

**An Exploration of the Factors that Enable Inclusion of  
Children who have Statements of Special Educational  
Needs in Mainstream Classrooms- a case study of a  
primary school**

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## Glossary

CPD:	Continuing Professional Development
DDA:	Disability Discrimination Act
DFE:	Department for Education
DFEE:	Department for Education and Employment
EHCP:	Education and Health Care Plan
GCSE:	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IDP:	Inclusion Development Programme
IEP:	Individual Education Plan
INSET:	In-service Education and Training
KS1:	Key Stage one
KS2:	Key Stage two
KS4:	Key Stage four
LA:	Local Authority
LEA:	Local Education Authority
LSA:	Learning Support Assistant
OFSTED:	Office for Standards in Education
PECS:	Picture Exchange Communication System
QCA:	Qualification and Curriculum Authority
NAHT:	National Association of Headteachers
NPQH:	National Professional Qualification for Headteachers
SA:	School Action
SAP:	School Action Plus
SATs:	Standard Assessment Tasks
SEN:	Special Educational Needs
SENCO:	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SENDA:	Special Educational Needs and Disability Act

SMT: Senior Management Team  
UN: United Nations  
UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation  
US: United States



## **Abstract**

This thesis investigates the factors that enable the inclusion of a child who has a Statement of Special Educational Needs (Statement) in a mainstream school. Current statistics on SEN (DFE, 2012b) states that in January 2012, 226,125 pupils across England had Statements. The original purpose of the Statement was to provide “special provision not generally available to ordinary schools” (DES, 1978:45) to those children who, on the basis of a detailed profile of their needs are judged to have significant educational needs. However, this can also position children as negatively different (Foucault, 1977 & 1979). This study argues that the concept of Statements is problematic due to systemic policy deficiency, which sometimes impacts on the way the Statement is perceived. Whilst the systemic problem exists the teacher is perceived to be one of the major factors affecting inclusion. This study explores how teachers ensure that children who have Statements are effectively included and make progress. The views of advocates of critical pedagogy (e.g. Lingard & Mills, 2005; Freire, 1970 & 1974; hooks, 1994 & 2003; Kanpol, 1994 & 1997) have been used to support the argument that teachers can make a difference to enable the inclusion for children who have Statements.

A case study design was selected as the methodological approach to investigate how and why this child was included. Interviews with staff, twenty lessons observed in two classes over two academic years, a research diary, informal conversations with staff and source documents were used as the means of data collection.

Analysis of the findings suggests that where a child with a Statement was perceived to be included, evidence (see Chapters Five to Seven) suggests that it was because

the teachers made it happen by 'transgressing'. 'Transgression' happened because the teachers did not perceive special needs to be within child and 'cared' about inclusion. This study argues that more work needs to be done to support teachers so that they can include all children. Finally consideration is given to the changes that are taking place in the Government's proposal for policy change in the provision of SEN (DFE, 2012) and the impact this may have on Statements.

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## **Declaration and Word Length**

I hereby declare that, except where explicit attribution is made, the work presented in this thesis is entirely my own.

Word count: 87,757

## Foreword: Reflection on study

Reflecting on a study at the outset is perhaps unusual but for me this has been a particularly difficult journey. I began this study believing that Statements were inclusive, that for children who were experiencing 'considerable' difficulties in their learning at school, Statements could offer the resources necessary to enable them to access the curriculum and increase their participation in a positive way in the classroom. I also believed that if that extra resource was made available, then teachers could find it easier to teach all the children in their class and inequality of access to the curriculum for some children might be removed.

However, well into the research process, I began to feel uneasy about this position and in fact, through the research, changed my whole perception of Statements with all the difficulties it entailed for my research and for me. As a result, there maybe inconsistencies in the thesis which reflect my changing position and this has been incredibly difficult but important for the research and for me as a teacher-researcher.

I remember in one of my first supervision meetings, my supervisor said engaging in a topic like this will bring up a lot of difficult issues relating to my identity, experiences and how they 'relate' to what I was doing. At the time, I thought 'what is he talking about? I thought I could do a PhD without becoming emotionally involved'. But he was right, as this study unearthed feelings and issues that I had not 'consciously' dealt with. I started to see parallels between children who had Statements and myself. The children, as a result of being 'categorised', were being disempowered in my view. For example, they did not have any say in what went into their Statements despite the rhetoric of policy, which suggests they do (DFES, 2001). The appendices attached to their Statements were reports usually from the perspectives of the

educational psychologist, clinical psychologist, doctor, paediatrician, SENCO (school), various therapists, parents and every body else who had something to say, but not the child (Coates *et al*, 2008). What were they feelings, and how do they relate to this study?

