding at this point. This was no surprise as it was only her second placement and she was encountering new experiences, but she was clearly reflecting on her experiences in an effort to understand individual children, rather than just groups. 'D. she was very withdrawn, but she was not

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withdrawn when she was with the right group of children'; she was observing individual's behaviour and how that was impacting on their learning. Perhaps because she was working in Nursery and the children are mainly too young to have been assessed for a particular special need, Student Two was learning to describe the learning of her class in terms of what they could do and what they were interested in, rather than being led to certain conclusions as a result of a child's grouping or label.

5.2.4 College-Based School-Based Training (SBT) Manager Early Years

The SBT Manager shared responsibility for the design of the school-based elements of the programme with the SBT Manager Junior Years and the Head of Department. The academic programme was designed by the full Primary Education team and there had been some development over the previous two years to create stronger links between the two. The SBT Manager had been working with a member of the team who had been developing assessed placements in special provision, but at the time of this interview, that was only available to a couple of Early Years student teachers.

'I think they still find those things to do with SEN, to do with personalized learning agenda, individual learning needs, I still think that is still an area of challenge, but then that is high order'. The SBT manager here was suggesting that there was a complexity about teaching children with SEN that was above and beyond planning for the rest of the class. She commented that, 'I think that the model that we've got, in terms of the strands, is still very strong. I still really believe as a principle of the way in which the programme is put together that that principle still stands and is relevant'. By this she was

referring to the model of professional studies where elements such as teaching skills, diversity and individual needs and child development were embedded within modules and were revisited each year, so that students were gradually introduced to key concepts and theories and how to apply them in practice. However, she equally stated that 'it may actually be necessary for us to do a very specific SEN module' in addition to the ILN module in their second year. She justified this statement by saying this was due to 'the school contexts are so varied now in terms of the kind of children that they will be teaching', but this was again suggesting that she was supporting a specialist pedagogy model, where SEN needed to be taught as a specialist activity that would not fit within the stranded, spiral curriculum that applied to other aspects of teacher development. I had a concern that this message would be shared with schools during the pre-placement training sessions as it did not support the continuum of needs approach that the ILN module promoted. The connection between college curriculum, school-based placements and pre-placement training for School-based Tutors and Link Tutors now needed to be considered. It was part of the boundary between school and college that had been raised in Chapter Four as a concern. Here the concern was that the messages were being given from college to school that teaching children with SEN was a specialist activity and student teachers might not be able to meet the needs of all pupils in their second year. This did not match the expectations of the schools demonstrated here and the contradictions between the statements in this section of the research would suggest that dialogue needed to occur, rather than college assume an ownership of this area of provision.

It was apparent from the data gathered from all parties that there remained a conviction that teaching children with SEN involved an element of specialism. Whilst student teachers demonstrated in their school-based placement that they could address individual needs, their comments showed a hesitation with the process, using language of specialism even when discussing more inclusive practice. The teacher and student teacher questionnaires also demonstrated this lack of surety. School A were more positive about extending 'good practice', which was supported by the student teachers in School A in their interviews. However, there were obviously still differences between words and actions in School B and in the observations made of the students. They were struggling with the desire to include all children in their teaching sessions, but feeling that there was something about that process that they did not, as a student teacher, feel they knew about yet.

5.3   Discussion

Most of the students in the free association exercise outlined in Chapter 4, responded within a functional model of SEN and disability. This suggested that at the beginning of the ILN module and second year school-based placement, they engaged in a model of teaching children with SEN that looked for symptoms and how to cure them through the appropriate teaching methods. In some ways this was exacerbated by the case study assessment carried out after the first two weeks in school which focused on one particular child's education in the class, with possibly a discussion of the IEP. An IEP could present a negative view of the child as it presented what the child was unable to do and how the classteacher and SENCo were going to overcome

this. However the assignment did ensure that the student teachers were working with a child with SEN prior to having to teach the whole class and hopefully they would recognise this was not 'scary' – a word used a few times by student teachers to describe their feelings about teaching children with SEN.

The language of SEN and special provision (Farrell, 2006) reinforced the student teacher's perceptions that there was something different about teaching 'them' (student term). Given the fact that there were 'special' needs, 'special' schools, 'special' educators, 'special' funding, it did not take too much imagination to think there was a 'special' pedagogy. This was reinforced by researchers such as Mitchell (2008) who suggested particular teaching strategies for children with SEN.

Most student teachers still believed that children with SEN should be taught by specialists by the end of the ILN module and school placement. Some were still using language such as 'SEN problems', which suggested that their medical model perceptions had not been overcome entirely. However, the idea of a continuum of teaching strategies (Norwich and Lewis, 2001) had been assimilated by some of the teachers. In the staff questionnaires with School B, the majority of the teachers expressed the view that specialist teaching was needed; but in School A the classteachers stated that it was an extension of good practice. This meant that student teachers would have been given different messages by the two schools. This was where working with college tutors more closely could help. If student teachers were receiving a particular message in college – one based on a more transactional model of SEN and disability and a continuum of teaching strategies – then schools

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needed to be able to accommodate this into their practice for the students or they would struggle to work effectively in the setting.

In the next chapter, it was important to build this dilemma into the discussion of ITE, partnership and mentoring. Student teachers needed a consistent message; they worked in two different schools and four different classrooms across their programme and it would be very challenging for them to have to accommodate contrary views in each. This needed to be where college and school provided a consistent message and built into the school-based placement and college course opportunities to discuss different views and how to manage to work with them.

Chapter Six Initial Teacher Education and Special Educational Needs

6.1   Literature Review

This chapter considers the complex issues surrounding student teacher learning, in school and in college. To gain an understanding of how student teachers develop, I discuss adult learning as student teachers are engaging in a combination of technical, professional and academic learning and a process of meta-cognition to try and assimilate all these types of learning to become an effective teacher. In order to facilitate this learning, there needs to be an understanding of effective initial teacher education (ITE) for teaching children with SEN in mainstream provision and the players within it from schools and the HEI institution. Therefore I have provided a brief overview of models of ITE and then looked more closely at how mentors can work to the benefit of student teachers and, finally, how these work together in partnerships to meet the needs of student teachers learning to teach children with SEN.

6.1.1 Adult Learning: Effective models of adult learning and professional development

For learning to be effective, the conditions of learning (Gagne, 1977) require as their foundation recognition of previous experiences and understanding. Adult learning, like that of children, emerged in this theory from a constructivist methodology of encountering a new concept, assimilating new information against prior experience, adapting previously held ideas then accommodating the new concepts and becoming confident with them. Gagne

described five aspects of learning: skills; understanding; factual knowledge; problem solving and social values. This mirrored the stages student teachers go through in relation to SEN with skills, understanding and factual knowledge being the elements they place as the highest priorities, but often not appreciating the value of problem solving and social values. Previous chapters demonstrated the impact of student and teacher values on how they approached the teaching of children with SEN. Starting from a position of wanting to know how to teach the condition for example ADHD, rather than the child, led to a lack of problem solving, for example, identifying what the child was capable of and meeting their individual needs.

In the first element of my research when the students were engaged in the free association exercise first examined in Chapters 3 and 4, they were exposing their schemas around the issues of SEN and inclusion:

> schemas have been shown to be useful ways of describing a number of psychological processes, including stereotypical judgements ... attribution processes ... and implicit personality theories (Long, 2006, p.22).

This formed a baseline. Then students were led through a meta-cognitive process of examining why they thought the way they did through the exploration of influences on their early conception of SEN and inclusion. The taught module had been designed to be 'not simply a matter of presenting an initial stimulus – instead it was composed of several kinds of external stimulation which influence several different processes of learning' (Gagne, 1977, p.69). Active learning was achieved through the teaching processes of direct input of new information – theoretical and skills related; modelling good practice; scaffolding learning to link theory to practice; opportunities for

learning retrieval and re-examination before the more exposed practice in the classroom on placement.

Adults could and should be encouraged to take responsibility for their learning so the design of taught sessions needed to allow for accommodation of individual learners' perceptions, schemas, confidence and competence:

> such a learner-focused perspective will need to recognise the characteristics and roles of the individual learner, organisational culture, colleagues and leadership as factors which contribute to the quality of professional learning and development (Day, 2003, p.3).

In my research this was explored through examining effective partnership between college and schools in the specific areas of SEN and inclusion. Organisational culture was examined in Chapter three when examining how schools viewed themselves as inclusive; the other elements were addressed as perceptions of SEN and inclusion in Chapter 4 and understanding of specialist pedagogy in Chapter five. In this analysis of the development of student teachers regarding teaching children with SEN in mainstream settings, early data was looking more at how students fitted into an HEI and school system rather than developing independence; however, the tutorial observations indicated how far students were ready to engage in a professional dialogue which was the early indication of taking responsibility for their learning.

Adult learning, as described above, involves a set of processes centred around scaffolding from previous knowledge and experiences, but there were other influences at play on the adult learner during their study: self- efficacy,

motivation, the context and their perception of the desired outcome. Bandura (1993) defined self-efficacy as 'people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning ... Efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave' (p.118). In educating teachers, this was quite a challenge for the learner; they had a view of themselves not only as a student in the academic arena; but also as an emerging professional. They had to perform in academic assessments and in the classroom where not only are the audiences different in each case providing different challenges in terms of measures of success but so are the expectancies – for one honours degree benchmarks and for the other QTS standards. In terms of this research, students were asked to measure their confidence in teaching children with SEN in inclusive settings as they went through the phases of academic study in the ILN module and professional in the school-based placement. Whilst this was not a perfect measure of self-efficacy, it did give some measure of how students were viewing their progress in this specific aspect.

Effective adult learning thus emerged from an awareness of the role of the adult in assessing their own baseline; in positive self-efficacy; in critical thinking and problem solving; in an awareness of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators; in an ability to apply understanding and skills across contexts and in being provided a learning environment in which these are scaffolded, modelled and evaluated effectively, not just by a tutor but by the learner and peers in a supportive, collegial fashion. In Zepke & Leach (2002) amalgamate these into three key features: i) relationships; ii) interpretation and iii) critical reflection. The tutor's role was to enable the learner to draw on

previous experiences and learning in a social context so that they could draw on learning gained by interaction with others, and were supported in their interpretation of theirs and other's learning and experiences in a range of contexts. This classically social constructivist model was defined as 'contextualised meaning making' (Zepke & Leach, 2002, p.214) and was effective because 'the nature of being, and therefore the focus of education, (is) ... emotional, spiritual, social and physical as well as intellectual ...' (Zepke & Leach, 2002, p.215). This holistic view was one that I was exploring through student and tutor analysis of the module delivery, self-evaluation exercises and school placement analysis.

Fundamentally, prior to engaging in curriculum development, consideration needed to be given to effective adult learning per se. Assumptions in my study included the fact that ITE should relate theory to practice in the 'wrap around' approach to the learning, as opposed to a separation of school and college SEN input as experienced previously. Adult learners' motivation was influenced by a perceived purpose to the aspect of study and its application (Trotter, 2006); therefore a blended approach to teacher development would appear to be the most relevant. Another key feature to emerge from these studies was the support for collaborative learning in adults, where new concepts were absorbed, practised and reflected upon as a group with the tutor operating as a facilitator rather than instructor. 'The key challenge is in the conception of the trainee as an equal, active partner in their learning' (Lunn and Bishop, 2003, p. 204). In a model of ITE where college tutors then school mentors had responsibility for the learning outcomes in partnership, they equally took responsibility for the means by which these were to be met – and a greater awareness of adult learning as well as teacher development

could meet this ideal of a partnership of student and instructor as well as school and college.

The social context of learning was key to an understanding of effective adult education. Self-perception, life experiences, motivation and the value of the material studied are fundamental elements in effective adult learning. This had an impact on this research as a significant element of an awareness of how best to prepare teachers for SEN was an understanding of how values and attitudes towards inclusion were formed and accommodating, or challenging, these within the learning and reflection process. It emerged from Merriam (2001) that borrowing from a range of adult learning theories in creating learning experiences was of greatest benefit as no one theory appeared to capture the complete adult learning experience:

> The adult learner is (thus) seen holistically ... the learning process is much more than the systematic acquisition and storage of information ... the context in which learning occurs has taken on greater importance (Merriam, 2001, p.96).

Reflecting on Garner's (1996) view that ITE had become competency based and formulaic, it would appear that another criticism for this approach was its handicapping of adult learners who required a more reflective, experiential, problem solving approach in order to succeed. This in turn would lead to a lack of confidence in the student teachers in SEN as they attempted to make connections for themselves between the college-based course and the experience in the classroom. In my study, therefore, there was a need to focus on the specialist Individual Learning Needs module and its connection with school-based placements. If andragogy was ideally social constructivist

in nature then the development of knowledge of SEN and inclusion and the ability to teach children with SEN needed to become a cyclical process involving input, reflection, practice and transformation. This was supported by Lunn and Bishop (2003) who 'argue for a social construct in which trainee teachers perceive that they are required in partnership with their tutors, to generate a response to an issue' (p.197). This is also supported by Lambe and Bone (2006) who stated that 'the combination of practical workplace experience and reflective academic study has been seen as the best method of producing a competent classroom practitioner' (2006, p.516). Through these combined processes of reflection and constructivist model of learning students would not just gain a better understanding of inclusion and SEN, but a view of themselves as an inclusive teacher.

6.1.2 The Person of the Teacher:

Student teachers are not just engaged in developing knowledge and skills, they are developing a view of themselves as a professional teacher. This self image impacts, too, on whether they see themselves as competent teachers of children with SEN. As has been discussed previously, student attitudes to inclusion and SEN affected how they approached the teaching of children with SEN, which was why ITE needed to address student perceptions and encourage them to reflect on these as they developed professionally. Lambe and Bone's (2006) investigation into initial teacher education (ITE) focused on student teacher attitudes to inclusion and the students' judgement of their resulting training needs. This was a study of post primary PGCE trainees and focused on a Northern Ireland setting where inclusion was less advanced

than in England, resulting in a potentially stronger variation of opinions arising from more limited experience. However, the study was still of relevance to mine as outcomes indicated that whilst students were positive about the principles of inclusion they lacked confidence in their ability to teach in an inclusive setting – about half believing that 'I think you need to be a special kind of teacher to teach pupils with special educational needs' and about half stating 'I think you need a special interest in special educational needs to be an effective teacher of SEN' (p.522). This mirrored concerns expressed in my Masters study in 2007 and was a motivator in my deciding to engage in these issues in the Individual Learning Needs (ILN) course development and doctoral research. Lambe and Bone (2006) did not conclude with recommendations for ITE beyond a need to acknowledge student perceptions and attitudes to SEN and inclusion; they recognized a need for further research in this field.

Jones, West and Stevens (2006), pursued the development of effective professionals in relationship to postgraduate study but, again, related to teacher perceptions. This study resonated with mine as it drew together notions of adult learning, teacher development and special educational needs. Their study included UK and US postgraduate training in specific areas of SEN through interviews related to teacher learning. The sample group was not representative of those in my study; however the results of the interviews had an influence on the development of the Individual Learning Needs module and its relationship to the school-based placement. Jones et al (2006) found that the majority of the respondents stated that the relationship between theory and practice had the most impact on their learning and professional development. Interestingly – for the integration

between the ILN module and SBT – the UK teachers also recognized the role of the educator as key in translation of learning to practice. For my study, this was the element to be developed where the college-based module and school-based ITE merge and the educators – whether college or school tutors – exemplified the theory through an exposition of their own experiences. Jones et al's (2006) study drew a significant conclusion that 'improved teaching can occur when providers listen to what constitutes effective learning for teachers' (p.88). Students, therefore, developed their confidence in themselves as teachers through college- and school-based learning, but this required both training environments to understand what effective learning was for adults generally and also for emerging professionals. Student teachers did not develop an image of themselves as the person of the teacher alone it required a social constructivist approach.

6.1.3 Perceptions of ITT/ITE

Having extolled the value of a social constructivist model of andragogy, the imposition of a set of standards for qualified teacher status could take the learning more towards an instructional model where 'teaching stresses cognitive learning and logical, objective, abstract, sequential thinking. The curriculum is fixed ... '(Carnell, 2007, p.27). The challenge for the undergraduate degree was to ensure that the need to pass the standards did not override the need for holistic learner development academically and professionally. Carnell's research focused on effective learning and teaching in HE, concluding that the most effective model was a co-constructivist one where 'dialogue transforms learning. There is a sense of learning together by

talking about their learning, engaging in co-constructive dialogue, focusing on learning about learning' (Carnell, 2007, p.37). My research examined this co-constructive model further than just the college-based learner community, extending to the partnership between college and school environments. It would seem to be an ideal model if the co-constructive dialogue was a continuous three way flow between college, school and learner.

The introduction of the National Curriculum for ITT (TTA, 1999) formalised the requirements for school-based training in respect to a set of standards to be evidenced in the classroom prior to qualification. However, it did not necessitate schools to be involved in partnership nor did it establish guidelines for school-based training and mentoring beyond the number of school-based weeks required to qualify - the responsibility for these remained with the HEI. This resulted in a limit to resourcing for school-based elements of training and

> from the beginning then neither the resources nor the rhetoric were such as to encourage schools to be innovative in their teacher education thinking or practices. Nor has that changed significantly over the intervening years (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006, p.12).

The partnerships developed between schools and HEIs became significant in the determining of overall quality of the programmes – and were a key feature in Ofsted inspections. However, without sufficient funding for schools and without an imperative for schools to become involved in initial teacher education, partnerships were more school informed HEI run entities. This was noted by Edwards & Mutton (2007) who stated that the initial premise for partnership was that it would be a shared endeavour in all senses, but became 'HEI-led arrangements in which both the ITE curriculum and its assessment processes were directed by HEI' (p.505). This demanded of the

HEI that it remained up to date with developments in schools, including those related to inclusion policies and strategies for teaching children with SEN.

For the purposes of this research study, these findings were relevant as I was gaining an understanding of effective partnership with schools in the development of emerging teachers' knowledge, confidence and competence in the area of SEN and inclusion. In my opinion, the students benefitted from awareness and an experience of the practicalities of meeting individual needs, which could only be gained in schools. However, I also believed that practical experience had to be informed by the underlying theory from the college-based studies but also through the guidance of a school-based mentor who was able to work with the student in understanding what they were experiencing in the classroom and in encouraging reflection and self-evaluation . The challenge in the research was to identify with the case study schools how this could be achieved without overloading school and college-based colleagues.

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6.1.4 Models of Mentoring

With the increased emphasis on partnership between schools and higher education institutions (HEIs) for effective initial teacher education, the various roles and responsibilities of personnel within these partnerships had become more explicit. Furlong and Smith (1996) writing at the time such partnerships were first formalised, outlined the pressures on schools including league tables, workload, challenges of statutory assessment and restrictions in

resourcing which they had to weigh against a recognition that training teachers was part of the responsibility of a school. At this time the government was promoting a move to more school centred initial teacher training but Downes (in Furlong and Smith, 1996) asserted that 'functional effectiveness is not enough; there needs to be time for reflection and for wider perspective and this is where the HE contribution is paramount' (p.86). The partnership model potentially provided the best of both environments, providing they communicated effectively about how they were going to engage in the education of emerging professionals.