Some time ago, I sustained serious injuries in a car accident: I fractured my neck, and the doctors treating me initially suspected that I would have to use a wheel chair for the rest of my life. During that time, I was bed ridden and the lack of control and frustration I felt, having to depend on others for even the most private of things, significantly eroded my dignity and confidence, but there was nothing I could do, because I could not do those things myself. I felt like I existed at the mercy of others, and I had to show gratitude. I believe this experience to be the foundations of my ability to empathise with children who depend on professionals to decide on a lot of things for them. After hospital, I saw my life from everybody else's perspective but mine. I started to think how hospital visits would inconvenience my husband or the ambulance driver, although no one complained. Is that how children who have Statements feel?

As a SENCO, my brief was to secure as many Statements as possible because the school believed it was only able to keep children who had special needs in school if they had the resources to enable that. I had to work very closely with external agencies like educational psychologists, school nurses, clinical psychologists and a lot more. There was a constant reminder of my hospital experience, where 'professionals' made decisions about me as if I did not exist. Being in a position where I could make decisions about the lives of 'vulnerable' pupils gave me constant flashbacks, and, in a way, I struggled to answer the question: "how can I use my

knowledge and skills to challenge...the forms of oppression disabled people experience?" (Clough and Barton, 1995:144). Did the children feel disempowered and vulnerable like I did? Was I doing the right thing in securing Statements for children as I was directed?

The arrival of a new Headteacher at my school (Frosties) led to a climate of change (very inclusive with a lot of pastoral support) in the school without the extra resources made available by Statements. This led me to question whether a 'Statement' was needed to include a child, or if there were other ways of providing resources for schools to become more inclusive without 'the Statement'. For example, I stopped believing that it was enough for teachers to be 'positive' about Statements, as the whole concept of Statements, in my view, was (and still is) 'deficit' in consideration to the children concerned. However, I can be criticised for projecting my own experiences onto the children. For how was I sure that children who had Statements viewed such categorisation as deficit? The answer came from a Year Four boy who attended 'Moonlight Class' - Nurture Group (a small special class that provides a safe and predictable structured environment in which children are given opportunities to re-visit early missed 'nurturing' experiences). He had been involved in a lot of fights, so I was talking to him, trying to understand why. He told me 'Miss, the boys in my class like to fight with me, because I go to Moonlight Class'. So although Moonlight Class was perceived as somewhere children went to improve their 'social communication skills', the other children in the school had started identifying them as 'different'.

Creswell advises that researchers should recognise that their own background can shape their interpretation and how they position themselves (Creswell, 2003:8-9). This

view is shared by Barton who cautions that “research is not a value-neutral activity” (Barton, 1988:91), hence, such transparency in my own account. The contention, for me, was whether, by securing Statements for children, I was actively involved in excluding them? Is a Statement necessary? I then set out to investigate the factors that enable the inclusion of ‘statemented’ children in mainstream classrooms. The ability to empathise was useful to inclusion. However, as my research progressed I was able to see the ‘otherness’ of Statements.

As well as my journey as a researcher, I have simultaneously been travelling another significant journey which has impact on my research. My position within my context changed enabling my perception of Statements to change with it. Formerly a SENCO, then an inclusion Manager, an Assistant Head and now a Deputy Head, I have become a powerful player within my context although the ultimate power I believe rests with the teacher. My perspective became significant and impacted on the way policy was implemented within this context. So my contribution to knowledge is not just to research, but also to make a difference to practice, even in a small context. For as Handy says:

Change comes from small initiatives which work, initiatives which, imitated, become the fashion. We cannot wait for great visions from great people, for they are in short supply at the end of history. It is up to us to light our own small fires in the darkness. (Handy, 1995:271).

Through what I read (see Chapters Two and Three) and my personal experiences, I began to see that Statements can actually be exclusionary due to the difficult educational climate within which they exist- a climate, which promotes educational policies (standards and inclusion) that do not align as they have conflicting agendas. Although I was aware that teachers’ teaching aims (cognitive or affective) can sometimes be determined by the most influential education policy (in this case the