Central to all the partnerships and their effectiveness was the student mentor – the person who, during the school-based elements, enabled a student teacher to connect theory with practice, to reflect on their burgeoning skills and to make sense of the school setting. Effective mentoring engaged the emerging teacher in professional, reflective dialogue examining values, attitudes and professionalism alongside evaluation of effective teaching practice.

McIntyre et al (1994) outlined three models of mentoring: the apprenticeship model – where student teachers learnt their skills 'on the job' following the model of the classteacher; the competency model – where student teachers aimed to complete assessment in the range of competencies encapsulated by the standards; and the reflective model – where the student teacher engaged in professional dialogue with the mentor to understand why certain teaching strategies may or may not work. Exploring how the mentor – or School-based Tutor - worked with students and schools in my research

would help determine an effective model for teacher development in SEN and inclusion. Megginson and Clutterbuck (2007) would support the reflective model as they promoted seven layers of dialogue from social to integrative as central to effective mentoring. The higher levels of dialogue – strategic, self-insight , behaviour change and integrative – were the goal of the reflective mentoring model where 'if learning to teach is at the heart of training then reflection on teaching … must be part of that learning process' (McIntyre et al, 1994, p.81). Self insight was not possible without effective reflection on one's impact as a result of a teaching episode; it was a high level skill and time needed to be set aside to educate student teachers on how to engage in this level of dialogue both in school and in college through effective mentoring.

It would appear that the reflective model was the ideal mentoring approach as it went beyond ensuring classroom competence or effective mirroring of the 'master's' practice – as in the apprenticeship approach – but led to the self-insight and integration desired by Megginson and Clutterbuck (2007). They promoted this by asserting that 'integrative dialogue helps the mentee develop a sense of who they are, what they contribute and how they fit in' (p.34) it was a refined process of supported self-reflection based on a synthesis of theoretical and practical experiences; observation and practice. This supported the recommendations above that students reflected on their values and attitudes to children with SEN as they learned how to meet their needs. The mentor would include dialogue relating to this within the tutorial process and help the student teacher learn from the college-based and school-based elements, recognising that the stakeholders in this process

might themselves be influenced by their values. This was a complex process, but recognised that merely observing or being an apprentice was insufficient if the student teacher was to become confident in managing the learning of the whole class.

The challenge, therefore, was in considering how to manage the student teacher's development in such a complex process. In their psychological mode of learning, Dunne and Harvard (1994) argued that 'it is a mistake to assume that the complexity of acquiring professional activity can adequately be addressed by arbitrarily dividing that activity into manageable portions and attending to each separately (Dunne & Harvard, 1994, p.126). Edwards' (1998) research suggested that this was precisely what mentors were attempting to do. In her analysis of mentor-student talk, she discovered that discussion related to underlying values, theory and professionalism accounted for only 3% of their total dialogue. The practicalities of student survival in the classroom appeared to override any desire to engage in a reflective approach. One of the reasons for this could be that the tacit thinking behind the overt activities of teaching (Hagger & McIntyre, 2006) was not obvious to a student teacher but the mentor focused too much on developing the competency with the student rather than enlightening them to the thinking behind the action which they could then generalise to other contexts. Edwards (1998) suggested this was because the mentor's responsibility ultimately was to ensure pupil performance and therefore they had to ensure that the student teacher undertook teaching that would advance pupil learning. It became, then, a risk averse, practice focused, mentoring process. This was understandable; however, focusing merely on pupil performance in children with SEN would be counter-productive as it was

only in fully understanding the child's capabilities and needs that the student teacher was able to support them reaching their potential. And, as we had seen, this was only possible once student teachers had examined their own learning in the field so their initial perceptions of children with SEN were not hindering their ability to work with them effectively. As has been seen in Chapter Five, students arrived at a school-based placement very often with a perception that there was something specialist about teaching children with SEN. If the mentor failed to take on board these perceptions and any that might be presented by the classteacher in professional dialogue, then they were failing the student teacher.

To ensure that student teachers became reflective practitioners, Hopper (2001) unlike Burnett (2006) above, placed the responsibility onto the HEI tutor for this rather than the school-based mentor as

> not all mentors are reflective, analytical teachers, and it is the tutors who are best placed to encourage trainees to examine, evaluate and reflect on their work, often highlighting links with more theoretical, college-based aspects of courses (Hopper, 2001, p.214).

There appeared, therefore, to be complex identities within these examinations of partnership and the roles within them which needed consideration before an effective model can be defined. This was examined in the data related to whom the student teachers believed had the most influence on their development during the ILN module and the school-based placement. It could be that for elements such as SEN, which was viewed by students and schools as a challenging issue and one in which perceptions could differ; development should be supported by college tutors in the transition from theory to practice. School mentors, however, would be able to

support students in reflecting on their behaviour management; teaching and other teaching and learning elements. Hayes (2001) researched this in his case study of primary student teachers. This research focused on 43 student teachers' experiences of school-based training within the same school and concluded that effectiveness for the individual student of the mentoring and development even within the same setting varied greatly. This underlined the conclusion drawn by Hopper (2001) that an individual student teacher's experience might not be well managed exclusively by the school mentor, but was more successful when school-based mentor and HEI tutor worked together – again supporting the collaborative partnership outlined above.

In concluding this section on effective school-based mentoring it is necessary to also draw conclusions on effective partnerships and the roles within them; it is ill advised to view them singularly as effective initial teacher education via a partnership model was more than a sum of its individual parts - it needed to have an overall cohesion and shared philosophy. Within this it was possible for student teachers to develop particular elements of learning, for the purposes of my research, in teaching children with SEN.

6.1.5 Models of Partnership

Such an approach would require a good partnership between school and college as perceptions and experiences arising in one needed to be addressed in the other. Goodson (2003) would say there has been a lack of this, in fact describing the relationship between faculties of education and schools as 'they constitute a model of how to talk past each other' (Goodson, 2003, p.13). Whilst Goodson was mainly focused on educational research

not initial teacher education, his image was apt in this case. In my research, I was examining this grey area – the border between college and school-based learning. Perhaps we were expecting too much of students and schools to cross this border together; perhaps this was where the partnership could work more effectively to support the work of both school and college.

Furlong et al (2000) outlined a partnership spectrum from collaborative partnership to complementary. Key to the effectiveness of the partnership was a shared understanding of the curriculum, school context and student learning. In the collaborative model this was embedded within the roles of mentor and HEI tutor, where each learned from each other in developing student competence within the particular setting within which they find themselves; but equally challenging the student to consider issues and perspectives beyond this. In the complementary approach each partner remained within their respective environments and worked in parallel. The role of the HEI Link Tutor indicated for Hopper (2001) how far along the spectrum each partnership was working and she described this role as crucial to the success of placements. In the complementary model, above, Furlong et al (2000) would outline the HEI tutor's role as ensuring compliance and entitlement for the student in the school; in the collaborative model there was a sharing of responsibility for enabling the student to make sense of their college-based learning within the school context. Hopper (2001) preferred the collaborative approach, but emphasised the need for HEI tutors to manage expectations and ensure compliance. The role, therefore, would ideally fill that grey boundary area between HEI and school.

Whereas college-based learning was exemplified by active learning, dialogic teaching and experimentation with a range of perspectives (Carnell, 2007) in a community of learners, school-based learning appeared to have been characterized by instruction in teaching technique and strategies (Lai, 2006) largely resulting from school-based mentors' concerns for pupil achievement and, to some extent, from their own limited awareness of teaching and learning beyond their immediate context (Jones & Straker, 2006). Within special educational needs this could lead to even more nervousness on the part of the school; they could feel precious about the strategies they were employing with the children and more conscious, therefore, of any perceived criticism by college proposing alternative approaches via the student teachers. Where they may have the confidence to assert their methods of behaviour management, planning and so on that relate to the general population of pupils; the teaching of children with SEN was more focused on individual children, so had more of an emotional element to it. This makes the 'grey boundary area' even more challenging for student teachers to cross alone.

Higher education has a vital role to play in the formation of teachers through the opportunities in college to examine effective pedagogical approaches outside the complex and challenging classroom environment (Furlong & Smith, 1996); to provide insight into theoretical perspectives and to explore the philosophical, sociological and historical disciplines of teaching. Furlong and Smith (1996) assert that

> if values are to be fostered in a rational way, an exploration of values, including their own, must be a central part of students' professional preparation. Once again it is HE, with its commitment to open-minded critique, that is best placed to contribute to this aspect of training (p.162).

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This was a significant element of my own research, where the college-based individual learning needs module examined student perceptions, values and attitudes towards teaching children with SEN in an inclusive setting as well as knowledge and understanding of models of disability and how the school environment might be presenting challenges for pupils with particular individual needs. However, this had to transfer into practice in schools, so it was only through an effective model of partnership that students would be able to make sense of their college-based learning and to challenge their assumptions through guided practice.

The most effective form of partnership would seem to be the complementary one – where the professional identity of partners was maintained and they engaged in initial teacher education within their own context, not challenging each other's perspectives. However this placed the onus on the student to make connections between the two whilst managing the practicalities of teaching placement. As has been suggested above, this would be particularly challenging within the aspect of SEN. This was apparent, too, in Lunn and Bishop (2003), who raised concerns about this expectation as they identified in their research into trainee teachers' perceptions of effective teaching that the focus on competencies and training was leading to 'an ideological chasm' where 'the course by adopting a technicist model of effective teaching and learning prescribed one view of the effective teacher' (Lunn & Bishop, 2003, p.201). Whilst the trainees in this study did not explicitly blame the model of partnership for this dichotomy, it was evident from their response to the college set reflective assignment that reflection had not been their experience

on school-based training and they had on the whole struggled with the differences between school and course expectations and approaches. By college supporting the integration of reflective practice into school placement, through the work of the mentors and Link Tutors, it would be possible to avoid this chasm and to support emerging teachers in aspects of work such as teaching in an inclusive setting which requires student teachers to reflect on their values and attitudes as well as utilize their emerging professional skills.

Adopting a collaborative partnership model requires clarity between the partners on priorities and approaches to learning for the student teachers. Hagger and McIntyre (2006) described how the asymmetry between the two partners can work in the favour of the student, for HEIs were established to engage in adult learning, whereas schools were founded on the needs of children. This enabled the adult learning engaged in by the student at their own level in college to be translated by schools into effective learning activities for the children, but could also support students in challenging their preconceptions through application of pedagogical understanding from HE into the classroom. They outlined the roles of school-based mentor and HEI tutor as vital elements of this process. The mentor was necessary

> alongside student teachers in schools not only because of the importance of their own school-situated professional expertise but also because it is in schools that they need to help student teachers to learn to engage in disciplined every day practical theorizing (p.67)

and the HEI tutor was required to

help both the student teachers and the school-based teacher educators to draw on research-based and other academic kinds of knowledge, and to support them in asking critical questions, so that the school-based learning can draw strongly on university traditions of independent and disciplined thought' (p.67).

However, our model of HEI link tutor was not as described here - their role was checking compliance and student entitlement. For second years they occasionally carried out a joint observation with the School-based Tutor, but the assessment of students was in the vast majority of cases in the hands of the school. This could impact negatively on student teachers who needed to develop an understanding of concepts from the individual learning needs (ILN) module and apply them to the second year placement. The HEI link tutor could work in partnership with the SBT and student teachers to scaffold the transition from college to school and contextualise the theory with the children in their placement class.

Ideally therefore an effective model of ITE and mentoring includes the following elements:

- An understanding of initial teacher education as an active process whereby student teachers engage in evaluation of their own values, attitudes and professionalism as well as application of knowledge and understanding into practice in the complex world of the primary classroom

- A collaborative partnership between HEI and schools where both partners design the curriculum for initial teacher education; understand

their roles within the partnership; maintain a learner centric approach with the needs of individual students addressed; where there is clear progression beyond competency to reflection and where there is mutual upskilling of those with roles within the partnership to foster awareness and respect for the professionalism of all involved

Focusing such practice on SEN and inclusion would be even more challenging as it required schools to be able to offer students experience of good practice; HEI tutors who were able to recognise this and mentors who were able to support students in challenging their preconceptions in light of the values and attitudes demonstrated by school staff. Therefore I focused on how the partnership appeared to have worked during this ILN module and school-based experience and highlighted any apparent areas of strength or development.

6.2   Data Analysis

Student teachers have a challenging job to assimilate learning from college and school and make sense of it for themselves to become confident, competent teachers. Given the perceptions shown in Chapters Four and Five regarding the teaching of children with SEN, it was necessary to gain a better understanding of how they learned to be able to try and work with these perceptions more effectively. There still appeared to be a 'grey area' between college and school learning with no one helping them to cross this boundary and this was of interest to me in reviewing the data gathered regarding ITE and professional learning. Who do student teachers feel should be helping

them make the connections? Who do they find makes the biggest impression on them during the learning process? How does this relate to the teaching of children with SEN?

6.2.1 The ILN module and the Early Years cohort

In the first student questionnaire (Appendix F), students were asked to outline what they thought should be included in the four year programme. The most common response (20 comments) was appropriate ways to plan and differentiate; followed by (17 comments) more detail on the variety of SEN and disabilities. These were logical comments at this stage of the programme because the students had not started the ILN module or their second year school-based placement. At this stage students perceived their confidence level to be 4.9 out of a possible ten. Their comments reflected a series of worries that arose through inexperience: in order – experience in special schools; practical experiences with children with SEN; typical strategies and resources for teaching children with SEN; together with a range of similar comments offered by individual or pairs of students. This related to the areas of confidence discussed earlier when students expressed low confidence in their ability to assess the needs of children with SEN and knowledge and understanding of SEN related issues.

At the mid-module review (Appendix G), Q6 related to how far students were satisfied that the module was meeting its objectives. Only one group of students (22 in total) completed the questionnaire, but there was no obvious

difference between the two groups in the other questionnaires so I was satisfied that this smaller group was representative of the whole cohort. All responses in Q6 were 'agree' or 'agree strongly' to each of the statements. The strongest response was the agreement that students' understanding of individual learning needs had increased (19 agree strongly, three agree). The least strong was student confidence that they would be able to teach children with individual learning needs (ten agree strongly, 12 agree). These responses outlined student satisfaction that they had developed their knowledge and understanding and confidence in their related teaching skills. However, the student teachers at this stage had not taught their whole class as their placement thus far had been a planning one. Therefore the reduced confidence in teaching children with individual learning needs could relate to a nervousness that their block placement had yet to start.

The final element of this question asked students whether they liked the way the module had been delivered – they responded positively (14 agree strongly, eight agree). This element was followed up in Q7 which focused on a specific element of the module delivery, how the college-based teaching was structured around the school-based elements and how the initial stages of the college-based teaching focused on their preparation for their school-based placement and the post school-based placement teaching focused on specific needs and strategies for all e.g. behaviour and social development and how these may relate to all children, but some more particularly. At the point of this questionnaire students had completed half of the college-based teaching and were about to go into school. For Q7, all of the students agreed that they liked the 'wrap around' nature of the module. The reason they gave

most frequently (12 comments) was that it related to actual children and real experiences; theory into practice. There were only six suggestions for improvements – three related to help with the assignment; one to do with the length of the taught sessions; and two to do with more information on SEN. When asked what they were particularly interested in studying nine responses related to particular conditions – cerebral palsy, ADHD, autism, Down's syndrome, physical disabilities – three responses related to general increased knowledge and one related to specific cases found on school placement. So overall there was consensus that the module was meeting their needs in relation to subject knowledge and preparation for teaching, given that this was the mid-point of the module.

Table Seventeen: End of Level 1b and ILN student questionnaire Question 5 responses

I have gained a better understanding of:	Individual Learning Needs Module			Y2 school based training		
	Agree	Disagree	No change	Agree	Disagree	No change
Planning for individual learning needs	60	0	1	51	3	5
Differentiation in my teaching	57	1	3	56	1	2
Assessing individual needs	49	1	11	45	2	13
Teaching children with autism	54	1	5	24	12	21
Teaching children with emotional and behavioural difficulties	52	0	9	48	2	9
Teaching children with physical disabilities	43	2	16	26	9	23
Teaching gifted children	46	0	15	33	6	19
My role as a class teacher in an inclusive mainstream setting	57	0	3	54	1	5
The issues surrounding SEN and inclusion	60	0	1	45	2	12
My own values in relation to SEN and inclusion	58	0	2	49	1	8

n = 61

In the end of Level 1b STB and ILN module questionnaire, once the school-based placement and the module was complete, students were asked to reflect on what they had learned from the ILN module and from the school-

based placement. In Q5 (see Table 17) students were asked what they had learned across a range of skills and knowledge. In all ten areas students agreed that the ILN module had more impact that school-based placement. Some of the biggest differences were in predictable areas such as teaching children with autism, physical disabilities and gifted children – the differences related most likely to a lack of experience of working with children in these categories in their classes. The statements that resulted in the strongest agreement were that through the ILN modules students had gained a better understanding of planning for individual learning needs (60 agree, one no change) and issues surrounding SEN and inclusion (60 agree, one no change). The statements from their school-based placement that resulted in the strongest agreement were learning about differentiation in their teaching (56 agree, one disagree, two no change) and about their role as a classteacher in an inclusive mainstream setting (54 agree, one disagree, five no change). This was an understandable balance as the ILN strength related to the theory and the school-based placement to the practical. For some students it was still a challenge to carry over theory into practice, given their limited experience. This was of great interest to me as an outcome of this research as these students were half way through their four year programme by this stage and I thought there should be signs that they were able to bridge the gap between school and college – perhaps it needed to be one particular person's responsibility within this process; therefore I asked them in Q8 (see Table 18) and 9 (see Table 19) who had been most influential.

Table Eighteen: End of Level 1b and ILN student questionnaire

Question 8: average responses

8. Rate the following according to the level of influence they have had on your **development as a teacher** this academic year: (0=no influence; 5=extremely influential)

	ILN module	Progress Tutor	Link Tutor	School - Based Tutor	Class Teacher	Peers	Other (please state)
Level of Influence	3.7	1.9	1.8	4.1	2.8	3.4	

n=61

Table Nineteen: End of Level 1b and ILN student questionnaire

Question 9: average responses

9. Rate the following according to the level of influence they have had on your confidence in **SEN and inclusion** this academic year: (0=no influence; 5=extremely influential)

	ILN module	Progress Tutor	Link Tutor	School - Based Tutor	Class Teacher	Peers	Other (please state) TAs
Level of Influence	4.3	1	1.1	2.1	4	2.6	4

n=61

Questions eight and nine focused more precisely on whom the students felt had been influential in their development. In Q8 the focus was on their development as a teacher: here they stated that the school-based tutor (4.1 out of a possible five) had the strongest influence with the ILN module at 3.7 and peers at 3.4. I was surprised to see that peers had more influence than their classteachers who only scored 2.8. The school-based tutor was not unexpected as the strongest influence as it was their role to observe the student and mentor them. Peers must have been offering an informal support network that helped the student; and, in fact, observing their college Facebook interactions during school-based placement there was evidence of mutual support, and asking for advice which was mostly answered by other

students, but occasionally by college tutors. Facebook was a relatively new initiative in the department so was not a focus in this research, but worthy of consideration in the future as a potential tool of communication across the boundaries of school and college. The role of the classteacher had been debated a lot in partnership meetings; however, funding training for classteachers was an issue and we relied on the school-based tutors to prepare them for our student teachers. Those schools where there was a whole school policy and engagement in ITE had, anecdotally, been able to offer a more consistent message and support.

In Q9 – which related to confidence in SEN and inclusion – students rated the ILN module as the most influential at 4.3 out of a possible five. Classteachers and teaching assistants came next at four each. It was interesting that the results were different from those for Q8 – one reason could be that Q8 was related to their identity as a teacher, whereas Q9 related to more day-to-day confidence which was influenced by the people they saw more frequently in the school-based placement. Disappointing in both questions was the role of the Link Tutor – the college-based tutor who liaised with school during school placement – whilst their main role was compliance and ensuring students' entitlement, it was not working as an influence on student development with only 1.8 out of five for influence on students' development as a teacher and 1.1 out of five for influence on their confidence in SEN and inclusion. It was worth considering how this role could be enhanced in the relationship between school and college. If this role related more to enabling student teachers to connect the college and the

school-based experiences, it could be extremely influential and beneficial in student development.

When asked at the end of the questionnaire for any comments about the ILN module and ITE, students responded in three main areas: 19 comments related to how useful the module had been; five comments related to the value of the guest speakers and six comments related to a range of areas including how well it was taught; school-based placement helping with practical experiences and how it should be taught throughout the course. This last point was interesting for later review as it related to our stranded model of the course rather than separating out elements for specific modules – the potential was for students to see these elements, such as SEN, as separate from general good teaching.

6.2.2 Case Study Students

Before the school-based placement (Appendix B), the case study students expressed the need for a lot of experience, including some time in a special school; as Student two stated, 'I would be interested in going to that kind of thing and seeing how different it is in a specialist school to a mainstream school and see how the teaching is different'. This perceived need to see the difference of teaching children with special needs in a special provision setting was examined in Chapter Five and it related to a perceived difference of pedagogy within the two settings.

Regardless of any special school experience, Student Three reiterated the need for 'just a lot of experience in the classrooms with people working'. This matched the earlier discussion of situated learning; their learning was related to a particular context and they needed to become familiar with versions of that context across different schools and age groups. They needed to find their identity as teachers and this was only possible within the professional environment. What the students valued here was applying the things they had learned in college to school and gaining insight into how teachers engaged in the same activities, 'because I didn't quite understand a lot of stuff in college until I got in and did it but I know after I'd actually done it'. This highlighted the challenge of professional learning within the college situation; whilst Student Three was talking generally, it could be applied to my ILN module and the necessity perhaps for visiting speakers, videos etc. to try and bridge some of the gap between college and school.

In the tutorial with Student One (Appendix K) the school-based tutor opened with asking how the student teacher felt the lesson had gone. The next five minutes were for the student teacher to outline the strengths she had demonstrated and areas for development. This was a supportive start to the tutorial as the student teacher was being guided into self-evaluation, without having already received judgement from the school-based tutor. The school-based tutor then focused on one of the targets that the student teacher had been set in the previous tutorial – subject knowledge. Student One had pitched the lesson a bit too high for Year One children and the school-based tutor provided a possible scenario for how one of the more challenging concepts could have been modelled by the student teacher to make it more

successful. The balance between encouraging the student teacher to develop her own ideas about how the lesson had gone and providing her scaffolding for the next step, fitted well with a constructivist notion of learning. She was able to say 'I was going to ask about …' and was challenged with 'what made you choose that …'. Although the tutorial only lasted about 20 minutes, the carefully constructed discussion had allowed the school-based tutor to draw out from the student her understanding of the learning that had occurred during the session; checked out targets from the previous tutorial; discussed particular events during the session and set targets for the next week. On the video it was evident that the tutorial took place in the school-based tutor's office, but both were comfortable in the setting and Student One was relaxed, smiling and able to accommodate constructive criticism as well as praise.

The tutorial with Student Two (Appendix K) followed the same pattern, although it lasted a few minutes longer as they discussed a particular incident that had previously concerned the student at the end of the meeting. Again the setting was the school-based tutor's office and both were relaxed and comfortable in the discussion. Student Two was able to engage in self-evaluation and in inviting comment from the school-based tutor with comments like: 'I wondered what it would be like to let them just wander over and join in, but I didn't want to send them away and they seemed to enjoy it'. This was her first experience in Nursery so although she had a rationale for why she had let children join in, she was also inviting comment about whether this was a good thing to do. The school-based tutor acknowledged that it was. This discussion would not have been possible if the students had

not been guided in how to reflect on events that occurred during a session and had the confidence to deviate from the session plan.

Although in neither of the tutorials did they discuss the ITE programme in terms of structure or roles – and it would not have been appropriate to do so in a tutorial on a session observation – the process of the tutorial itself indicated how the school-based tutor was trying to work with the student teachers. Apart from discussing the Early Years Foundation Stage document with Student Two, which would have been covered in college, there were no comments about linking theory with practice. The tutorials focused exclusively on the lesson observed. Discussion about the college-based learning could have been included if the school-based tutor had asked why a particular response was likely from the children. For example with Student One the school-based tutor provided the scenario for the challenging concept. Perhaps more questions about why the children would find the concept challenging in the first place would have revealed how much the student knew about children's science development in Year One, which would have been covered in college.

In the interviews after the school-based placement (Appendix B) the two students in School A expressed the view that the school 'was not the template' that they had been given in college. But they saw this as a positive thing, they were being challenged to adapt their concepts to a particular setting - perhaps recognising that no school would be exactly like the model presented in college but a version of it. They did talk about how college

should give them 'tips' for teaching; but this would not be how tutors in college would describe their task, the students were studying education at degree level. Perhaps, here, there was a message for college and schools that student teachers were entering the programme with a particular view of what each stakeholder should be doing.

The students in School B were less forthcoming on ITE generally, focussing more on specific examples of things they wanted to know i.e. subject knowledge in maths. However, they reiterated the students in School A's views that 'Yeah, you follow a lot of what was taught (in college) I suppose. But when you talk about it in college it doesn't seem real'. These comments were not focussed entirely on the teaching related to SEN but generally. This, once more, added to the notion of a boundary between college and school which we were making the students overcome for themselves, but which needed more support. An interesting comment on this subject from these students when asked whether they expected classteachers to ask them what they had been learning in college was 'I don't think they were interested. I think you try and take it from scratch ... rather than asking what we already know'. This might be easier for the classteacher, but it equally could have been an ideal opportunity for the students to have to drawn connections between college and school learning and express them to the classteacher. Perhaps here was one of the examples of why engaging classteachers more closely in the partnership training and discussions would be beneficial.

6.2.3 Case Study Classteachers and School-based Tutor

In their interviews (Appendix H) the class teachers and the school-based tutor were asked what characterised an effective teacher for SEN and how student teachers could develop these characteristics. Classteacher One emphasised the importance of open mindedness and maturity as well as the development of professional skills. 'They've got to be able to think out of their own head and put their mind in somebody's mind'. This level of empathy with children with SEN suggested maturity, not necessarily in years but in approach to teaching. Student teachers were often so concerned with creating a good lesson plans and delivering a good learning session that did not deviate from this lesson plan that they were thinking only from their own perspective – how have I done in this lesson, rather than from the child's perspective. It was not the sort of questioning that happened in the tutorial after the lesson observation, so might be something that school and college had to reflect on as it was a valuable experience for the student teacher to consider his/her lesson from the child's perspective.

Classteacher Two was more focused on the administrative tasks, particularly the individual education plan (IEP) but she did not go into any depth about how she would recommend college and school worked together to develop student teachers. I did not press the classteacher on this as I did not want to lead her answers or for her to think that she had answered incorrectly and try to work out what I wanted to hear. If the IEP was the most important thing to her, then it was apparent that she felt it helped a teacher become 'one who considers all their needs'. Student teachers would not be expected to

complete an IEP, but during the ILN module they were expected to review any IEP for children in their class and college sessions looked at a range of examples, so they were familiar with their purpose and they began to consider good examples.

The school-based tutor (Appendix H) was expansive in her response, but her key message was: 'I think an effective teacher for SEN is an effective teacher. I think it is about good practice in terms of all areas really'. She then proceeded to give examples of good practice including planning, classroom management, how to use support, how to work with parents and 'a willingness to go and seek advice'. This mirrored the perceptions in the literature that described starting with good practice and then extending it for different children's needs. As the school-based tutor stated: 'your classroom management and organization has to be able to be flexible enough to allow for all children'; suggesting children may require different practices within that classroom management, but effectively it all started from good practice. This would be very reassuring to student teachers as it suggested that teaching children with SEN was not different practice, but flexible practice. Their challenge was to recognise when this flexible practice was required. However if they combined this with Classteacher one's suggestion to think from the child's perspective, this would be an easier proposition.

When asked how we help student teachers to achieve the teaching above, all three focused on developing theory in practice but considered that the success depended on the school and its ability to work with college. All

suggested it was a partnership between school and college working together to develop theoretical understanding, practical skills and professional attributes with students who also needed to actively engage with the process. This was promising, although the student interviews suggested that they did not feel it was happening this way.

6.2.4 Focus Group

The focus group (Appendix L) was asked to comment on their current programme and how the ITE programme should be developed further. As far as the school and college-based programme was concerned they had negative and positive comments and also made suggestions. On the negative side they said that sometimes they felt patronised by college tutors who talked down to them like children; but their biggest concerns were with their personal experiences of school. The concerns were rooted in relationships: 'my first year was awful and the teacher didn't want me in the class, she didn't want me there ... she'd stop the whole class, tell me to go and sit down and she'd finish my lesson'; 'it completely depends on the teacher'. Positive aspects also included relationships and the following comments:

- 'but then my second year was really, really good and it helps if everyone wants you to do well'

- and the ILN module 'this module for me has been just fine ... I am quite glad it started before I went into SBT (school-based training) because as we went into SBT we could pick up on things';

- 'before we went on that first two week induction and we had that assignment like to pick a certain child ... maybe you are much more aware ... so that was really good';

- 'from the knowledge that you had given us, I think, it has changed how I think in some ways'.

(Student comments from focus group)

Ideas arose from the students' experience between their college and school programmes:

1. 'we do all the work to get us planning, but then we never ... follow it through ... I sort of just go in, do my bit and leave ... then just disappear which made no difference to the class';

2. 'it was like, have you done that ... fill something in, but they never read it and you felt like it was pointless me doing that as it's not come to anything, like nothing I've noticed about the child has been picked up on';

3. 'it would be nice to be in school and spend a separate placement working alongside the classteacher doing just doing assessment because that underpins everything of your teaching';

4.   'they told me to do something, then the tutor came in and said why

        have you done this ... and then my classteacher and my SBT would

        be there and I would be stuck in the middle of it when I thought, you

        told me to do it and I'm getting told off by you and no one would

        own up to anything'.

(Student comments from focus group)

Here students were expressing graphically how much better they felt when

the staff in school were supportive and consistent with each other and

college. Because they were reliant on school approval for their self image as

a teacher they suffered when school was not approving of their efforts. 'When

you are there you are gutted. When it happens you are absolutely

devastated. You think, oh my God, I've done it wrong'. This was a very strong

expression: 'you find when you get a bad experience from school, at first I

didn't want to go back to my school at all'; which was probably not

appreciated by tutors and teachers who no doubt expressed their ideas

regarding a student's performance with consideration. Although the children's

learning experience was everyone's first priority, the commitment of the

student teacher in the placement and how far the experience in school

affected their identity as a teacher needed to be acknowledged and built into

the scaffolding of this learning experience for them.

6.2.5 School-based Tutor on Partnership

The interview with the school-based tutor after the school-based placement (Appendix M) focused mainly on teacher education; during the interview she commented on our ITE as well as that of their other ITE partner, B College. Both institutions worked in partnership, B. College with PGCE students and us with undergraduates; her role with both was as tutor and assessor and she was happy that it was a whole school commitment and engagement with ITE. She defined their role in the training and development of teachers as 'it is about them applying their skills from college and I suppose you backing us up – this is the theory but in practice it might be different'. One of the areas where this difference was apparent was in preparation for teaching where they were given a framework for planning but when they took this into school they stuck to it more rigidly that they should – 'timings was always the thing that throws them', this was also apparent in assessment practices. 'Because a classteacher can stand in front of the class and all the children are quiet, they all stand at the front of the class and expect the children to be quiet'. So although each party was upholding its responsibilities, the students were not able at this stage to adapt their college learning to the different context of school, 'I think they seem to find it hard to begin with, to look deeper than that, in terms of behaviour management or teaching and what actually is going on'.

She describes other misconceptions that occur with student teachers in the area of SEN. She stated that student teachers thought that 'all SEN children are low ability … differentiation was a biggy … I think they see differentiation

as the teaching assistant will sit with that group and, of course, it's a lot more than that'.

As far as roles within the partnership: 'you can give them lectures and literature and we can give them ideas and give them that whole sequence of learning that comes with experience'. The school had the role of the reality check because 'as a trainee, you write it all down in your lectures and you think yes, I'll go and do that ... and it will be perfect and you go and try it and it doesn't work'. She recognised the value of the Link Tutor from college:

> 'One of the supportive elements of the relationship with us and B. College was the Link Tutor 'we've had both our link tutors the same all the way through and I think that is a strength really because they get to know us and our school and when you do joint observations you know'.

With this had come mutual trust and this led to some effective project work; but this trust was jeopardised if communication was poor. The SBT gave an example of poor communication about a student doing a deferred placement that could have led to her being placed in an inappropriate class, but generally she said 'you are doing a good job'.

6.2.6 College-based School-based Training Manager

The college-based School-based Training Manager's role (Appendix J) included the responsibility 'to ensure that students receive their entitlement within the terms specified in the Partnership Agreement'. This, to me, was one of the difficulties that had arisen from the comments above. The college

was viewing its relationship with schools as maintaining entitlement, which was mainly the role of the Link Tutor, rather than continuing the education that started in college and overlapping that with the education that took place in school. Even when the Link Tutor carried out a joint observation, this was done mainly to ensure moderation of grading – it was an exercise for the school and the college, not really for the student teacher.

The strengths she outlined as 'the quality of their training, both centre based and school based, was still very relevant and makes them very employable. I think the very fact that we've done so well in terms of our Ofsted inspection, speaks volumes in itself'. She was right that the development the student teachers had undergone had resulted in high employability rates, but this also related to the fact that the students had a four year course, which provided them with additional school experience. Ofsted praised particularly the relationships between schools and college and the clarity of the roles held by the various participants in that relationship. However, they were less complementary of the grade 2 cohort, which resulted from having too many satisfactory students. It was worth considering whether a better relationship between college work and teaching in school would enable these satisfactory students to achieve higher. School colleagues worked with one or two students at a time so had the potential to provide individualised learning opportunities that college–based learning was not; so college could identify areas for development and mentors in school could realise them with the student on placement.

The SBT manager's recommendations for the course included: ensuring the programme met the requirements of the new primary curriculum; more effectively tracking the QTS standards throughout the programme so that school-based and college-based standards were well synchronised; to ensure that progression through the programme was smooth and well supported; to include M level credits again and enhancing the SEN provision. She commented – as discussed in Chapter Five – that SEN provision could be enhanced by providing another module at a higher level. It would be my suggestion that this would not be necessary if there was a way of enabling students to take their learning from college into school in a more effective fashion.

6.3   Discussion

In their discussion of situated learning, Lave and Wenger (2009) outlined the concept of peripheral learning or participation. 'Peripherally, when it is enabled, suggests an opening, a way of gaining access to sources for understanding through growing involvement' (Lave and Wenger, 2009, p.37). This described the boundary that I have outlined in this chapter between knowledge gathered in college and knowledge gathered in school and the fact that there was not yet an effective way of applying them to each other. The growing involvement Lave and Wenger mentioned could be just more practical involvement in teaching, but it was apparent from the fact that we had too many student teachers reaching a satisfactory rather than good or outstanding Ofsted grade, and the fact that the students talked of the difficulties of transferring knowledge, that this was not happening. Student

teachers needed a structured support system to overcome the boundary, or to get further involved than at the periphery. Wenger's (2008) concept of communities of practice explained why this periphery could be challenging to pass through: 'Communities of practice are the prime context in which we can work out common sense through mutual engagement' (p.47). For student teachers the practice of teaching was not yet common sense and they struggled in a context where it was. College tutors had all worked in this environment, so, again, they understood the common sense of teaching. In this way the language of teaching was common to college tutors and teachers in school, it was only the student teacher who was left out and who was left to work it out. The student teachers suggested in their questionnaires and interviews that they received a lot of support from each other in trying to untangle this learning, but that Link Tutors and college tutors contributed less. I think there was an enhanced role required between the Link Tutor and the School-based Tutor to bridge this gap and to work with the student teachers in understanding how to apply learning from one situation to another, so they could become part of the community of teaching.

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This also related to self identity and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993), which was a recurring theme in this chapter. When engaged in professional learning, one of the intentions was to see oneself as a professional – this was a message that was given to students as soon as they arrived at college. However, in taking on that professional role, student teachers then felt very strongly when things went wrong which was something that came through the focus group comments. They were not professionals the second they got into a school, they were engaged in professional learning so required

feedback on how they were developing professionally as well as in the skills of teaching. Negative comments impacted on their view of themselves as potential professionals. This was how it related to self-efficacy; if they did not make connections between what they had learned in college and what they were doing in school, they could doubt their capabilities. College teaching would have helped them understand what they should be doing in school and why, but in school they were often told to 'start from scratch' as the case study students stated. Student teacher self-perception was fragile; they were within two communities of learning – college and school – and the perception through the data was that they did not feel strongly enough that the two overlapped.

In this chapter models of adult education; teacher development; mentoring and partnership have been presented. In relation particularly to the ILN module and teaching children with SEN, the student teachers identified the 'wrap around' nature of the ILN module as a positive. The reasons for this were that the first half involved focusing on one particular child from their placement class and identifying and planning for their needs. They felt that they were prepared better, even though their perceived confidence level was still low in relation to teaching children with SEN. It was apparent from the feedback from the focus group and the case study students that mentoring varied and that this had an impact on their confidence. So although the partnership was highly graded by Ofsted and the roles well established, it was one of my conclusions that the literature (Carnell, 2007; Day, 2003; Zapke & Leach, 2002; Lai, 2006) proposed a closer relationship between

learning in the two contexts and that to enable student teachers to construct

meaning in both and transfer that knowledge required support.