standards agenda) which in turn can influence whether or not Statements are inclusionary or exclusionary I witnessed how it can manifest in practice first hand. While this is one perspective, even at the outset Statements were perceived and continue to be perceived as the 'real evil' and Warnock herself describes them as "not a very bright idea" (Warnock, 2005:27). There are others (e.g. Corbett, 1996; Benjamin, 2002) who maintain that the very notion of special funding and special 'status' means that certain children are identified as different ('different' meaning 'less than' (see section 2.3.1)) making labelling an important issue. The Green Paper (DFE, 2011) does not address this issue of labelling. As a result of this special 'status', children can and are being removed from classrooms and even mainstream schools for 'special treatment' and schools utilising the Statement to claim that they are unable to meet the 'needs' of certain children. Some teachers may also use the 'special' status to claim that they do not have the special training to meet the needs of all children; schools fighting for places in the league tables (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) are only too willing to claim they cannot meet the child's needs. This means two competing policies (Inclusion and standards) are operating simultaneously within the same educational environment. As Benjamin (2002) argues, the standards agenda takes precedence over the inclusion agenda. Often the pressures of the standards agenda means the provision for children who have Statements in mainstream schools can often be of secondary importance to the class teacher and most teachers choose to have a cognitive aim because it is professionally less risky (see section 3.2). Parents too have regarded Statements as one way of ensuring (ring fencing funding) that their child will get resources (Warnock, 2005) to the extent that an LA investigated:

how best it can persuade parents and carers that the use of statements is not necessarily the best way to meet SEN, and that mainstream funding can meet special needs more effectively (The Learning Trust, 2006: 7.14.2).

So there is a whole range of issues highlighting the real controversy around Statements.

Despite the above picture, policy is not just made centrally (by the Government). As Ball (1994) argues, policy is made at all levels and in my professional context I have seen good practice whereby some teachers have subverted policy. Some teachers are implementing policies which could be exclusionary in an inclusive way and making policy work for them. In this study this has been because they have been able to empathise with the child. They see themselves as having a moral purpose (Fullan, 1999) and they have an affective aim to teaching (See section 3.3).

I now believe policy in education as it stands is flawed in relation to children who have Statements. However, for this group of children, that change might come too late and something needs to be done for them now. As a result reviewing the literature (Chapters Two and Three) and the findings of this study (Chapters Five to Seven) I now believe that teachers have the power to change the situation for children who have Statements now if they choose to do so. This is because teachers' perceptions and attitudes can make a difference in the classroom, a difference that can empower both the teacher and the children. For although Statements are divisive because they present a challenge to the teacher (Benjamin, 2002) research suggests that where teachers believe that they can make a difference, they can (Cole, 2004; Dadds, 1994; hooks, 1994).

Although the aim of this study is about factors that ensure inclusion and not about a change of policy, I find it necessary to point out that subversion of policy or 'transgression' (Chapter Three) has been one of the ways some teachers have managed to include all children in their class (hooks, 1994). My perception of Statements now is that a policy which forces teachers to transgress as a way of ensuring that some children get their entitlement is a bad policy. It is a 'bad' policy because, within the current education environment, Statements and the standards agenda are policies that ultimately encourage exclusion rather than inclusion.

Lastly, how can the good practise observed during this study be shared throughout the school without putting the teacher at professional risk? There has also been the issue of language used in the field of special educational needs (e.g. "statemented pupil" (Warnock, 2005:31) - a language which I feel uncomfortable using, but which has been used in this work because that is the way it was used within the context of education during this study and putting it in any other way might have created an issue of shared meaning with my colleagues.

# Chapter One

## Introduction, Rationale and Thesis Outline

### 1.0 Introduction

In 1994 ninety-two governments signed the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), which recognised the necessity and urgency of providing education for all within the “regular education system” (UNESCO, 1994:viii). The aim of this was to “work to ensure that Education for All effectively means FOR ALL, particularly those who are most vulnerable and most in need “ (UNESCO, 1994:iv). Inclusion in this ‘regular setting’ stressed the quality of education when it advised that:

Schools should assist them [children with SEN and disabilities] to become economically active and provide them with the skills needed in everyday life, offering training in skills, which respond to the social and communication demands and expectations of adult life (UNESCO, 1994:10)

It has different meanings in different contexts but it is on international agendas for example the Jomtien and Salamanca statements (Bursling *et al*, 2003). However, there is considerable confusion over the term inclusion with a wide range of meanings applied to the term. The word alone invokes a great deal of strong feeling. For example, while many (e.g. Barton, 1997 & 2003; Benjamin, 2002) may regard inclusion as a human rights issue that all children should be included in mainstream schools to be the ideal, many also believe that it is not workable in practice (Warnock, 2005; Wilson, 2000; Hornby, 1999). Warnock (2005), Wilson (2000) and Hornby (1990) perceive inclusion policy as the root of all problems in SEN, such as a hesitance on the part of local authorities to issue Statements and the closure of special schools that parents have fought hard to keep open. Those who do adhere to

it, argue that it is always being worked towards, a process rather than a state (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). Within this process there are many complexities, contradictions, difference of values and views. There is no consensus amongst different groups such as teachers, parents, policy makers, academics etc.