Chapter Seven   Conclusions, Reflections and Implications

7.1   The Case

In the introduction I stated that the aim of the research was to engage in a case study of the student learning experience related to the four themes and the impact of these themes on students engaged in college-based and school-based learning. I had expected initially to be focused on describing the experience of teachers and students in teaching children like Jack, but soon found that my reading and data production were directing me within the themes towards new ideas and concepts; so it became less about Jack and children like him and more about a view of initial teacher education in the area of SEN. This helped the research be more purposeful as it was not just an inward looking piece, but one where potential outcomes could be relevant to ITE programmes beyond those of my own professional setting.

My intention for the case study was to explore the four themes of inclusivity, perceptions, special pedagogy and models of initial teacher education in order to assess the impact of each on the student learning experience. The complexity of examining the experiences of students in both college and school required a framework within which the literature review and data production could be positioned. The themes worked well as each had its unique elements but combined to form a good overview of perceptions, experiences and potential issues related to ITE in SEN. Even though I only chose two case study schools, the data produced demonstrated that the experiences within schools were different due to the varying experiences of the students and even that class to class, different class teachers'

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perspectives and practices influenced student development. It is my opinion that this could lead to student teachers approaching the teaching of children with SEN in later placements with different perceptions of how to relate to children as individuals along a spectrum of needs and plan teaching to meet the needs of all children in their setting. College cannot insist on a school adopting a particular perspective, nor a proposed way of working with children with SEN, but if we consider the models of partnership presented above, there are ways in which schools and college could work during school placement to moderate provision and collaborate on student teacher development in SEN. It became apparent during the research that the role of link tutor – the college-based tutor who visited students on placement – could be developed further to act as a guide for students in how to 'translate' the experiences they were having and relate these to their studies in college.

7.2   The Themes

The research themes offered a broad perspective on teacher education in SEN. As can be seen from the literature on adult learning, students bring their own life experiences to the learning context. As a result, the perceptions they had developed needed to be exposed to understand how they were going to approach the ILN module and the school placement. Students, too, needed to reflect on their approach to SEN and disability using the range of models within the functional and transactional frameworks. One of the perceptions that emerged from my 2007 masters study was that teaching children with SEN required specialist pedagogy and that one of the reasons for a lack of teacher confidence in the area was because they had not received this specialist understanding during training. This perception

persisted throughout this research and, again, resulted in conflicting views. When deciding how to manage these ranges of perceptions, models and teaching strategies, it was important to review the literature on adult education, ITE, mentoring and partnership to consolidate them all within a model of ITE for my institution in relation to teaching children with SEN.

What the data provided was an insight into student views and school views related to both the ILN module and school placement. In each of the four areas particular themes emerged that were also pursued through the literature.

Inclusivity was viewed as an important aspect to pursue as teacher perceptions and the messages passed on to students in school relied on a shared dialogue for inclusion. Definitions of inclusion vary from breaking down barriers to all aspects of education and society (Hick et al, 2009; Florian in Topping and Maloney, 2005) to celebrating difference (Thomas et al, 2000; Rix et al, 2005); from educating all in mainstream to not worrying where children are educated. Teachers and student teachers generally supported a view of inclusion as one where a wide range of children with SEN and disabilities are included and provided an equal opportunity to engage in the range of learning experiences. The data led to the conclusion that teachers held a positive view of inclusion for all, but struggled when it came to individual children in their classroom. In a couple of cases this resulted in children being considered to offer too much of a challenge for mainstream. The two case study schools differed in practicalities, although both were considered inclusive by their teaching teams. The evidence suggested that inclusion was a familiar term to students and they had similar

views of what it meant to them – mainly all together, all included. What they had seen in their classes, varied and their views of their experiences were often critical, but equally, they did not fit neatly into one model of SEN or other, which was explored in their perceptions.

Student and teacher perceptions did not necessarily follow the simple pattern of one particular model of SEN and disability. Models are often presented in a straightforward fashion (Warnock and Norwich, 2010; Sandow, 1994; Terzi, 2005), but neither the teachers nor the student teachers in the research offered the same model throughout the data. One of the greatest differences was between ethos and practice (Sikes et al, 2007). Student teachers look to their classteachers to model practice (Cambra and Silvestre, 2003; Topping and Maloney, 2005) and this impacted on their self identity as a potential teacher themselves. It was evident from the data that the greatest influence on students prior to college were teachers, peers and or their own experiences if they, themselves, had a special need. These were the perceptions students were drawing on when they responded to the free association exercise. The responses to these were predominantly functional in nature. By mid-module it was tutors in college, peers and school-based tutors who had the strongest influence on their view of themselves as teachers and in their perceptions of themselves as teachers of children with SEN. At this stage their responses to what they had experienced in school followed a more transactional model with expressions of interest in planning for all children, differentiation and meeting all needs. Through discussion they could become clearer about how their perceptions impact on their teaching and how far modelling themselves on their classteacher would support this.

This process could also be included within a placement task, where classteachers or the school-based tutor reflects with the student teacher on how they perceive the children in their class and how best to teach them.

Specialism was described as knowledge of particular conditions, the use of extra support, resources and funding as well as teaching strategies. The literature did not suggest that all children would thrive in mainstream education, but the role of special schools was viewed variously (Norwich and Lewis, 2001). Student teachers expressed a desire to have experience of special provision, with one of the case study students suggesting this was because they wanted to experience the different teaching involved. Norwich and Lewis (2001) suggested a continuum of teaching and learning, which was what the students were developing an awareness of by the end of school-based placement. They included more terms such as differentiation as a way of meeting all children's needs rather than seeing children with SEN as a totally separate group who would need someone separate or totally different strategies. I do not feel that by the end of this school-based placement that student teachers were entirely confident that there was not something 'more' about teaching children with SEN as when asked what else could be included in the course, they mentioned lectures about Down's Syndrome, for example, as well as how to teach children with SEN. The programme needed to continue this as part of the stranded model of the course so that students did revisit elements of the individual learning needs module, but in the context of other aspects of the course - for example assessment or child development.

Adult learning does not occur in isolation, as has been clear throughout this research. The conditions for learning and the contexts in which it occurs (Gagne, 1977; Day, 2003; Wenger, 2008; Lave and Wenger, 2009) impact on how far a student teacher will assimilate new professional learning and create an image of themselves as a teacher. The complex blend of academic and professional learning needs to be facilitated. This role was best managed by a professional mentor (McIntyre et al, 1994; Megginson and Clutterbuck, 2007) who in the partnership in my institution was the school-based tutor. The students expressed the view in previous chapters that the school-based tutor had a very strong influence on them and that their opinion was very influential in their self confidence – even to the point where a student who was criticized in a tutorial did not want to return to the school. However, although the individual roles of college tutors and school-based tutor were operating well and were praised by Ofsted (2010); it was my view that the students would benefit from a stronger Link Tutor role. The students did not believe that this role influenced their development as a teacher in the school placement and this was something I wanted to review further. The Link Tutor could support the students in the reflection that needs to occur for them to confidently review their experiences and understand why schools operate the way they do; why children respond the way they do to learning experiences and, most importantly, the student teacher's role in these.

7.3   Key Findings

7.3.1 Impact on theory

According to Garraway (2010):

> Boundary recognition involves making difference which may
> have previously been implicit, explicit. It is not, however,
> necessarily a barrier to further development ... the success of
> work done in the developmental space depends on how the
> participants work with the explicit differences (p. 220).

Garraway was discussing the boundary crossing from university learning to the workplace and, while his examples came from science and engineering, his exposition of activity theory and the challenges of crossing the boundary from university to work apply to my research, especially where Garraway confirms that boundary crossing – however hard – does not need to imply that learning needs stop during the crossing process or where a crossing is challenging. By exploring the work of Engestrom and Vygotsky, Garraway proposed that children seek to cross the boundary between what they know now and what they are going to know through the use of teacher interaction and resources in school. He then applied this to university and work, where the challenge is greater as the context for the transfer of knowledge changes. It was my finding that the desire to cross the boundary between college-based and school-based training – even with support materials from college and the role of the school-based tutor – was insufficient for 2nd Year undergraduates in the aspect of teaching children with SEN in mainstream. The community of practice that is the inclusive school operates in too alien a fashion for these inexperienced teachers to penetrate or to, then, operate in independently as teachers for children with SEN. The partnership had been designed to support training and education in each setting with a Link Tutor

to act as liaison, but the research demonstrated that there was no one within the partnership to take responsibility for enabling the boundary crossing itself. Link tutors, who I think would be best able to take on this role, were only responsible for compliance; ensuring students were receiving their entitlement in school and moderating assessment.

The barriers to students becoming fully encompassed within the school as far as teaching children with SEN was concerned were language; the gap between ethos and practice and shared understanding of the partnership. It is my assertion that because practice across schools will be so varied, as evidenced by the different experiences of the case study students, a common perspective of how to support students in gaining competence in ensuring equality of opportunity to engage in the full and broad curriculum for children of all needs can only be provided by the college. If Link Tutors were trained in how to support students in this way, it would have benefits for their teaching of children with SEN; but could also highlight other aspects of teaching with which individual students or cohorts were struggling, which could lead to improvements in the curriculum in college. It would also encourage further dialogue between college and schools as the Link Tutor would have to work with the school-based staff to contextualise the general guidance to the specific school environment. This would further support students in their schools as the language they are not yet competent in using would be modelled for them in the communication between student, Link Tutor and School-Based Tutor.

It is my conclusion that student teachers require an understanding of why these barriers exist, particularly in relation to language and the difference

between ethos and practice. Students expect schools to be open communities to trainee teachers, but they find that they are excluded from understanding the underlying rationale for labelling children or for the way in which a school approaches inclusion because they are not yet fully part of its 'inner circle'. This exclusion results in further confusion and in students trying to emulate their class teachers, even if it is in opposition to what they have been told in college, because the stakes are so high in gaining approval for their teaching and, thus, passing the placement.

Much research has been completed in relation to student perceptions of children with SEN or disability (Sikes et al, 2007; Cole, 2005; Pearson, 2005; Cambra and Silvestre, 2003) or their perception of their own training experience (Nind and Cochrane, 2002; Lambe and Bone, 2006; Jones et al, 2006; Carnell, 2007), but these research studies have not endeavoured to present a model of initial teacher education where the students' awareness of their perceptions forms a fundamental part of the education process. It was my finding that the students were appreciative of the ILN module where perceptions, values and attitudes were addressed from the opening activity – the free association exercise. They then gained an understanding of the impact of their values on their teaching methods; for example wanting to seek to 'cure' the symptoms of a special need if they were operating within a medical model of disability. This understanding enabled them to reflect on their teaching and, although the journals evidenced an immaturity in this skill, the evidence from the focus group suggested that the cohort had developed in this aspect of professional learning.

So it is my assertion that before students learn about how certain 'conditions' might be manifest in the classroom and any strategies to use to enable the spectrum of learners to progress; students need to understand their own values and attitudes to children with SEN and disability. From this awareness comes their ability to be mindful of the approach they are making to children in the classroom – to ensure they are approaching the child not the label – so that they build relationships with individuals and use their understanding of the child, not a generic understanding of a condition, to generate their planning and teaching strategies. Knowledge of potential challenges faced by children with certain needs may support this, but it would not be the starting point. The challenge facing the application of this learning to the professional workplace is the shortcut taken by many classteachers straight to the label. This was what the students described about their experiences and why they witnessed teachers classifying children as different or problems. It was the most obvious example of where a belief in the ethos of inclusion differed from the practice of teaching all children in the class without prejudice.

7.3.2 Impact on Practice

What emerged from the data analysis and literature, which would underpin all ITE activities was that good teaching for children with SEN is good teaching for all. The challenges presented to our student teachers were to identify what from their range of teaching strategies would work best for particular children in any given circumstance. In terms of curriculum, this would be manifest in delivering modules on individual learning needs where students gain an awareness of their own perceptions and how these may influence their approaches in the classroom. Having reflected on this, they would then

focus on aspects of development and start the process of identifying the needs and abilities of children along continua of development areas, for example identifying how an individual child's verbal communication had developed in comparison to their peers. From this identification of needs and abilities would come the identification of appropriate teaching strategies. Whilst some generic introductions to identified conditions that they may encounter in school would be made, students would be aware that knowing about a condition would not translate exactly to the children in their care.

The challenges for the course as a result of this research include how to create an effective partnership to support this initial teacher education. It is apparent that the roles of Link Tutor and School-Based Tutor are key and that both college and school need to take responsibility for the education of all those responsible for ITE in how best to support students making the transitions between college and school. As far as teaching children with SEN is concerned, this needs to include education in relation to ethos and practice. School staff need to appreciate the perspective students gain of them as they try to manage the learning of all those in their care and the rationale for acting the way they do. This dialogue needs to be facilitated by the Link Tutor and the School-based tutor to ensure a consistent message that students can transfer to other settings.

In addition to elements of partnership college staff need to appreciate the imperative of acknowledging the values, attitudes and perceptions students bring with them to their studies and how these impact on their teaching and their application of college-based learning. As a partnership we tend to group values and attitudes under an umbrella term of 'professionalism', but do not,

in my opinion and from what I have learned in this study, provide sufficient guidance to students on how this is manifest. Professionalism was described by Hay McBer (DfEE, 2000) as:

> Professional characteristics (that) are deep-seated patterns of behaviour which outstanding teachers display more often, in more circumstances and to a greater degree of intensity than effective colleagues. They are how the teacher does the job, and have to do with self-image and values; traits, or the way the teacher habitually approaches situations; and, at the deepest level, the motivation that drives performance (p.19).

In essence, it is enabling our student teachers to recognise these professional characteristics within themselves and reflect on how they can best develop them further in relation to teaching children with SEN that will lead to excellent teaching for all children. The ILN module began that process by asking students to identify their perceptions and levels of confidence in given areas and to challenge them in a supportive learning environment. The next step was to take that process into the school-based element, supported by college link tutors. This is an element that needs to be addressed in future developments for the programme.

7.4   Future Potential

On the horizon for HEIs is new legislation, standards, curriculum and strategy for ITE, for the primary schools and for working with children with SEN and disabilities. One of these will be to assess potential students' attitudes, values and traits in psychometric testing at interview. No formal guidance as been published at this point in time, but the process has been piloted in several institutions. Whilst it may appear a valuable tool in relation to the teaching of children with SEN; I believe we could also end up overlooking the

students' ability to learn. If we fail to offer places to students who demonstrate a functional model of SEN and disability, for example, we have predetermined that effective ITE could not enable those applicants to adopt a more transactional approach once they have gained more experience. Social constructivist learning suggests that learning, through practical experiences and the reflection on these with others, can be transformational. By being selective in this way ourselves, we would not be sending an inclusive message to others, thus not mirroring what we are expecting our partnerships schools to do – accommodate and develop the learning of the diverse range of learners in the setting.

Another new initiative emerges from the SEN and Disability Green Paper (DfE, 2011) where it is clear that the role of the teacher of children with SEN will extend again to include working with the wider children's workforce in social and health care to formulate one plan for the child's development needs:

> We want to give children the best chance to succeed by
> spotting any problems early, extending early education
> and childcare, and bringing together the services they
> need into a single assessment and a single plan covering
> education, health and care (p.2).

We need to ensure that as an HEI we are preparing our student teachers to communicate with these services; to recognise a child's wider circumstances and to appreciate how these can impact on their learning. This links to the dialogue that needs to occur between Link Tutor, school and student in relation to contextualising the college course to the individual school's environment. If this dialogue were to include wider services, students are enabled to develop a wider vocabulary of SEN and disability and can reflect

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on the assumptions and values each of the professions brings to their role. Understanding a health worker's use of diagnosis and symptoms can help students clarify for themselves the apparent dichotomy between ethos and practice that they had reported in this research.

7.5   Personal, Professional Development

With these changes and the inevitable ones which will follow, it is important to me that the outcomes from my research are embedded within our programmes so that we are more effective in the way in which we are working with our partnership schools and with our student teachers. Impact could be provided through:

- Supporting student teachers in making the move across the boundary between college-based and school-based learning environments, rather than assuming that student teachers can automatically apply the theory to practice in the complex learning environment in school

- A higher importance placed on the perceptions, attitudes and values that student teachers bring to college with them so that both schools and student teachers work to understand the impact these have on their identity as a teacher and on their practice. Although I have emphasised the importance of this in this area of research, it underpins all teacher development so should not be left to the study of teaching children with SEN.

- A reflection on the roles and responsibilities within the partnership relationship, most particularly those of Link Tutor, Classteacher and School-based Tutor. It is clear that in order to support students in making the transition from college to classroom, the role of Link Tutor should not just be about entitlement, but also about engaging with student teachers in the school context and helping them to reflect on this.

Having completed this case study I can see areas in which I would like to do further research to gain a broader view of ITE and teaching children with SEN including:

- The role of the classteacher. Classteachers are often not invited to training sessions in college regarding ITE because of the expense of bringing them out of school, however this means that they miss out on any discussion regarding current priorities or issues that the student teachers are facing. I would like to research with classteachers how they view their influence on student teachers and also the results of this research in terms of any conflict of ethos and practice

- The role of the Link Tutor has taken on a significance as the research continued and I would like to work with Link Tutors in finding a way of working that could benefit student teachers but, also, potentially the school personnel with whom they are working

- The boundary between college and school. Prior to carrying out this research, I had not appreciated that there existed a gap between learning and college and experience in school. I had expected there to be a smooth transition between the two. Student data suggests that this was significant to them and I would like to understand it better from a college, school and student perspective

- The role of the TA or LSA in the education of the children with SEN. They were influential with the student teachers and appeared to have the most interactions with children with SEN, yet did not have qualified teacher status and did not have a role in the ITE process. I would like to explore further the relationship between the TAs and student teachers and the impact of their perspectives on SEN on student teacher development.

My own perspectives and practice have changed throughout the course of this research study. Although I had included various elements of discussion of children as individuals and challenging student perceptions; the individual learning needs module has developed to offer students a much more effective model to follow in teaching children with SEN. I still employ the free association exercise as part of the module teaching and use this as a starting point for discussion of models of disability and SEN. Students then have a framework for discussion for the remainder of the module – they are aware of the implications of operating within functional and transactional models of disability and use this awareness to observe the practice of others. My confidence has grown in not following a traditional model of SEN delivery and structure sessions around areas of development rather than conditions. This

helps students to see all children as part of continua of development and they can use these continua to discuss children's needs and abilities and to plan for learning. I have recognised how difficult it is for students to maintain their new perspectives in school due to being very early in their development, so I structure observations and case studies to support them in their preparations for teaching and encourage discussion of their experiences so they can deconstruct what they are witnessing in school. I have now been able to include a day's experience in a special school towards the end of the module but students enter that placement aware of how to view children as individuals, so use the day to observe good practice not look for the secrets of specialist teaching which they perceived teaching children with SEN to be at the beginning of the research. All of these practices exemplify my belief in a social constructivist approach to initial teacher education, which I would assert leads to the growth in confidence in students from the beginning to the end of Level 1b.

7.6 Limitations of the Study

Reflecting on the research experience, there are aspects that I would do differently were I to do it again. Methodologically I would have taken a more grounded theory approach to how the data emerged, I think that it would possibly have improved the research if I had been more flexible on further data production; for example, when it became apparent that the link tutor role was important I could have included them in the research. I had anticipated that the case study students would be able to complete a journal; however, this had proved to be a difficult task and it limited the volume and quality of

information received from the students. I was disappointed that School B did not engage in all the research elements. I could have been more decisive early on, when they had difficulty completing the interviews and considered changing case study school. However, the student teachers in the school were excellent research participants, so in turn I may have missed out on some interesting data by excluding them. I was tentative in my early interviewing as I was building relationships with the participants, I would have been better to have some interview practice with them initially so that when it came to the case study material, they were more confident.

SEN is a well-researched area and the environment of SEN and teaching is constantly changing. Even since 2008 when I started this research, the government priorities have changed; the governing party has changed; the QTS standards are changing in 2012 as will the primary curriculum. Student teachers need to be aware of these developments and how it will impact on them in the classroom. However, the practices within my institution have not changed extensively.

7.7   Conclusion

I have gained valuable insight through this research into the lived experiences of student teachers and schools in relation to our ITE programme and how we could improve the opportunities for student teachers to gain confidence and competence in the area of teaching children with SEN. My assumptions about adult education have largely been confirmed; but by examining the experiences of school and students and gaining an insight into how they experience the programme, I have gone through

fundamental changes in the way I view my own practice. Like many college tutors, I expect, I had seen my duty as delivering an effective module, with links between college and school discussed and exemplified within the teaching sessions. I had not seen my responsibility to actually work alongside students as they made the journey from teaching sessions to classroom. My responsibility as a tutor was now to take on a more mentoring role and as a Head of Department to ensure that this need is understood by my staff so that changes could be made to the way we support learner development. Telling the students about professionalism is not the same as modelling it for them with schools.

> I think, as a teacher anyway, you've just got to take what you've had, you know the input that you've had in your lectures, and I know it might sound sad to some people, but build upon it in your own time and in practice as well, when you are in school. I think there is still a lot to be learned since it is such a wide field … and I bet even teachers that have been teaching for years and years and years still think, right, I've got to do some research about the underlying issues. They're still learning in progress (Case Study Student School A)

If we can provide our student teachers the tools to be able to start their career as effective teachers of all children as well as have the attitude evidenced by the case study student here, that it is learning in progress, a career long journey of learning about and from children what they are capable of and how to meet their needs, then we will have effectively prepared our students to teach children with SEN in mainstream setting.

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School Staff Questionnaire

School A

1. **Your role in school:**
   Head teacher 1   Deputy Head 1   Class teacher 6   SENCO 1
   TA   4

2. **Are you on the senior management team? Yes   4   No   8**

3. **If you are a teacher, how long have you been qualified?**

   Average 19.85 years

4. **How long have you been working at this school?**

   Average 9 years

5. **Age:** (please circle)

   18-29   1   30-39   2   40-49   6   50+   4

6. How would you define **inclusion** for children with special educational needs?

Inclusion is:

7. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Enabling children with the following special needs to access the full and broad curriculum was..	Less Difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	No different than for children not identified as having SEN	More difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	Too difficult for mainstream schools
Physical impairments		4	9	
Sensory impairments		2	10	1
ADD/ADHD		2	11	
Autism		1	11	1
Asperger syndrome		3	10	
Down's syndrome		3	7	2
Emotional/ Behavioural disorders		4	9	

8. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the teaching of children with special educational needs: (tick the box):

Children with special educational needs typically:	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
require specialist teaching		4	1	8	
require additional planning	6	7			
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	6	5	1	1	
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	2	5	2	4	
are able to reach their potential in a mainstream setting	2	9	1		

9. Please rate your agreement with the following statements: (tick the box)

An inclusive school:	Agree Strongly	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
treats all children the same	3	3		4	2
Meets the needs of all learners	10	3			1
acknowledges that there could be something wrong with a child that could be classified as a special educational need	7	3		1	
recognises that children whose needs persist despite help may not be suited to the mainstream environment	1	9	2	1	
recognises that there may be barriers to learning in the school environment itself	4	8			
was one where everyone shares the same opinion about inclusion	3	5	2	1	

10. Please rank the following priorities for effective inclusion on a scale of 1-5, giving the highest priority a grade 1 and the least important priority a grade 5:

Priority	Rank (1-5)
Utilizing a range of teaching strategies	2.5
Having a knowledge and understanding of specific needs e.g. dyslexia, ADHD etc.	2
Having specialist teaching skills related to SEN	3.2
All staff sharing an opinion on inclusion	3.3
Having additional support staff	2.8

11. Including children with SEN in a mainstream class was detrimental to the opportunity for other children to reach their potential (please circle):

          Yes   2   No   11

12. How confident are you that you can meet the needs of children with SEN within the mainstream setting?
Rate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being no confidence to 10 being extremely confident:

7.3

13. When was the last time you received staff development related to SEN and/or inclusion (Please tick the appropriate box):

In the last month   7

In academic year 07/08   0

This academic year   4

Not in the last 3 years   1

In academic year 08/09   1

14. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the training of teachers: (tick the box):

Trainee teachers:	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
should not teach children with special educational needs (SEN) until they are fully qualified		1	12
need to learn SEN related teaching skills in order to be able to teach children with SEN in mainstream classes	12	1	
receive insufficient training prior to qualifying for the teaching of children with SEN in mainstream schools	4	8	1
learn best through practical experience in schools	10	2	1
do not have a realistic perception of teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools	2	6	5

Is there anything that would improve the training of teachers for teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools?

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School Staff Questionnaires

School B

1. **Your role in school:**

Classteacher   3   Learning support assistant   1   TA   2

2. **Are you on the senior management team?**

Yes   1   No   6

3. **If you are a teacher, how long have you been qualified?**

   Average 10.75 years

4. **How long have you been working at this school?**

   Average 4 years

5. **Age:** (please circle)

18-29   1   30-39   2   40-49   1   50+   3

6. How would you define **inclusion** for children with special educational needs?

Inclusion is:

7. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Enabling children with the following special needs to access the full and broad curriculum was..	Less Difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	No different than for children not identified as having SEN	More difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	Too difficult for mainstream schools
Physical impairments		2	5	
Sensory impairments		1	6	
ADD/ADHD		2	5	
Autism			7	
Asperger syndrome			7	
Down's syndrome			6	1
Emotional/ Behavioural disorders		2	5	

8. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the teaching of children with special educational needs: (tick the box):

Children with special educational needs typically:	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Require specialist teaching		5		2	
Require additional planning	3	4			
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	4	2		1	
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age		4	2	1	
are able to reach their potential in a mainstream setting		7			

9. Please rate your agreement with the following statements: (tick the box)

An inclusive school:	Agree Strongly	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
treats all children the same	3			4	
Meets the needs of all learners	5	1	1		
acknowledges that there could be something wrong with a child that could be classified as a special educational need	4	2	1		
recognises that children whose needs persist despite help may not be suited to the mainstream environment	1	6			
recognises that there may be barriers to learning in the school environment itself	3	4			
was one where everyone shares the same opinion about inclusion	1	4	2		

10. Please rank the following priorities for effective inclusion on a scale of 1-5, giving the highest priority a grade 1 and the least important priority a grade 5:

Priority	Rank (1-5)
Utilizing a range of teaching strategies	1.7
Having a knowledge and understanding of specific needs e.g. dyslexia, ADHD etc.	1.8
Having specialist teaching skills related to SEN	3.14
All staff sharing an opinion on inclusion	3
Having additional support staff	1.4

11. Including children with SEN in a mainstream class was detrimental to the opportunity for other children to reach their potential (please circle):

Yes   0   No   7

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12. How confident are you that you can meet the needs of children with SEN within the mainstream setting?
Rate on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being no confidence to 10 being extremely confident:

5.7

13. When was the last time you received staff development related to SEN and/or inclusion (Please tick the appropriate box):

In the last month   1   In academic year 07/08   0

This academic year   2   Not in the last 3 years   1

In academic year 08/09   3

14. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the training of teachers: (tick the box):

Trainee teachers:	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree
Should not teach children with special educational needs (SEN) until they are fully qualified		2	5
need to learn SEN related teaching skills in order to be able to teach children with SEN in mainstream classes	7	1	
receive insufficient training prior to qualifying for the teaching of children with SEN in mainstream schools	5	1	1
learn best through practical experience in schools	7		
do not have a realistic perception of teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools	4	3	

Is there anything that would improve the training of teachers for teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools?

Appendix B
Student Interviews

1. Before School Placement

This table highlights the student responses according to question themes and the data analysis process undertaken to analyse their

responses as can be seen in the related chapters

Questions Themes	Student 1 School A	Student 2 School A	Student 3 School B	Student 4 School B	Categorical Analysis	Stage Structure Analysis Emerging Concepts/ Dilemmas
Age, gender	21, female	20, female	19, female	20, female		
Circumstances	Lives with father and step mother	Lives with mother	Lives with mother	Lives in big family		
Influences	Parents and Grandparents	Mother	Mother	Parents, friends and teachers		

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TEXT BOUND INTO

THE SPINE

What is your definition of inclusion? Themes: Inclusion Models of disability and SEN				Stage analysis
Children who have special needs and might **need extra help** in the classroom, by teaching assistants. They might struggle in certain areas and need teaching assistance. They might have autism. Inclusion is how the teacher can adapt for that child. How they can put it into their planning and work so the **whole class** is developed and that child is included.	From a personal experience, I had ADHD as a child and thankfully I've grown out of it, I don't know if that is normal or not, but I have, and I wasn't really catered for in any way, shape or form. It was seen as, I am still very fidgety now but I am happy to have a pen in my hand and I'll concentrate but I was seen as, I don't think naughty's the word, but the individual needs weren't taken into consideration. As I've grown up and met different people around me I understand now SEN to be anything from a disability to personality, and inclusion just to include **everybody,** and to plan around that individual rather than take him out of the class. You've got to adapt the curriculum, might be in 30 different	Well, Special Educational Needs is a range of things from dyslexia, autism, and physical. I think inclusion is making sure that **everyone,** every child is involved in everything and that the lessons are tailored around everyone so even if it is something like finding it hard to concentrate or I don't know, my brother had dyslexia and his teachers printed out his work on coloured paper but nobody knew about it, everyone had it on coloured paper when he was at college but no one knew that was why but that was why he could read more easily so I suppose it is just doing it and not making a thing out of it, just **knowing what children need and doing it.** 242		
		All children should be included in everything, like tasks and activities should be **differentiated** and lessons should suit their needs as a lot of SEN children are now in mainstream schools and we need to cater for them. Just that it is important that they should be included and should be treated the **same** as all the other children, but they just might need that bit of **extra support** and help.	S1,2,3,4 – labelling S1,2,3,4 – inclusion definition S1 - ?functional S2,3 – personal experiences S1 - ?transactional S4 – same or equal S2,4 - transactional	Stage analysis models of disability and SEN – those with personal experience of SEN appear to have a more certain understanding of what inclusion might be Some confusion eg. S4 'treated the same' – is this lack of experience or a functional model? Person of the teacher – all understand that it is the responsibility of the teacher to adapt

What is your personal experience of inclusion?				
I don't remember very much of it in my school, when I was younger I probably didn't recognize different abilities. I do remember **TA's** being around they **used to go out** and do reading sessions so the teacher probably did use inclusion. High School, we were set into different **sets** and that was for different abilities I don't remember specifically the children with SEN and I wasn't aware of it.	We didn't have sets in year 7 so after that you knew where you were going to be. I don't see how they could have done it any differently because, the people who were in the **bottom sets weren't any less able, they just didn't want to work** so I suppose you couldn't really mix it all up because then it would be messing it all up for all those people who wanted to work so I can't see how it would be done any better but, may be, because they are in the bottom set you have the **self fulfilling prophecy and they don't work.**	Mainly in High School there was inclusion. They did have their own **Special Needs teacher** but they were also in the classroom. I found it a lot in PE. They **changed the activities** to suit individuals, but they were still included. But Primary School, not as much I don't think. I don't really remember inclusion so much there.	S1, 4 – no personal experience S2,3 – personal experience S1 – removed S2,4 – inclusion S3 – opinion, negative S2 – opinion, positive S1,3 – setting S4 – differentiation S3 – opinion, negative	S1 – children with SEN were removed from the classroom for specific needs S2,4 – differentiation needed but inclusion in the same lessons as others S3 – very different perspective presented to first question, very negative view of those in 'bottom sets' – does not appear to recognise possibility that these may include children with SEN eg. learning delay Dilemmas – does a negative personal experience prior to college impact on model of disability and SEN employed? Does ITE acknowledge impact of prior experiences and attitudes?

					Stage analysis
How do you feel about teaching children with SEN in mainstream? Confidence level out of 10	If I understand the children and **what their SEN is** then that would help me, I feel like **TAs** would really help with support but I don't have a great **knowledge**. We have had a few sessions which have really helped me and I understand a bit more. Also in school it had a signets room where the children would go and it was more like a **home environment** Confidence level **6**	I've only had one block placement so far, and because of that school I am a lot **more confident** now than if we'd had this interview this time last year. It wasn't severe but there was one aspect of it that really made me think I can do this. There was a group called signets which was in the 'nurture' room. The **SENCO** basically took me out of the class for an hour and she said you come in and you can just be a fly on the wall and just see how we go about this. That is the only way you are going to understand it really. She said I can reel off everything we do but the only way but **you need to see it in action**. After that I feel pretty alright. A lot of the issues there were behaviour so, coming out of	Absolutely fine. I think it is a good thing, **I don't think they should be separated**. I don't have much experience of it but I think at first you might be a bit not uncomfortable but unsure about maybe what someone might need, but I think once you've worked with them for a while you would know. It's the same with every child that once you know what they need, and what they do like and what they do well, it's the **same with every child**. I think it is a good thing. Confidence level **6**	I probably would feel quite confident as I am thinking about **specializing** if I get a chance to do to that. I had a bit of experience with a young boy who had autism. And that is really good, you feel like it is **rewarding** when you work with them in school. One of my best friends at home has a Down's Syndrome brother and I've been around him a lot. I've **looked after him** a lot. I just think it is nice that you feel that rewarded with what you are doing, and feel like you are making a difference. Confidence level **4**	S4 – models of disability and SEN – charity model S1,2,3 – ITE - knowledge, experience S1,2 – inclusion – separation S3 – inclusion - no separation S2 – specialist pedagogy – role of the SENCO S1,2,3,4 – ITE – confidence levels pre SBT	Teaching – S1,2,3 – know the child first then capable of meeting their needs Emerging concepts – there is something different about teaching children with SEN beyond their 'normal' teaching experience S4 – dilemma – wants to specialise but views it as looking after Stage analysis – ITE – S2 – observe an 'expert' do it first before doing it oneself
Themes					
Person of the teacher					
Specialist pedagogy					

What messages did they receive about SEN and inclusion from 1st year placement?	It was very much aware in my school I think, they did have the signet's room for the children. There were lots of **TAs** with **specialist needs** for different children. There was a little girl in a wheelchair who had a **specialist TA** the majority of the time. They did **take them out** for mini sessions to help support.	that I thought if I can do that, I can probably do anything. Confidence level **8.5** It really taught me a lot and the teaching by the classteacher was great... they were really challenging but if you **get to know them,** if you have that **relationship** with them; you know, some days they were tired, if they'd been to bed really late the night before they are going to be. You have to consider that, and if you have that relationship they are able to talk to you then you can take it as it comes. Each day was different. Thankfully I did have a discussion with the teacher and she was very, very experienced, and	There was one little boy they thought he had autism but they weren't sure, but he didn't talk and he had his own **TA** to work with him all the time, and he **wasn't planned for,** yet, all it was when I was involved, it was **separate and people came in.** He sat down and he did carpet time and listen to stories but he just did his own free play. I don't think he'd really been planned for he just did whatever. I tried to persuade him towards playing outside but I never did enough with him, I spent time but I never did an actual plan for him. So I don't know of any	Yes, there were. There was a young child with Autism and he had his own **special helper** with him, but I felt like the **classteacher didn't really work with him** at all and I thought why was she not working with him? *Interviewer: Did you think of any reasons for it? Did you work out a reason?* Well, probably because she had the **whole class to deal with** as well. There was quite a few in a low ability group as well as all the other children so she probably had to work	S1,3,4 – specialist pedagogy – TAs, specialists S2 – models of disability and SEN – social	Stage analysis – ITE – S2 – build relationship then possible to meet needs of all children Dilemmas - the students were not seeing what was expected from their college curriculum. If class teachers were not obviously taking responsibility for the planning for children with SEN, how were the students going to learn?
Themes **ITE** **Specialist pedagogy**					S1,3,4 – ITE – person of the teacher – not responsible for planning for SEN	S4 – 'deal with', 'too much responsibility' – is this language that the student has picked up from school? Does this

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			contribute to her view of the person of the teacher and specialist pedagogy?
	she did show me a lot of IEPs and things like that. Based on my last placement, getting to know the children, we did a lot of things that **didn't really interest them** and a lot of the **behavioural issues** were because of boredom and things like that. … I also found helpful, for me and the children, was not to put them in ability groups, but **to mix them up**. You know, two brains are better than one, they have talking partners with people they would never talk to on their own they wouldn't choose to go and talk to that person.		S2 and S3 – different views of ability grouping, even though working in EYFS
	plan like that but then I learned to do the **groupings according to ability** for some activities which took me a while to learn but, by the end of it, I knew exactly who to put with who by ability and who would work best together, even though I was just in **nursery.** I think it just once you get to **know the children** it comes a lot easier. In the beginning I didn't have a clue.	S2 – ITE – opinion, negative	Themes – ITE - S2 had best experience but was prepared to try things that were different to the teacher – are students given this opportunity?
	a lot with them and probably **too much responsibility to do** it I would have thought.	S2 – Inclusion – administration	
		S3 – specialist pedagogy - relationships	
Influence of college course so far	I don't think before I started my course I was really aware of it **as I should be**. It has helped me become more aware		S1 is aware of lack of knowledge prior to college, but ITE has focused on practicalities of teaching.