This study is located at the centre of a complex and contradictory context, and central to the context and, therefore this study, are teachers. They are at the centre of policy implementation or as some would argue, policy making (see Chapter Three). This study shows the power of teachers to take policy in different directions than the ones intended – for example some subvert depending on their values and beliefs. Amidst policies of inclusion, there are policies, which identify some children as ‘different’, marked out as such through Statements of Special Educational Needs (Statements). It would, of course be very worthwhile to offer a serious evaluation and critique of the UK statementing policy, but this would be a completely different doctoral project. It would involve surveying and weighing up the various intended and unanticipated benefits and cost of statementing, and critically examining what alternative policies might deliver more benefits while incurring fewer costs. The scale and scope of this thesis is incapable of giving it the attention it deserves, hence a brief discussion of Statement follows. A Statement of special educational needs is a formal document detailing a child's learning difficulties and the help that will be given.

### **How are Statements given?**

The Code (DFES, 2001) advises that when a school identifies a child ‘with’ SEN who continues to make inadequate progress then they should provide interventions that are additional to and different from those normally provided as part of the school's

usual differentiated or adapted curriculum or the strategies they employ. These are often recorded in an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This level of intervention is at School Action. The school has a duty to inform parents that special educational provision is being made for their child because they have identified the child as 'having' SEN (Parrott, 2006).

If at a review of progress and of the IEP, it is felt that little or no progress has been made in specific areas over a long period of time and, if the child 'has' special educational needs which appear to impede the development of social relationships and cause substantial barriers to learning, then a decision would be made to request help from external agencies e.g. an educational psychologist or speech and language therapist, who would meet the child and be able to advise the school on new targets, approaches and strategies to help. Parental consent must be sought and received before a child is seen by the external agency. This level of intervention is at School Action Plus. If the child's education continues to suffer then a referral for Statement can be made. The first stage in the process is called a statutory assessment, which is carried out by the local authority. This is a detailed investigation into the child's learning needs. The school or a parent can ask for a statutory assessment. If a school asks for one, they must inform the parents. After a request for an assessment, the local authority seeks the views of the parents and the school.

If an assessment is necessary, the local authority seeks the views of the child's school, an educational psychologist, a doctor, social services (if the child is known to them) and the parents. If a Statement is made, it will be in six parts. These are:

1. Name and contact details of the child
2. Details of the child's SEN
3. What help the child should get, and learning goals
4. What part the child's school will play
5. The child's non-educational needs
6. How these non-educational needs will be met

The policy of Statementing is highly controversial but is seen by many (including parents), as an access to resources; (Thomas, 2005; Warnock 2005) and by others as a means to exclude, in many cases from mainstream altogether (Warnock, 2005). Implementation of Statements in mainstream schools is managed by the SENCO. The core purpose of a SENCO as identified in Teacher Training Agency (TTA, 1998) is providing guidance in the area of SEN in order to secure high quality teaching and keep the head informed as well as taking a lead on developing inclusive practice in the school (DFEE, 1997).

This thesis investigates the factors that enable inclusion of a 'statemented' child in a mainstream school. It is a case study of the inclusion of a boy who had a Statement of special educational needs (from now on referred to as Statement) in two mainstream classes. It examines how school staff (especially his teachers) perceived Statements and how that perception in turn impacted on the provision they made available to the child. It looks at how teachers navigated the multiple policy agendas within a school in their effort to carry out their jobs within a highly regulated system, against the backdrop of non-aligned policy context, personal beliefs, values and experiences. The study argues that depending on the way it is used, within this

context, the Statement can be seen as a potentially exclusionary device contrary to the ethos of inclusive education. In making evident the contradiction posed by the enforcement of Statements within an inclusive ethos, this study highlights the gap between policy as written and policy as enacted (Ball, 1994; Larsen 2001). It also shows how teachers recreate policy within their practice to support inclusion and how this sometimes works especially when the teacher's practice is underpinned by the principles of critical pedagogy (see chapter Three). The study argues that where this works, it is due to the attitude of the teacher and their determination to make it work. Hence, Statements at their best rely on teachers who are already committed to include children to make it work, but at worst, they can be used to exclude the very children that they were intended to support. Evidence from this study (Chapters Five, Six & Seven) shows how this manifested within mainstream classrooms, where in one practice a teacher included the child effectively, whilst in another class, the teacher found it challenging to use the resources made available by the Statement to effectively include.