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Themes / ITE					Definition of inclusion from ITE
Themes ITE	and to notice it within the schools and how using the **planning** you have to **differentiate** for the other children to ensure **inclusion** is in place.				Dilemma – S2 – talked previously of the need to know the individual and build relationships, but when asked wants to know about 'conditions and disabilities' there is a dilemma between the confidence she felt when she started to organise the class according to what she knew about them and between needing to know about the labels Stage analysis – S3 – practicalities from college but lots of experience
What else do they feel they should learn? Themes ITE	Probably more **awareness** of the different needs that children have and experience definitely helps. **To talk to the teachers** that work with that signet room in school and ask her what needs the children have and how she works to help them.	I find this interesting, but I am also interested in the **facts and information** about the background of conditions and things that you do find in mainstream schools. You could ask me about, for example, Down Syndrome and I wouldn't know how to cater for that person whatsoever. I would find it helpful to be informed, maybe do a module or something like that about **conditions and disabilities**. I would find that really helpful and maybe even do a short **placement in a**	Mainly **experience**, a lot of experience. I suppose **work in college as well** but just a lot of experience in the classrooms with people working. I suppose you've got to know how to do it, to plan, so yes, learn in college how to differentiate and how to, but then, actually carry it out	S1,2 – ITE & SEN – knowledge and understanding S2,3 – ITE & SEN – experience S2 – Specialist pedagogy - experience	

		specialist school.		S2 – specialist pedagogy – is there something different about teaching in special provision? There is a fear shown of the unknown

2. After school-based placement and ILN module

Questions	Student 1 School A	Student 2 School A	Student 3 School B	Student 4 School B
How did the 2nd year placement compare to the 1st year?	To be honest, this year, very much so much different to last year, and I am glad in a way that I got a completely different experience as last year, thankfully, I got a very supportive classteacher and SBT2 was amazing, and I am glad as a first year student it was that way, rather than this year was very much the classteacher's just let me get on with it, and that built my confidence up, but if it was the other way round I'd have just been like, Oh, no! and probably terrified, after how I was when I was in the foundation stage. I felt like I was kind of left to do it and sort myself out and figure things out whereas this year I got a lot more like constructive criticism like how to handle the behaviours in particular because I struggled. The teacher, she gave so much guidance, didn't she? She sat you down and in Primary you shouldn't be doing this and gave me things to do over the		I was more confident but I think it was to do with the year group, mainly, from what my expectations were. I thought it was going to be really hard and couldn't imagine standing up in front of all the class but actually it was a lot easier than I thought. I expected it to be like that but actually it was a lot harder. Currently we write our lessons and we do learn some parts of what they are doing in class, but things you forget. Teaching it was a lot harder and of course the differentiation that we were new to but yes, it was what I expected. My confidence was alright. It was getting my head around so much more to do than in Nursery, but it was a lot harder.	

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	weekend and whatnot and I found that she sat you down a week in advance to go through your planning and practice it, and really, you know, refine it, anything that needed changing she'd e-mail it to you and she'd check it and things .	It does prepare you for a lot. You go in having an idea of what they are doing and it all comes back to you kind of thing. Yeah you follow a lot of what was taught I suppose. But when you talk about it in college it doesn't seem real. It does prepare you for it because you go in and it all comes back to you.
How far did it match what they had learned in college?	To be honest, not at all because the school wasn't the ideal, It wasn't the template that I think the University (present) which was good, because I think next year it will probably match a lot better with school which wasn't inner city but it was pretty much and the area was quite deprived and what have you so I think to match it all up we couldn't quite.

With planning and stuff in Uni, I got in with my teacher and it was just like this planning and stuff was complicated. You understand why you do it because it gets you into looking at everything you need to do to be able to teach the children, differentiation and all that, and it really helps . It was just the behaviour because last year behaviour was a big issue for me because the children were so hyper and as a teacher you've got to feed that and try and manage the behaviour whereas at University I didn't get any tips about that and from a first year, but this year, behaviour was a lot better. But I think it was because it was more Foundation stage and more free as well so it wasn't as much of an issue as it was last. | |
| Was there anything they should have learned that they hadn't? | Maybe a bit last year but not so much this year because I was very much on my own. | Yes, with the differentiation. Especially with so many gifted and talented and there's only one little boy who, wasn't really Special Needs, he had his IEP but he was alright inside, he was just working at a lower level but differentiation for the higher ability I'd not come across it before because and then sort of like expanding on things and there would be times when she'd have to say, you have to do more on that. |
| Have their perceptions of SEN changed as a result | My confidence has increased dramatically and I think it is an area of interest now rather than we just go along with it. Yes. It has actually become an interest for me. | Yes, I thought teachers would be more involved with them. Like, from being at school I didn't feel that they were really, not in my class because I didn't have any, no disabilities really, but in the |

of the placement?	Because I was in Nursery I think it very hard to determine SEN. With a child with an IEP obviously I didn't say this but personally I don't think you should have, I didn't understand the reasons because he was a three year old, he's hyper active, he doesn't need an IEP he just needs you know.	other classes I thought they were quite isolated actually. I thought the teacher would have more of an input into their learning. Like in Nursery last year, she didn't do anything with him, it never felt like she were asking how he's doing or anything, it was really strange. I thought we'd have more of an input to teaching. I think how the higher ability can be classed as well as gifted and talented. It wasn't until I saw some of the children in my class and realized how much it helped. Sometimes you had to differentiate the same amount for the lower ability and the higher ability which I didn't realise so much. You didn't think so much about them because you didn't expect it. You never really think of them as a problem until you have these children in your class. You were thinking more of the lower ability really and what you are going to do with them, but you don't think there are children who finish the work in 2 seconds and you don't know what to do with them.
What was the most important thing they learned from the ILN module?	Before I was scared. How do I approach it, what do I do with the child, but because of the ILN Module it has now become an interest. It is now pretty much just becoming second nature, and I was thinking the other night when I was reading back on my findings that SEN is not just a label, every child needs their individual interests addressed and what have you, so why is a particular child labelled with SEN because everybody's special. Everybody needs, I just hate the label. I don't know if I am more confident to teach, depends on, I think, on what you get. I don't know. I read up all about it and I've done it in my assignment but in practice it was different. For me personally, it was just the labelling. I'm guessing everybody in the class took a different thing from it but me, I hate labels so it was that, and it just completely changed the way I think about things, my planning, my attitude towards it as a teacher, whether the child has SEN or not, you know, I just think you take it as individuals not a whole group, or little groups so I	Just knowing what the disabilities are and getting to know them and when the educational psychologist came in. And the lady about autism, that was really good. I think it was just the fact that she actually worked with these children and she actually had first hand experiences and she's talking about it . And with the psychologist just getting to know this role because obviously they come to school and observe and everything so just knowing what they do, what their job is and getting to know like what the disabilities are 'cause we don't really know. Things like surprise me and it's good to know that because these are things you're going to come across in school so it's good to find out information about them really.

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	think that. Mine was I took an interest in the group, and just an individual child and finding out about them and what strategies they like because you can just say oh, this child has Autism, and they need this, this and this, but you actually know the child, so you can figure it out really. I think it is really hard going into a class in September, I think that is probably the hardest point for a new teacher EVER, because it is alright them saying oh yes, this child's got this, this and this but as you say, it is getting to know the child, it's their personality. You might have three different children with Autism, but they can all be completely different as children without Autism can be completely different.	Probably more information on the subject areas, there are like bits in maths that we have to teach and we've never done before. But in English we spent months and months just on guided reading I think it was, we didn't get anything else. I think just more general knowledge of what was being taught really. You know the comments that you write at the end of the module I'm always saying like we need more information on differentiation. This was an idea. I think you need assessing when there's times when there's times to include differentiation. We get an example on our worksheet and that's it. Certainly more on how to differentiate. Just the subject knowledge and how to differentiate really.
Do they have any comments about ITE as a result of the placement?	I think as a teacher anyway, you've just got to take what you've had, you know the input that you've had in your lectures, and I know it might sound sad to some people but build upon it in your own time and in practice as well, when you are in school. I think there is still a lot to be learned since it is such a wide field, from personality to specific disorders, various conditions whether it is physical or you know, it is such a wide field and even, I bet, even teachers that have been teaching for years and years and years, still think right, I've got to do some research about the underlying issues. They're still learning in progress.	

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Appendix C
Free Association Exercise

In the boxes below write **3-5 words** that **immediately** occur to you when you read the box titles. You must respond honestly and individually. The point of this exercise is for you to recognise your understanding and attitude towards the phrases. We will explore these ideas throughout the module and reflect back on any changes you would make at the end.

I am looking for an immediate response – you will be given just 2 minutes to complete the task so that you are really presenting your first thoughts.

INCLUSION

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING NEEDS

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

DISABILITY

Student responses are in the tables below: (#) indicates a multiple response

Inclusion: Student Responses

	Functional Model			Transactional Model			Unclassified
Medical/ Deficit Submodel	**Tragedy/ Charity Submodel**	**Support/ Services Submodel**	**Social Submodel**	**Capability Submodel**	**Socio political/ Bio-psycho-social Submodel**		
SEN (3)		TA	Working together (2)	Unique child (4)	Everyone involved (12)	All religions should be celebrated
Gifted and Talented		All children should be given the same amount of support	Differentiation (2)	Involvement in an activity	Everyone (7)	Ethnicity groups
EAL (2)		Meet needs	Relationships	Allowing all to achieve	Equality (6)	Behaviour
			Varied curriculum	All abilities	ECM (6)	Learning
			No barriers		opportunities(3)	Fun experience
			Ensuring everyone was involved		No matter what race, sex, ethnic background all individuals should be able to participate in all situations (2)	Parents and children
					Involved (2)	
					Fair	
					Involve minority groups	
					Schooling for all children To fit in	

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Individual Learning Needs: Student Responses

	Functional Model			Transactional Model			Unclassified
Medical/ Deficit Submodel	**Tragedy/ Charity Submodel**	**Support/ Services Submodel**	**Social Submodel**	**Capability Submodel**	**Socio political/ Bio-psycho-social Submodel**		**Unclassified**
Need more help with an area of learning	Caring	TAs **(5)** Support **(2)** Extra support should be given for children that need added help 121 support Taking groups out of class Extra help Specialist help	Differentiate **(4)** Lesson plans **(3)** Tailored **(3)** IEPs **(3)** Every child has ILN and styles which need to be catered for Teachers should provide activities Varied resources The best way to teach someone Catering for each individual child Everyone was different Children are all at different stages Meeting everyone's learning needs Type of learning	Learning in different ways **(7)** Unique **(6)** VAK **(4)** Targets and goals **(2)** Success criteria Recognising preferred learning styles Supporting personal development How an individual learns Achievable	The personalised physical, intellectual, emotional and social needs ECM Inclusion	Plan, do, review

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Special Educational Needs: Student Responses

Functional Model		Transactional Model			Unclassified
Medical/ Deficit Submodel	**Tragedy/ Charity Submodel**	**Support/ Services Submodel**	**Social Submodel**	**Capability Submodel**	**Socio political/ Bio-psycho-social Submodel**	
Mental (2)	Different needs due to disability	Extra support (25) Support staff (9)	IEPs (5) Planning (4)	Individual abilities	Inclusion (4) SEAL Equality	Behaviour (4) Braille Collaboration
Dyslexia (2)	Assistance	SENCo (2)	Individual learning (3)			
Children who are not able to do what others can		121 support (2) Some children may need extra support	Differentiate (2)			
Physical/ mental Disabilities		Extra resources that may be needed				
Physical impairment		Statement				
		Children who need more help than others				
		Attention				
		Specialist help				

Disability: Student Responses

Functional Model			Transactional Model			Unclassified
Medical/Deficit Submodel	**Tragedy/Charity Submodel**	**Support/Services Submodel**	**Social Submodel**	**Capability Submodel**	**Socio political/Bio-psycho-social Submodel**	
Physical or mental impairment (7) Impairment (5)	If children find it harder to do something they may have a disability	Extra support (7)	Planning (3)	Potential	Inclusive (6)	Safety
Unable to do something Not able to do something		Needs assistance (3)	Differentiate (2)	Self-awareness	Access (3)	Behaviour
Physical or mental problem Physical or academic	Support should be given to children who have disabilities	Extra provision (2)	Something which can prevent/affect a child's learning (2)		Equal	Learning about it
Inability to think/communicate in the normal way	Something that should be noticed and supported	121 support (2)	Inclusive		ECM	
Physical and mental disability		TA/SA (2)	resources			
Physical differences	May need carer	Specialist provision	Inclusion in sport			
Problem	Disadvantage	Special requirements	Empathise			
Physical e.g. wheelchair Visual impairment Mental, Medical		Wheelchair				

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Responses to the Free Association Exercise presented as %

	Functional Model		Transactional Model			Unclassified
	Medical/ deficit	Tragedy/ Charity	Support/ services	Social	Capability	Socio-political	
Inclusion n=72	7%	0%	4%	11%	10%	60%	8%
ILN n= 66	1%	1%	13%	23%	24%	3%	1%
SEN n= 83	10%	2%	55%	17%	1%	7%	7%
Disability n= 73	31%	7%	26%	14%	3%	15%	4%

Appendix D
End of L1b SBT and ILN Questionnaire

1. Group (please circle)   A   B

2. Age (please circle)   Under 20   21-25   26-30   31+

3. Qualifications prior to HE (please circle):

A level   BTEC   ACCESS

Other: please state

4a) Would you describe the school in which you have just completed your Y2 SBT as **inclusive**: (please circle)

Yes   41   No   1   To some extent   19

4b) Using up to 3 sentences, explain the reasons for your answer to 4a):

5. Rate the following statements as they relate to what you have learned through the Individual Learning Needs Module and Y2 school-based training:
(tick the boxes for ILN and Y2 SBT for each statement)

I have gained a better understanding of:	Individual Learning Needs Module			Y2 school-based training		
	Agree	Disagree	No change	Agree	Disagree	No change
Planning for individual learning needs	60	0	1	51	3	5
Differentiation in my teaching	57	1	3	56	1	2
Assessing individual needs	49	1	11	45	2	13
Teaching children with autism	54	1	5	24	12	21
Teaching children with emotional and behavioural difficulties	52	0	9	48	2	9

Teaching children with physical disabilities	43	2	16	26	9	23
Teaching gifted children	46	0	15	33	6	19
My role as a classteacher in an inclusive mainstream setting	57	0	3	54	1	5
The issues surrounding SEN and inclusion	60	0	1	45	2	12
My own values in relation to SEN and inclusion	58	0	2	49	1	8

6. How would you rate your current confidence level in teaching children with special educational needs in a mainstream class/ setting?
(Rate your confidence on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being no confidence and 10 being highly confident)

6.95

7a. Have your perceptions of teaching children with SEN in an inclusive mainstream setting changed since the beginning of this module? (please circle)

Yes (answer Q7b)   48   No (move on to Q8)   11

7b. How have they changed and what do you believe caused them to change?

'

7. Rate the following according to the level of influence they have had on your **development as a teacher** this academic year: (0=no influence; 5=extremely influential)

	ILN module	Progress Tutor	Link Tutor	School-based Tutor	Classteacher	Peers	Other (please state)
Level of Influence	3.7	1.9	1.8	4.1	2.8	3.4	

8. Rate the following according to the level of influence they have had on your confidence in **SEN and inclusion** this academic year:
(0=no influence; 5=extremely influential)

	ILN module	Progress Tutor	Link Tutor	School-based Tutor	Classteacher	Peers	Other (please state) TAs
Level of Influence	4.3	1	1.1	2.1	4	2.6	4

9. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Mainstream schools should include children with ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Physical disabilities	37	19	2		
Sensory disabilities	32	28	0		
ADD/ADHD	32	28	1		
Autism	33	26	1		
Asperger syndrome	32	27	1		
Down's syndrome	27	31	1		
Emotional /Behavioural disorders	34	25	1		

10. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the teaching of children with SEN:

Children with special educational needs ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
learn better when withdrawn from the class	0	5	10	42	3
require teaching by specialists	5	34	7	13	1
learn best in mixed ability groups	3	37	16	4	0
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	19	33	3	4	0
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	6	28	14	12	0

12. Please rate your confidence with the following aspects of teaching as they relate to teaching children with SEN in mainstream classes/settings.
(0 = no confidence, 10= highly confident):

	Confidence Rating
Planning for the whole class including the children with SEN	7.18
Behaviour management in a class/setting with children with SEN	6.9
Meeting the targets of a child with an individual education plan (IEP)	6.6
Working with assistants in meeting the needs of children with SEN	7.5
Assessing the needs of children with SEN	6
Assessing the level of attainment reached by a child with SEN	5.9
Subject knowledge related to an understanding of common special educational needs and disabilities	6.5

13 Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Enabling children with the following special needs to access the full and broad curriculum was..	Less Difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	No different than for children not identified as having SEN	More difficult than for children not identified as having SEN	Too difficult for mainstream schools
Physical impairments	7	23	29	0
Sensory impairments	5	16	38	0
ADD/ADHD	4	16	39	0
Autism	3	9	46	0
Asperger syndrome	3	10	44	0
Down's syndrome	3	7	48	1
Emotional/ Behavioural disorders	3	18	37	1

14. Including children with SEN in a mainstream class was detrimental to the opportunity for other children to reach their potential (please circle):

Yes   19   No   37

15. Finish the statement:

For me to effectively teach children with special educational needs in a

mainstream class I need …

Student Perceptions Survey

1. Please rank the following items with 5 being extremely influential to
    1 being of no influence

    How influential were the following in forming your opinions about
    children with special educational needs

Parents	2.52
Siblings	1.48
Teachers	4.3
Peers at school	2.72
Having special educational needs yourself	1.76
Media	2.43
Reading about SEN	3.86
Peers at university	3.54
Tutors at university	4.77
Children you have taught in school	4.22

2. Prior to starting this module and SBT 2 how would you describe your
    perception of teaching children with SEN in a mainstream class:

    Teaching children with SEN in a mainstream class ...