There is already a body of evidence in the literature that offers this view (see Chapter Three). The aim of this study is not to advocate a change of policy (although sharing good practice seems irresistible), but to look at factors that may or may not cause teachers to include children with Statements. However, the fact that Statements still exist and teachers do struggle with implementing them effectively shows the need for continuing work and commitment to inclusion to change things. The Coalition Government's proposal of replacing Statements with an "Education, Health and Care Plan" (DFE, 2011:6) is but a change in the name/language but the concept is still the same, for:



This has the same statutory protection as a statement of SEN, and those involved will commit to providing services. (Young, 2011: Para 14)

Children who have such plans will have to go through the same process of identification by professionals, and like the Statement, having one of these care plans may position a child as 'negatively different'. My argument is, a Statement (or Education, Health and Care Plan) can become problematic within an inclusive ethos and its success is dependent on the teacher. Also, if the Statement remains (many parents want it to (Galvin, C. 2006; Row, 2004; Warnock, 2005)), then teachers can (and some do) subvert it for the inclusion of the child. The danger here is that successful subversion can be used to demonstrate that Statements work - a 'Catch 22' situation for all who actively try to include but face the dilemma of perpetuating the very system they perceived to be detrimental to inclusion. The dilemma here is- should teachers continue to subvert policy allowing it to continue or should they stop subverting and expose the policy for what it actually is? The teacher who included effectively in this study did not think she could do anything else but subvert policy because in her view if she did otherwise, the child would have been the victim. It is a moral issue for this teacher and her values as a person (taking her own experiences into consideration) do not allow her to do otherwise. The current Green Paper (DFE, 2011) I believe has taken the focus off what really matters for inclusion of all children to be effective- and that is teachers! The Coalition Government in the Green Paper proposes:

Sharpen accountability on progress for the lowest attainers, introducing a new measure into school performance tables (DFE, 2011:9)

This makes transparent the Government's preference for standards rather than inclusion. For:

Since the 1988 Education Reform Act, teachers' work ...has been subject

to increasing levels of surveillance and appraisal, based on commercial management techniques...as they have become increasingly detailed and standardized...aimed at external audiences...The procedures use a quasi-standardised model that fails to make explicit its empirical basis. Teachers are forced to work within it, if they are to be perceived as effective teachers... this approach relies on a vision of the 'average' child as an ideal type that exists in official rhetoric...Therefore the planning, assessment and reporting procedures in common use are relatively opaque to pupils and parents. Within English education we now see strict levels of control and assessment. It could be argued that this has been a factor in an apparent deprofessionalisation of teachers' work, which renders them governable rather than autonomous in this respect, and that subsequently they have become technicians rather than professionals in the true sense of the word. (Gray, 2007:194)

I draw on the type of pedagogy advocated by hooks (see 3.3) where 'Good Practice' means the creation of a classroom community. However, hooks idea of 'Good Practice' can take the teacher to dangerous grounds because sometimes they might have to transgress policy. 'Transgression' within this study means, teachers stepping out of the role of "technicians" (Gray, 2007:194) and being creative. This means that teachers like Miss Titch (study participant) may still continue to transgress because the new policy is not exactly pro-inclusion leading some to argue that:

the government's plans for reforming the special educational needs (SEN) system will set the fight for inclusive education back 20 years. (Pring, 2011: para 1)

Whilst acknowledging the dilemma transgression presents to the perpetuation of this policy, it is clear that this is an area where further work needs to be done on how those teachers who subvert this policy can address this issue. Besides, the options for most teachers are limited by the policies impacting on education, hence, the need for a transformation of policy. Even though the new policy proposal (DFE, 2012) advocates training and CPD for teachers and support staff to address SEN issues the question is whether teachers can be trained to 'empathise' like Miss Titch.

From an analysis of the literature (see Chapters Two and Three) and the findings of this study (Chapters Five to Seven), a range of contestations associated with the inclusion of this child in this mainstream school emerges. I draw on the way Statements and the process of Statementing (assessment processes) result in some children being constructed and positioned as negatively different. I also draw on the argument that this is possible because of the non-alignment of the Government's policies on education and the pressures this places on teachers (see section 2.2.1). The argument that has been used by Gillborn and Youdell (2000) and Benjamin (2002), is that the pressures of the standards agenda often take precedence over inclusive education. However, bridging this policy non-alignment can be the teacher, who can choose to make a positive difference driven by their experience, beliefs and values in adopting a pedagogy that may be conducive to the learning of all the children in their classroom. This study presents the teacher as a strong contender in the policy arena. It presents the teacher as a professional who has ultimate power within the physical space of their classroom to decide how they teach, what they focus on, who they focus on and why, regardless of the policy initiatives of the Government. Within their classrooms, teachers (in spite of the policy documents) decide (depending on their value systems and beliefs) to have regards for or disregard for policies despite the risks this might pose to them.

I utilised literature review, documents, semi-structured interviews and observations during the process of finding out about how the focus child (Alex) in this study was included (or not included) in a mainstream school. Framing the study in this way,

allowed for the interpretation of power relations in the different classrooms and above all, how this impacted on the quality of provision the child experienced. This study focuses on what teachers did to include or not include and why one teacher included a child and another excluded that same child. The phrase 'inclusive education' or 'inclusion' in the context of this work, is:

...about the why, how, when, where and the consequences of educating all learners. It involves the politics of recognition and is concerned with the serious issue of who is excluded within education. (Barton, 2003:10).

Inclusion describes the process by which a school attempts to respond to all pupils as individuals by reconsidering and restructuring its curricular organisations and provision, allocating resources to enhance equality of opportunity (Sebba and Ainscow, 1996). The focus here is on school organisation and culture and how diversity is perceived and differences celebrated. However, as Warnock argues:

the concept of inclusion must embrace the feeling of belonging, since such a feeling appears to be necessary both for successful learning and for more general well-being (Warnock, 2005:14).

In this study a child is considered to be included if they are viewed as an equal partner within the school community and they access their educational entitlement without being made to feel different. Like all the other children in the school, the child who has a Statement should feel 'comfortable and secured' within the environment that they belong to a classroom and school community and that their contribution to that community is valued. Despite their educational needs, those responsible for teaching the child (e.g. teachers) should anticipate (through their knowledge of the child) and remove barriers to learning for the child even before the lesson begins. The classroom should be an even playing field for all, where children feel confident

to take risk as learners and move on to the next stage of their learning. How does this study contribute to research?

## **1.1 Contribution to Research**

Although Statements can be problematic (Tomlinson, 2005), until such a time that policy changes, teachers and schools are still expected to implement the Statement (DFES, 2001) - so they are a reality in educational environment today. The new policy proposal (DFE, 2012) still has the Statement even though it is called and Education and Health care Plan. The question this study has grappled with is how can teachers make a difference and include children who have Statements in an educational environment that constructs children who have Statements as 'negatively different'? This study shows that teachers can make a difference in a context, which is exclusionary by using subversion to include. I am arguing that it is not the policy that decides whether or not Statements are inclusionary/exclusionary, rather it is the willingness of the teacher to actively engage all the children in an effective way that counts. The teacher's pedagogy within their classroom is the deciding factor and this is influenced by the teacher's experience, values and history. Whilst research into the significance of affectivity in teachers' classroom behaviour is gathering pace (e.g. Tsokova & Tarr, 2012; Cole, 2004; Dadds, 1997), this is still not as explored as other areas in education (Nias, 1996) and often, when it is done, it is because the researcher 'actually' cares and wants to make a difference.

This study is a contribution to other research (e.g. Cole, 2004; hooks, 1994; Kanpol, 1997) that has shown how teacher affectivity can impact on a child's learning. It particularly contributes to the small area of research (e.g. hooks, 1994) that argues

that effective engagement of 'marginalised' groups occurs if a teacher is prepared to transgress and that often teachers who transgress do so because they are able to empathise. This study acknowledges that transgression of the policy through subversion can be professionally very dangerous for the staff concerned and that the ideal is policy transformation. Apart from the dangers of transgression, this study raised ethical issues for me as a member of the SLT, highlighting the tensions I face in my work and has impact on my practice (See Chapter Four).

What this study offers is two-fold. First, to the child, it shows how a teacher (Miss Titch) works against the tides of the standards agenda to include a child (Alex) who has a Statement. By doing this, this teacher ensures this child has an enriched school experience where he feels confident to participate with his peers without making him stand out as 'negatively different'. This child's Statement is treated by this teacher as an entitlement and used effectively to make the class inclusive for all. Hence, it is not just the child who benefits from the resources made available. For example, in Chapter Seven, the child is seen supporting another child in the class. As well as this, the other children are given the opportunity to understand and value diversity- understanding that they are all different but all have something positive and valuable to contribute.

Secondly, this study presents a teacher as someone who is able to make decisions for herself and the children in her classroom. Although the decisions made (for example disregarding the pressures of the standards agenda (Chapters Six and Seven)) to ensure that the classroom is conducive for all the children to participate effectively poses risks for her, she is determined to do the right thing to ensure that all the children in her class feel they belong. By doing this, this teacher feels

empowered, as she explores with ideas, adapted resources, works with other stakeholders like parents and support staff from the local authority (LA), engages all the pupils and the support staff, she becomes the policy maker in her own classroom. When the 'chair effect' (see Chapter Five) is no longer visible in her classroom and the child becomes a 'full' and 'equal' member of the class due to the pedagogy she implements, she feels satisfied and fulfilled as a teacher.

This study shows also how personal experience drives this teacher to want to include rather than exclude. Making the decision about what is important as an educator becomes one of this teacher's main roles, as she decides that having a classroom community is better than being driven by standards alone. It shows that teachers can make a difference even when policies are at odds with each other. It presents the teacher as a maker of policies not just an implementer. How teachers perceive Statements and how they interpret it in relation to the standards is important for this study and this forms an important part of the discussion in Chapters Two and Three as this impacts on the quality of provision that a child who has a Statement in a mainstream school experiences. The next section looks at the research questions, the rationale for choosing them and how the thesis is structured.

## **1.2 Research questions**

I am arguing in this study that the question of including pupils who have Statements in mainstream schools is largely a question of perspective, beliefs and views, and how teachers translate these into practice. Inquiring and understanding how teachers in schools understand these, as they attempt to implement the policy of inclusion, is even more important. Hence the key research question of this study is as follows:

- **What factors enable the inclusion of children who have Statements of special educational needs in mainstream classroom?**

For the purpose of empirical work, the key question is divided into the following sub-questions:

#### **What do teachers understand about Statements of SEN?**

This question serves to focus the study on the perceptions teachers have about Statements against the backdrop of the demands of the standards agenda and the inclusion agenda. In asking this question, I am interested in how teachers' perceptions influence the way they interpret and navigate the policy context of the classroom and how this affects the education of children who have Statements. I want to find out what teachers understand a Statement to be and how that is translated within their individual pedagogies and this is the focus of Chapter Five. This question intends to draw attention to the multi-dimensional nature of what shapes teachers' perceptions about Statement. It highlights Statements as a tool that can negatively construct difference within the classroom, with the teacher being an important player. The second research question is the main focus of Chapter Six and recognises the importance of teachers' perceptions of inclusion and how this impacts on the inclusion of children who have Statements as it asks:

#### **What do teachers believe about inclusion?**

This question explores what beliefs teachers have about inclusion. It has two aspects to it. The first is: do teachers' understanding about Statements affect their beliefs about inclusion? The second aspect of this research question is what factors shape teachers' belief about inclusion? The above two-research questions focus on the processes of navigating the educational policy environment and what meaning teachers make of the policies. There is an acknowledgement here that meaning



making is connected to the wider social and personal issues and not just determined by what the policy says and these are explored in Chapters Two, Three and Six. The third research question relates more to how the meanings teachers make impact on their pedagogy and the education of pupils who have Statements. It asks:

### **How does inclusion affect teaching style and expectation?**

This question is the thread that runs through the whole thesis, however, the crux for this study is factors that drive the inclusion or exclusion of children who have Statements and Chapter Three engages with this issue. Also in Chapter Seven where the teacher's pedagogy comes under scrutiny the factors at play are made transparent. This question draws together the meanings teachers make within their classrooms. It presents the teacher as an influential policy maker with a lot of power, who is the one professional in a position to actually make a difference to how effective or ineffective a Statement is. I am concerned here (as I have been throughout this thesis) to make evident the contradictions teachers face in their daily professional lives contending with multiple policy agendas and demands as they decide what is important. How do they as individuals perceive their role in this whole process of Statement implementation within an inclusive and competitive ethos?

## **1.3 Rationale - The objectives of the Study and Frame of Reference**

Many children in mainstream schools have Statements- in January 2012, 226,125 children across England and Wales had Statement (DFE, 2012b) and some (e.g. Nind, 2005) have argued that the onus of inclusion rests primarily with the teachers. For the "control over classroom practice remains with teachers and this comes through strongly in their shared experiences" (Tsokova & Tarr, 2012:13). My

argument is that for teachers to effectively teach children who have Statements, they need to have some understanding of what they think Statements are. The process used to identify children to have Statements works at their disadvantage as it positions them as 'negatively different', therefore, Statements are exclusionary. I maintain that some teachers are reluctant to include children who have Statements because they do not perceive their needs to be pressing under the current competitive educational environment (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). I also argue that powerful forces exist both within and outside the classroom that shape the quality of provision that children who have Statements experience in mainstream schools. One of these forces is the level of attainment of the children because, schools and teachers are being judged by this.