3. Since starting to study this module have your perceptions changed? If
    so how:

4. Since starting this SBT do you feel more or less confident about
    teaching children with SEN in your SBT class: (please circle)

    More   18   About the same   4   Less   0

5. How would you rate your confidence now, with 10 being extremely
    confident and 0 having no confidence?

    6.7

1.   Group (please circle)   A   B

2.   Age (please circle)

Under 20   35   21-25 13   26-30   1   31+   4

3.   Qualifications prior to HE (please circle):

A level   37   BTEC   6   ACCESS   5   Other   5

4.   Other than at LT have you had any experience of working with children with the following conditions (please tick):

	Extensive	Some	None	If you have answered extensive or some, please state in which circumstances
Dyslexia	3	14	36	
ADHD	2	23	28	
Dysphasia	0	8	45	
Social, emotional and behavioural difficulties	5	25	23	
Physical disabilities	4	20	29	
Sensory disabilities	3	7	43	
Asperger Syndrome	1	4	48	
Down's Syndrome	3	14	36	
Autism	4	19	30	
Learning delay	4	14	35	

5. How would you rate your current confidence level in teaching children with special educational needs in a mainstream class/ setting
Rate your confidence on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being no confidence and 10 being highly confident

4.9

6. Please rate your agreement with the following statement: (tick the box)

Mainstream schools should include children with ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Physical disabilities	44	14	1		
Sensory disabilities	31	24	1	1	
ADD/ADHD	25	31	2		
Autism	29	28	1	1	
Asperger's syndrome	24	28	5	1	
Down syndrome	24	27	3	5	
Emotional /Behavioural disorders	30	28	1	1	

7. Please rate the following statements as they relate to the teaching of children with special educational needs: (tick the box):

Children with special educational needs ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
learn better when withdrawn from the class	1	14	10	33	1
require teaching by specialists	9	26	13	10	
learn best in mixed ability groups	1	36	15	7	
need the help of support staff to reach their potential	25	30	3	1	
may do better when in a class that matches their level of attainment rather than their chronological age	10	33	9	7	

8. Please rate the following statements as they relate to training teachers to teach children with SEN in mainstream classes/settings: (tick the box)

Trainee teachers ...	Agree Strongly	Agree	No opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
Should not teach children with SEN until after they have qualified	1	1	4	34	17
Need experience in special schools before qualifying	6	19	10	19	2
Need to learn different teaching strategies related to children with SEN	39	18	0	0	0
Are given enough advice in school on how to teach children with SEN	11	11	13	22	0
Are given enough advice in college on how to teach children with SEN	9	17	15	14	1

9. Please rate your confidence with the following aspects of teaching as they relate to teaching children with SEN in mainstream classes/settings on the 0-10 scale used in question 5 with 0 = no confidence at all, 10= highly confident:

	Score
Planning for the whole class including the children with SEN	4.6
Behaviour management in a class/setting with children with SEN	5.8
Meeting the targets of a child with an individual education plan (IEP)	4.5
Working with assistants in meeting the needs of children with SEN	6.1
Assessing the needs of children with SEN	4.3
Assessing the level of attainment reached by a child with SEN	4.7
Subject knowledge related to an understanding of common conditions and disabilities	4.3

10.

Please comment on what you think should be included in the 4 year programme in college and school related to the teaching of children with SEN in mainstream classes/settings.

Appendix G
Mid Module Review

As this is a new module we would like you to complete a slightly more detailed mid module review than was usual:

Number	On successful completion of the module, students will be able to:	K/A/R/T*
1	Examine issues of SEN, gifted and talented pupils and pupils with EAL related to theory and practice (K5)	K
2	Evaluate IEPs in the context of the Code of Practice or relevant legislation and the roles of classteacher and SEN coordinator in providing for individuals (Q20)	K/A
3	Demonstrate an understanding of how key conditions may manifest themselves and how to respond appropriately in the learning environment (Q19)	A
4	Reflect on own experiences related to planning, teaching and assessing the diverse range of pupils (R4)	R

These are the objectives for the module. Bearing in mind that we are half way through the module please comment on the following issues:

	Agree Strongly	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Disagree Strongly
I am satisfied that the module so far has addressed the objectives	16	6			
My understanding of individual learning needs has increased	19	3			
I am more confident about planning teaching to address individual learning needs	11	11			
I am more confident that I will be able to teach children with individual learning needs	10	12			
I like the way the module has been delivered	14	8			

1. The module has been designed to 'wrap around' SBT so that you can explore issues directly related to your teaching as well as general topics related to inclusion. Do you feel that this is a positive aspect of the course? If so why, if not why not?

2. If we were to improve the module what could we do better?:

3. Are there any aspects of SEN, inclusion, individual needs that you particularly want to study?

Questions Identifying Themes	Classteacher 1	Classteacher 2	School-Based Tutor	Categorical Analysis	Stage Structure Analysis Emerging Concepts/ Dilemmas
Are you surprised at staff responses being different on the questionnaire? Closed question with encouragement to follow up with why Themes: Consensus Perceptions	**Not** at all because I think it was such a subjective issue and depending on the type of special needs that it was, sometimes it was great to have special needs children in your class, and some people might feel strongly that was great because it was the type of special needs of experience, whereas other people might be thinking with more **extreme cases** where you can have your whole year's worth of teaching disrupted because of special needs and things, so it doesn't surprise me at all.	I think **depending** on what experience the special need children you've had in the classroom or whether it was teaching staff, or support staff the questionnaire's come from will depend on the answer that you got. I know I've had special educational needs in classrooms that I've thought they **shouldn't be here** because I can't give them what they need. **They need something extra, different,** that we cannot give in school and I know of two children who have been through my classes that are now at special educational	**No,** no it doesn't, because I think we are quite lucky here that we have a very broad range of staff and we have two teachers who are currently NQTs. And then we have some members of staff who are coming to the end of their career and I think **at different stages in your career you have different opinions** and you can see things differently.	CT1 and SBT – consensus, clear no CT2 – consensus, qualified response SBT – historical perspectives CT1 and CT2 - inclusion (may not work) CT2 – specialist pedagogy	Schools acknowledge that teachers will have different views on inclusion – what impact will this have on students? When teachers trained may influence their views eg. 1970s pre-inclusion Reinforces idea that students may perceive the teaching of children with special educational needs as specialist

Should there be consensus? Closed question with the opportunity to develop. Question asked slightly differently in each case as it acted as a supplementary. Themes: Consensus Ethos	I think in schools there **was a consensus** because when you join a school that was part of your decision of whether to join that school or not because you read about the policies and things before you apply so you can get a feel for the school and think, I don't think I can work within that environment, so I think within schools there was always a consensus.	school. Then there was the other end of the spectrum where they have a special educational need that can be dealt with by slightly altering the work so, no, it doesn't surprise me.	**Yes, yes, I think so. I** think it depends how people interpret the questions as well as to what Inclusion would be, and I think more experienced members of **staff would recognize** that that would be all children regardless of ability whereas perhaps **less experienced members** of staff might be thinking of SEN children who perhaps they think should be in special schools eg: severe medical problems, and they don't see it as being everybody. I think it **was perhaps how they've interpreted Inclusion.**	CT1 and SBT yes CT2 no obvious comment SBT – inclusion definition SBT – historical perspectives, specialist pedagogy SBT – inclusion definition	Contradiction between yes there would be consensus and previous question re. shared beliefs – ethos and practice theme emerging Stage analysis – beliefs to practice, develop through ITE to CPD Experienced and less experienced teachers may have different opinions on specialist pedagogy – relates to point above about when teachers have trained and their views on inclusion

					Opinion that there may be different definitions of inclusion employed – dilemma: do schools define themselves as inclusive in different ways? How does this relate to student experience?
What characterises an effective teacher for SEN?			I think an effective teacher for SEN was an **effective teacher**. I think it was about good practice in terms of all areas really. Planning, so you are very clear on what you want the children to learn so what things do you need all of the children to learn, how are you going to stretch and push on your gifted and talented who still have special educational needs if they are way above, how are you going to differentiate down. Your classroom management and organization has to be able to be flexible enough to **allow for all children**, but also it	CT1 – SEN separate CT2 – paperwork SBT – good teaching	Class teachers both viewed children with SEN as a separate skill set to general good teaching.
Question as asked to each interviewee		One who considers all their needs. Remembers **the IEPs**, bits you have to fill in, which then helps when you have to do the next one because I know the IEP was another thing to do. To remember to put **paperwork** around it which aids the next step and effective planning, being able to incorporate the needs of that child into your daily planning.		All – ITE and the person of the teacher	CT1 more positive than CT2 but neither talking about impossibilities
Themes: **The person of the teacher** **Specialist pedagogy**	I think they have got to be **open to new ideas** and to new ways of thinking. They have got to **be responsive**. I think they've got to be a bit **perceptive** as well. They've got to be able to think out of their own head and put their mind in somebody's mind…… How are **they going to feel when** they walk in this room and see that? How are they going to feel when they are sat in this certain group or how are they going to feel when they are working with this group of children? So I think they are going to have to be able to think from **someone else's point**			CT1 – SEN separate	SBT referring to teaching children with SEN as just good teaching and it's a developmental process. CT1 also talked about the importance of being prepared to keep learning. So not just an issue for ITE but ongoing CPD.

of view. I think, as well, they've got to be willing, if they haven't already got it, to find out more about children's special needs and how they can best meet those needs, so I think they've got to be someone who was always striving rather than someone who was complacent about things. So, someone who was going to be hard working and willing to reflect on things as well because sometimes you don't get stuff right and you know, that makes you feel, ok, let's try it from a different angle, let's find a different way of doing this, so I think they've got to **be good at reflecting and honest**, as well.	needs those routines and securities for children. How you use your support, so having that relationship with other adults in school. How you deal with pastoral issues with parents and with other agencies. I think, as well, a willingness to go and seek advice because I know as SENCo, and Inclusion Leaders S and I go outside and say I don't know what to do. We've had two multi disciplinary meetings this afternoon where we've called other agencies in because we said, we've tried this, we've tried this, and we've tried this, and **we don't know** what to do next. What could you suggest? And that's about good practice and good teaching across the board and just being aware of those SEN issues as part of that rather than as a bolt on	SBT – inclusion CT1 – SEN separate CT1 - ITE SBT – specialist? Good teaching	Dilemma: SBT talks about 'all children' the CTs talk about children with SEN as a separate group – what impact on ITE? A good range of skills, understanding and values outlines – relate this to ITE

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			I think.		
What knowledge, skills and attitudes do trainee teachers need to adopt? Question asked as a supplementary so took various forms Themes: The person of the teacher ITE	So I think they've got to be more **questioning**. I think as well they've got to be willing to have a go and **get things wrong**, be a bit more risk taking. **Sometimes you try and guide them.** Give them opportunities to make them think about working with children with special needs. Get them out of that comfort zone a bit because you are not always in it, even as teachers. So I think, risk taking, open mindedness, being reflective and being really keen as well. **Enthusiastic** because I think at any point in your teaching career if that goes, everyone's lost out; your school, your classes, yourself, so I think keeping alive.	Filling in an **IEP** in itself, was a skill. Just those kinds of things, the administrative side of it, if we have those skills which we can learn, and breaking down your target down into manageable steps, so you know the theory behind it all, for when you get in the classroom. If you have **the theory** so you know what you are doing when you are sat at that computer trying to write the IEP, then in the classroom it should be a little easier.	With regards to SEN in particular, I think it was trying to make trainee's aware of the **spectrum** and, at some point or another, in their school career, for whatever reason, I would expect that the majority of children would have special educational needs at some point, whether that was because of the **medical issue or a labelling issue** something that might be with them throughout their academic career or it could be something that has happened at home, perhaps a bereavement or difficult house move or breakup, there are still needs there for a short period of time and I think making them aware of the spectrum and **encompassing that within your teaching** of what was	CT1 – person of the teacher - range of skills CT2 – administration SBT – all children CT1 – CT role in ITE CT2 – theory to practice SBT – ethos to practice CT1 – the person of the teacher SBT – good	ITE stage analysis – theory to practice, teaching skills to application across all groups of children Person of the teacher dilemma – if teachers have different views about children with SEN, how are they going to work with students – CT1, SBT high expectations of skills and attitudes; CT2 administration CT1, SBT – details on ITE – relate to students' perceptions and school-based training

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How can schools and college work together? Similar phrasing for each respondent Themes: Partnership ITE		teaching	
	I think I learned more **on the job** than in College. Not that I think I put blame there, think being in it, and doing it, you just **absorb it** then, it just becomes part of daily life.	good teaching so when you are talking about planning, rather than having **SEN as a bolt on** it was part of the planning ie: how do we plan for. When you are looking as pastoral issues, it was **not a bolt on**, it was part of, and how you use your support.	SBT – not specialist teaching	SBT – SEN as a spectrum where all children have needs – related to their teaching skills
I think the structure of the school day and the college day makes it **tricky** because you are teaching and working with the students at the same time as us so when you want to come and chat with us it was really hard because it ekes into your lesson time when you want to be in the classroom or into your prep time like now, and your after school time and stuff, so I think there are **structural problems** and I don't know how they can be overcome.		You need to give, which I know you do, you need to give the **theory alongside the practice**. So again it was **integral** rather than perhaps a bolt on section and then bringing that into schools and perhaps **SBTs** need some **training** or advice on how to guide the trainees because I am sure in some schools SEN was a bolt on and so trainees might be getting the **message** from there that it was a bolt on rather than integral.	CT1 – ITE practicalities CT2 – Partnership – not prioritised SBT – Partnership SBT – Partnership – training SBT – ITE – SEN	Partnership stage analysis – should it be theory to practice or together or college theory, school practice no overlap? Different perspectives CT1, 2, SBT SBT – more training needed for schools on college curriculum SBT – SEN should not be separate issue in ITE but integral to teaching skills

	Interviewer: Do you find the students relate what they do in college to what they do in school? Interviewee: I think they see them as a bit **separate** actually from my experience because they have their proformas to fill in and we have to sort of like change the way we plan a bit to make it fit into that, so it **doesn't naturally fit**. Maybe that was something that could be a bit more relaxed from a college point of view and seeing if they can work more **within a school's way** of planning.		CT1 – ITE college to school – challenges CT1 – ITE partnership, school led	CT1 – students do not see college and school activity as overlapping. Link to 'situational learning'? Theme – crossing the bridge between college and school – SBT suggests schools need training on this?
Does teaching children with SEN require specialist skills or pedagogy?	I think the teachers who I've worked with who've had special needs children who have done what I would subjectively think	It was **good teaching**. I also think that sometimes it was just some teachers work better with high ability groups and some	I think it **certainly is** for some elements I think where there are very complex, perhaps medical needs or behavioural issues	CT1,2 – specialist pedagogy, no SBT – specialist pedagogy, to some extent	Specialist pedagogy stage analysis: teaching children with SEN is good teaching but needs experience Context stage analysis:

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Themes / Codes	Transcript				Codes	Analytical notes
Needed some additional explanation but similar for all Themes: Specialist pedagogy ITE	as being really good, they have had to make **the least changes to the way that they practice** because good practice that like reaches special needs children, a lot of that was already there was a good practitioner's just daily practice, you know, so I think that might depend on how far people are through their career, either **depth and breadth of experience.**	teachers work better with the lower ability groups so I think sometimes it was just **personal trait** that people bring to the job and other people have to learn it more.	perhaps; I think there is an element of **some specialism** and much as I agree with Inclusion in mainstream, I still think there is a place for some specialist schools for SEN and it is about working together I think.	I am sure there are other people who disagree, who say it is specialist. I think you are always working with or against people's **own experiences** aren't you? And, particularly as trainee teachers, and to some extent NQTs you are starting with their school experience and so if you go back 15/20 years to their school experience, it is very much specialist and I would expect that there are very, very few people in teacher training who have come from a special school background.	CT2 – specialist pedagogy, person of the teacher- personal trait CT1 – specialist pedagogy, experience SBT – specialist pedagogy, experience SBT – historical context	historical context of teachers' initial training links to abilities for inclusion Dilemma – CT2 suggests some teachers have personal trait to be able to teach children with SEN and others do not Dilemma – various views, including SBT negative about ITE tutors' ability to teach inclusion – what does this mean for ITE and partnership? Link between ITE and CPD – if SEN requires experience, then ITE just the beginning of the journey

| | | | Most of them have come from mainstream, therefore **they don't know anything about it and** anything you don't know about is very scary and it is very specialist, and you don't know about it and so I can see that. | ITE – specialism, negative | | |

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Journal Entry Example
Case Study Student School A: Towards the End of Placement

Class taught: Nursery

How are things going with your teaching?

There is a definite difference between morning children and afternoon children. The afternoon class is a lot more challenging in terms of behaviour management and lack of concentration. But overall, I think I have found a setting where I feel comfortable in.

How well do you feel your differentiation for individual needs is going?

The class teachers plan according to the children's writing ability. After being there for my 2 week preparation period, I asked her if it would be ok if in my planning, I could differentiate the children according to the level of support they needed. I did this because I found a lot of children who were classed as 'lower ability' were in fact extremely capable and it was other factors holding them back. These factors included their shy personalities or the loud personalities of other children, meaning quiet ones couldn't get a word in.

What feedback have you received from CT or SBT about how you are working with the children with SEN in your class?

Due to the children being so young, we only have a vibe of which children may be classed as SEN later in school. There are no physically withdrawn children in either nursery classes. However, my SBT positively commented on the way I'd grouped children in terms of level of support they needed. This way every child's needs are met.

What strategies are you using?

In terms of focused activities, I take into consideration which children I think would benefit from having the first turn and who may need a bit of modelling from other children and therefore would benefit from going last.
In both focused activities and whole class, I have introduced a puppet. All the children, even the shy ones or EAL have responded to Pepper really well.

Are these the same as the CT? why/ why not?

The class teachers don't use puppets, but I'm hoping now they've seen how effective they are, they may introduce one in to their sessions. My support groupings are different to the class teacher's. Both class teachers have admitted to me that they are quite behind on their assessment. As a result, the ability groupings may be out dated slightly. This worried me whilst I was

on placement, so I've taken it on myself to make sure profiles are up to date and assessments are done at every focused activity.

In tutorials after observations are you being given specific feedback about meeting individual learning needs? If so, what?

My SBT took interest in the way my assessment was done. However, nothing specific was said as she doesn't know the children as well as I do.

Have you been set any targets in this area? If so, what are they?

My target at the start of the block placement was to consider which children would benefit from going first and last due to their wide range of personalities. This target has been practiced, tuned and met during focused activities throughout the week.
However, in terms of ILN, no other targets were discussed or set.

How are you going to meet these targets?

N/A

Have you heard any comments about children with SEN across the school that have surprised you?

An announcement at staff briefing this morning surprised me when the SENCO spoke about having to re-refer children with speech difficulties because the speech therapy service the school used hasn't bothered to keep up their service. One child was referred to a speech therapist when she was in Nursery. She is now in Year 2 and the service hasn't yet acted upon it.

1. Responsibilities for SBT Manager and Link Tutors

I think the first and foremost responsibility has to be to ensure that the QTS standards are met, professional attributes and professional skills and those I've got particular responsibility for in relation to those modules. Secondly the other crucial thing would be to ensure that students receive their entitlement within the terms specified in the Partnership Agreement or else responded to in terms of what the students' responsibilities are on School-based Training.