I am also interested in how teachers, in implementing the policy of inclusive education (where as stated in the Government's own Guidance (DFES, 2001a: para 8) schools must have "a broad and balanced curriculum for all pupils; high expectations and suitable targets for all" (ibid)), combine their personal experiences, values and beliefs with the demands of the standards agenda when teaching within their classrooms. I am particularly interested in factors that determine whether or not a child who has a Statement is included or excluded in a mainstream school. I selected the three research questions because they make evident the tensions that emerge as a result of implementing a Statement within an inclusive yet competitive ethos. Tensions like what teachers understand Statements to be and do they believe Statements can be inclusive. Without a critical understanding of Statements, can teachers effectively include children who have Statements? And what kind of inclusion do they think they can make possible within their classrooms for children

who have Statements? Although there has been a lot of work on Statements and inclusion, a lot of this had focused on how excluding it could be or how it was being used by schools (Pinney, 2003; Warnock 2005). This thesis agrees with research that argues that Statements are not inclusive. However, it takes the view that even in this less than ideal policy environment, some teachers, through adopting a creative yet often covert pedagogy are using Statements in a manner that helps to include children who have Statements. They do this by transgressing various policies and this comes with risks, however, what this shows is that even with the increased level of accountability, teachers come to their profession as individuals. They approach the policy process with different motivations, experiences and values. These differences result in struggles and power relations within the classroom that in turn impact on the provision of children who have Statements in mainstream schools. I have drawn on the works of Foucault (1977 and 1979), hooks (1994 and 2003) and Friere (1974) to show how differences are constructed and what can be done to enable disadvantaged groups such as those who have Statements to become actively involved in their classroom communities. What this study does is to share with other professionals some good practice in a less than ideal environment. The question is whether others feel confident or driven enough to learn from it, or is the risk just too much for some to even contemplate? Also, I argue that where individual teachers drive inclusion for children with Statements, although this is to be admired, this is fragile as it cannot be guaranteed as the teacher could leave or change jobs. For this to be sustained, initiatives have to be structural and whole school. The next chapter presents an engagement with the literature, discussing how and why perceptions are reached and by whom.

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter looks at the issues affecting the way teachers include (or do not include) children who have Statements in mainstream schools. It begins with an analysis of the changing education policy context (both national and international) from the late 1970s to the present day and how these impact on children's education. The contradictions of pursuing two key education policies (inclusion and standards) with conflicting agendas are highlighted. It then moves onto explaining what advocates of inclusive education (e.g. Ainscow, 1998; Armstrong, 2003; Barton, 1997; Corbett and Slee 1998) argue that inclusion should mean. There is an acknowledgement in this study (see Chapters Five to Seven) that within the current policy context, inclusion for pupils who have Statements in mainstream schools is less than perfect due to systemic policy deficiency. The coalition Government regards:

The current statementing system as "creaky" and "overly-bureaucratic" which helps neither parents nor schools" (Vaughan, 2010:2).

As a result the coalition Government proposes to replace Statements with an "Education, Health and Care Plan" (DFE, 2012:12) by 2014. Alongside this, the Government is developing:

Special Free Schools and Academies... by April 2012 twenty-eight Special Schools had converted to Academy status (DFE, 2012:30).

This position of special schools for children who have Statements is fiercely criticised by some parents (Harris, 2012; Tuckey, 2010) for excluding children- a view which

Warnock criticises as “the ideal of inclusion” (Warnock, 2005:32). This is because of some parents’ perception of special schools as “places of last resort” (ibid). However, for some children in mainstream schools who have Statements this could be their only chance of an education. This chance of an education is laden with ‘systemic problems’ best described by one of Harris’s (2012) respondents as:

The standard “put them in a big class and roll the ball down the middle and hope to hit as many of them as possible” (Harris, 2012: comment2:21/5/12 9:36am).

The Statement is described as “adversarial, overly bureaucratic and not sufficiently focused on outcomes for children” (DFE, 2012:18). This study welcomes the Government’s recognition that “Every child...deserves a world class education” (ibid:37) and that the label of SEN can result in low expectation. Yet the Green Paper proposals heavily weigh on “an ideology of a medical model of SEN” (ibid:2) and like the SEN Code of Practice, it still presents get-out clauses around the needs of other pupils, the capacity of schools and the effective use of