2. Links between college-based and school-based learning

I think that students' capacity to be able to learn theory and then practice is a big focus and I don't think that there are enough steps put in place for students, in terms of the transition from their level 1 work into level 2 work of the programme, so I think that should be an area of focus. I think also there needs to be considerable work to ensure we've got the right balance from both semester 1 to semester 2 and I think there are lots of things that in actual fact will lead to a better student experience by just generally having more consistency. So, one of the crucial things I think are for example: the study skills guide needs to be updated and I think that it needs to have much better guidance and I think there needs to be greater consistency across the modules about the way in which feedback is given, particularly at degree level. I think we should even look at the degree criteria as well, as how we communicate that to students but I also still feel that on a four year undergraduate programme there needs to be something, other than the fact that they have 32 weeks of school-based training, that actually really draws them to doing that length of study and I actually think that from a strategic point of view that it was important that we do have M level credits I think it needs to be reviewed but I still think that we should have that. I also think that we need to be looking at all the strategic development such as how could the QTS standards be assessing different kinds of placements not just standard school, you know what are their SEN provision, what about actually looking at transition more and assess elements of transition so I think there are lots of things there that could be taken forward but really need to be planned.

3. Improving the ITE programme

I think that the model that we've got, in terms of the strands, is still very strong. I still really believe as a principle of the way in which the programme was put together that that principle still stands and was relevant. I just feel as if, perhaps on a four year programme, that there could actually be more emphasis again, you know later on, in preparing them to enter the workplace. I feel they are possibly slightly disadvantaged in relation to that on the early year's programme, not necessarily on the juniors programme. I think I'd also like to feel that, in terms of academic achievement, that you know we should really be getting more firsts and I somehow wonder how that could be achieved more.

4. How to improve college and school partnership in learning

I think that where students are able to draw on their school-based experience that's fine, but then we have to remember that they will have a very varied and quite different experiences so what it might be is that on those modules you've actually to think about the role of guest speakers, visiting lecturers, whatever we want to call them, so rather than it being a case of perhaps a module tutor making a decision yes, I'd like this guest speaker to come it, well actually, are they the right modules to have guest speakers come in on because we've got a limited budget for that, so we don't get any additional funding for it, so would it be better to be more strategic in terms of where we have that, so that we are exemplifying really effective practice, even if their school related experience hasn't been the same.

5. SEN provision

You have to really point it out to them because it is still too easy for students just to see modules in isolation rather than actually see the link between them, so I think that the more staff are involved the more they understand how these things thread and dovetail together and where the progression is. It is going to lead to better outcomes for students. I think that is a really important thing to have communication that goes to students, about the fact that we do have this stranded model and this is what you have done previously, and this is what you are going on to do, and ultimately this is where you're aiming for in terms of your knowledge and understanding. I have mentioned previously about the fact that I think having some placements within SEN provision because there are most definitely some students on our programme who actually do not want to teach in mainstream. They want to teach within special provision and therefore I think we need to incorporate that in the programme. Equally, I think that the school contexts are so varied now in terms of the kind of children that they will be teaching that it may actually be necessary for us to do a very specific SEN module that perhaps is not just in the second year of the programme but actually comes later. I think that would probably complement the research module that we've done on the programme.

Focus	Student 1	Student 2
Structure	5 minutes: SBT prompting to find out about student perspective on lesson 12 minutes: 2 way conversation about lesson including particular incidents 3 minutes: general conversation about placement and target setting	Same as Student 1 with additional time at the end of the tutorial for a particular question
Student perspective	Intro: able to reflect on previous targets and how they had been met. Identified strengths and weaknesses of the session. Good self evaluation Main conversation: Raised concern about subject knowledge. Why did she choose mixed abilities: 'I find you leave the low abilities and they are not on task at times, whereas if you mix them with the higher abilities it prompts their learning as well and they find things out together. R. in particular really, I don't know what he would have been like in a lower ability group, but he found the magnet sticks with someone else and the little bowl and he was going around, really 'cooking with it'' Target setting: shared target setting	Intro: 'I got out of it what I wanted', 'I like the relationship I have with the children. Good level of self analysis Main conversation: 'I think because they are so young and with their concentration level as well, when you do an activity they may just be tired or having a bit of an off day and because this is the first time I've worked in Nursery as well I thought I would start with level of support given'. Noticed a child with EAL and low attendance who she would have automatically put her in low ability, but in fact when working with her she's noticed she isn't low ability just has some communication challenges. Target setting: talking about grouping and how to take learning forward
SBT perspective	Intro: First question 'How do you feel it went?' Prompted responses from student not giving her own perspective Main conversation: In response to student's question on subject knowledge gave a possible scenario for a challenging concept. Feedback on strengths Target setting: summarised 'next steps in children's learning'	Intro: similar questioning, but picked up on specific vocabulary such as high level, medium level and low level, when student was talking about level of support given to individuals rather than ability Target setting: used same question – how are you going to take learning forward. Demonstrated specific pages of EYFS student could use to help planning.

Appendix L
Focus Group: The Initial Teacher Education Experience

1. Experiences of lectures

There were few teachers I enjoyed. In some other lectures I found them really patronizing. Yes, I do as well. Some people talk, not talk exactly, they don't mean to talk to us like that but it was just how it comes across, yes, just patronizing. Sometimes I feel like we are actually the children and they are still a teacher and I know that's really bad but it's how we feel. We are all the same. We do it. I know I talk to my Mum like she's a kid and you know full well it's wrong. It's good to feel like you are the child because then you know how they feel and you know how your teaching was going to affect them, so it was good in that way, it was just you feel really self conscious and really patronized at times.

2. The balance between studying for a degree and ITE

I feel like I'm at college, the thing that happens when we are in school is we do all the work to get us planning, but then we never, I never get to follow it through? I've never assessed a child to look at their progress, to look at look at what they already are so I sort of just go in, do my bit and leave, which was still like being in college when I used to go and do placement, be there, and then just disappear which made no difference to the class. Yes, right. That's how I feel. But I still do my resources

But you feel you are not doing it right. Like in the lecture and everything, you get really excited for placement but there are so many things that you want to do, and so many things that you want to take in, and loads of topics and stuff, and, when you get there, the topics have already been started and you have to do this, and you have to do that, and you just like get sucked into the class, and then like, it's gone, before you know it.

3. The connection between college-based and school-based learning

A lot of the fact that when you are together when you are in school because things are, like I know we don't do assessment till next year but when we are in there my SBT was all about right, you assess this child, this was what your learning intention was for the group you've done, so what are you going to do now, and I am like I don't know!! I haven't got a clue. This year we did a lot of reading assessments and stuff and assessments on reception, and how they were and what Stepping Stones were about and then nothing ever came of it. The SBT hadn't checked if you'd done them.

It was like, have you done that, have you done that, fill something in, but they never read it, and you felt like it was pointless me doing that as it's not come to anything like, nothing I've noticed about the child has been picked up on.

I think when you are Uni like everything seems like it is so easy to do. You get into a school and it is a different environment and you have to go along with what everyone else does, and you don't really have the time to

like step back, and see what you are actually doing. That's what worries me. I know we have got another two years, but it is the thought of putting a child at a level, and to say why they are there and then move them on. That is the only thing that scares me. I love teaching and can do planning from what I have been taught here but that's my concern.

4. The difference between schools

They've got all of this of their own to do and then they've got you, it's like a burden sometimes, and you need support. I was really lucky because I had two classteachers, one worked in the morning and one worked in the afternoon so when I had my PPA, one would come in early for me, and one would stay later, and stay for the staff meeting, so she'd stay with me, but if you didn't do that. She was doing all the profiles and things, and she was sticking pictures in there and I was like, right, but because I then had my SBT meeting, she'd then just carry on and I wouldn't understand what she'd done with it and what relevance it had. It all depends on what teacher you get, and how willing they are to make your experience nice. My first year was horrible and I didn't get on with my classteacher at all and she was my SBT as well and it just didn't work. But then my second year was really, really good and it helps if everyone wants you to do well. If someone is not bothered you are not going to do well and you are not going to learn anything. It was also how we are as well. If we go in and can't be bothered, don't show any interest or enthusiasm or this and that they think then why should we bother. I don't think that's necessarily the same. I went to the same school twice. My first year was awful and the teacher didn't want me in the class, she didn't want me there. Everything I did and started teaching, if it wasn't quite, because it was my first year, you are not going to be perfect, and if like I didn't pick up on the same sort of thing she'd just stop the whole class, tell me to go and sit down, and she'd finish my lesson. I didn't actually do a full lesson, on my own, and then when I was doing my SBT my teacher told me I was doing something wrong, so I changed it, and then my SBT told me off because I'd done it wrong and I thought I was right to start with and the teacher told me I was doing it wrong. But then the teacher left it for the SBT to tell me that I'd done it wrong when really the teacher should have owned up and said when I actually told her to do it that way, but she didn't. Yes, that happened to me a lot as well. They told me to do something, then the tutor came in and said why have you done this, and why is that not there, and then my classteacher and my SBT would be there and I would be stuck in the middle of it when I thought, you told me to do it and I am getting told off by you and no one would own up to anything

Last year I was in my class with my SBT and she was fine, but because my SBT was Key Stage 1 and has never worked in a Foundation setting, she has no idea about the assessment they did in there, so when she was asking me to do things for my file I am going to my classteacher and saying I need to do this, because we don't do this, we do this, and when I show her what they did she'd say that wasn't what we need. Yes, and I think as well with Uni, I did a guided reading session and I did it the way my teacher did hers because you know you have to get used to it, but then when the SBT came in she had other ways to do it and she showed me other ways to do it.

When you are there you are gutted. When it happens you are absolutely devastated. You think, Oh my God I've done it wrong, but now, you sort of think well, alright.   We don't do it the same way as we were taught. You find when you get a bad experience from school, at first I didn't want to go back to my school at all, because I had a really bad experience my first year, but my second year I absolutely loved it. I'm glad I had that bad year in my first year, even though it was horrible, having it in the first year, like now, I know what not to be.

5. The Individual Learning Needs Module

This module for me has been just fine as it was and I am quite glad it started before I went into school-based training because as went into school-based training we could pick up on things. But I think a lot of seeing it, was being in the classroom with the child. You can give them a label but it still doesn't mean they are the same every time. You could write this child has Autism, this is what they should be like not every child is going to tick every one of those boxes they are going to have additional things. Before we went on that first two week induction and we had that assignment like to pick a certain child and look at it, maybe you are much more aware of looking at each child, and getting to know them more, so that was really good, because if you just went in, and you didn't have an assignment to do, you'd just like let everything just pass you by.

No matter how much information they can give us, if you've got a child with a certain disability in your class you'll need to go and research that yourself even though you've learned from college that certain disabilities, it was going to change in time anyway. In two years time, when we are teachers, if we've got a child with Autism from what you've already told us we'll still need to go and research because there will be more information out there. We'll recognize some of what we have been taught but that child will be an individual as well so you can't just get from the knowledge.

Examining yourself. From the knowledge that you have given us, I think, it has changed how I think in some ways. Yes. About a label?   It has made you so much more aware of yourself as well, and how you are teaching, and if you are including everyone, Yes,   and what you can do to make sure that everyone was included, no matter what ie: this is dyslexia …… but if you seem to like want to get to know your children as individuals better rather than just saying that's top group, that's middle group and that's the next group, that's bottom group, and treat and teach them as individuals now, not as a group whereas even your objectives in your class, you did them as groups didn't you, but even though they are in groups, and your objectives and your learning objectives and everything are in your groups, an individual you would expect a bit more from them and a bit less from them even though they are in the same group and have the same objectives.

1. Training Models:

SBT: There are a few schools where they don't have a trained mentor so the link tutor would go once a week and do the formal observations and tutorials once a week but I think those are less and less. The smaller schools or perhaps those mentors have moved on.

Interviewer: So, the model that you're employing here with a trained mentor, do you think that is better for training?

SBT: Yes. You've got somebody on site every day and when I was a classteacher, I tried not to place trainees with me, and we try not to place them with L, but if we do, it might be that I'll go in and do some of the mentoring so that there was somebody who is outside of the picture they can go to. But, yes, the day to day things are good. It's the big issues normally that normally need sorting and somebody else might do that.

2. The role of School-Based and College-Based training in enabling students to cross the boundary between college and school:

SBT: I think we are very much a partnership and I think that was partly why we work with you and B so well and I think that has grown over the years as

I can say to the trainees that I know that goes on in college. So, I think it was definitely a partnership.

Interviewer: Do you think we know enough about each of us?

SBT: I think you probably know a lot more about us, than we know about you. I think education is always in the news and I think as a professional institution you see your role very much as key, you know you are getting your information aren't you, this is what is happening in schools and this is how you need to train the teachers for it … I don't think we are as aware of how you have to work.

Interviewer: Do you think that's a problem?

SBT: Probably, yes but you are going to come up against how do you get that information across, because if you send it out in a written form people aren't going to read it, they are just going to shelve it. If you invite them for a meeting then people aren't going to turn up. Some people perhaps aren't interested or it is difficult releasing staff or even if you are given cover for supply staff the head still might not want to release you, so it is a difficult one, isn't it?

Interviewer: Do you think there is any advantage to the trainee for you to know more detail about the courses that they are studying?

SBT: I suppose you just, it is like anything because you are not in that environment any more you lose track of it don't you, when what you read on a piece of paper you just think, yeah, yeah and you just put your own take on it and you don't really realize just how it has come across

3. Handling student misconceptions in college and school:

Interviewer: Are there any particular strengths or abilities that you see from the trainees coming in?

SBT: It really is personal to the trainee I find, very much. You just get strong trainees and weak trainees across the board really, and that goes for different institutions, different years, and different courses and everything.

Interviewer: Do you notice from trainees generally, from across the board, that there are any common misconceptions that they bring with them when they start training?

SBT: I think planning is often a big one that the focus is often more on what the children are doing rather than learning I think, but that is really hard isn't it, to get, particularly you know the younger trainees when they are just starting out, they've got their ideas of what they want to do rather than right, what do I want the children to learn, and the assessments around that, they all enjoyed that. You see that's hard because that is your oldest skill of teaching and I kind of expect that is the sort of learning path that they go on and by the time they get to the level fours they do understand that right, this is the learning that they've done in maths, on fractions and this is what the teacher wants me to do so I need them to learn this, this and this and what ideas can I find on the internet that are going to help me teach the children. So that planning, and timings I think is another one and I think they seem to come with this and I suppose it was a bit of a criticism of your planning, your lesson plan for that because you put timings 5-10 minutes they see that as I've got timings on my plan there and there and there but no, that's the guidelines that college have given you know... I think another one is the misconception about the assessment about what they've done, what they have learned and again that assumption of because it works for the classteacher, it will work for them and I think there was this misunderstanding that because a classteacher can stand in front of the class and keep the children quiet, they all stand at the front of the class and expect the children to be quiet and I think they seem to find it hard to begin with, to look deeper than that, in terms of labelling, management or teaching and what actually was going on.

...

SBT: They just see that classteacher in that lesson, standing at the front and I don't think they think back to this teacher has spent weeks and months training these children, and getting that routine, and that teacher has authority in school because of all the other things they do...

Interviewer: Are there any SEN specific misconceptions that stand out?

SBT: All SEN children are low ability is the main one I think really. You can have children who may have a physical disability, for example a hearing impairment, who are actually very bright and, alright they maybe, certainly lower down school, they may be a bit behind because they've lost ground earlier in their lives with diagnosis and things but now they have their hearing aids and things sorted they can actually accelerate progress through school. Maybe gifted and talented are seen as separate rather than SEN . Differentiation is a biggy, isn't it?

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I think they see differentiation as the teaching assistant will sit with that group and they can relax, but in order to be fully included they need to develop their independent learning for their needs.

Interviewer: I think that is quite curious because, of course, presumably they won't have seen the classteacher operating in the same way?

SBT: I hope not!

Interviewer: So that is somewhere where they are not just mirroring? Do you think there is another fear or another reason why they do that with differentiation because they won't have seen that?

SBT: I think maybe they have a need for things to be on paper and to be recorded because that is their evidence and if they haven't got anything to show for that child then they don't know what that child has done in that lesson and so those are the children that often need help. But I also think it is about not knowing, probably again because of a lack of experience, not knowing the steps that build up to what the higher ability children are doing, that they can do this and they can do that. Not knowing how to make it easier or not even making that task easier, but giving an easier task that's completely different but is learning at that child's level. It's hard.

...

SBT: ...as much as you can give them lectures and literature and we can give them ideas and give them guidance that whole sequence of learning comes with experience and even now I will go to staff and say, I haven't got that and I've tried that and that and this was what I want them to learn and I don't know what else to do with them.

...

SBT: I think that is where you see whether the trainees are going to walk the walk and not just talk the talk, isn't it? Because you can sit there in a lecture theatre and think oh yes, I agree with you, definitely, I'll always do that and then you come to it and think oh! And again, even now I do employ bad labelling techniques on a bad day. I can have a really bad day and think that's not good but that is my fault because when they did that I should have done that but because I was the way I was I got it wrong and it is hard to accept that it is not always going to be perfect.

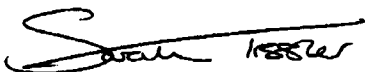September 2008 – October 2011

Dear SBTs,

I am currently studying for an EdD in inclusive education. I am completing research into how the institution develops student teachers to teach in inclusive classrooms. To complete this research I would like to explore the experiences of second year students during the Individual Learning Needs module and the second year teaching placement. My particular focus is on teaching children with SEN in mainstream settings.

As you will remember I approached your headteacher for permission to include your school as a case study for the research and I received approval to do this. Your involvement included distributing questionnaires, recording a tutorial and completing interviews and, at the time, I received verbal agreement from yourselves.

The data from the research will initially be used as part of my research thesis; but it is possible that on successful completion of the EdD I would publish the research findings more generally. I will ensure that you remain anonymous within the thesis and in any publications. You will be sent a copy of the data analysis so that you can be assured of this.

If you have any concerns regarding the above, please contact me.

With thanks

Sarah Trussler

My headteacher and I gave verbal agreement for the school to be a case study in this research:
Signed:
I am happy for the research data to be published:
Signed:
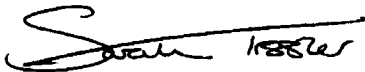
September 2008 – October 2011

Dear Student,

I am currently studying for an EdD in inclusive education. I am completing research into how the institution develops student teachers to teach in inclusive classrooms. To complete this research I would like to explore the experiences of second year students during the Individual Learning Needs module and the second year teaching placement. My particular focus is on teaching children with SEN in mainstream settings.

As you are a student in one of the case study schools selected, I would very much appreciate your involvement in my case study research. The extent of your involvement would be to engage in interviews with myself before, during and after your placement; to submit a journal entry regarding your learning experiences in school and to be subject to a recorded tutorial during your placement with your SBT.

The data from the research will initially be used as part of my research thesis; but it is possible that on successful completion of the EdD I would publish the research findings more generally. I will ensure that you remain anonymous within the thesis and in any publications. You will be sent a copy of the data analysis so that you can be assured of this.

If you have any concerns regarding the above, please contact me.

With thanks

Sarah Trussler
I am happy to be included in the research and understand the commitment above:
Signed:
I am happy for the research data to be published:
Signed: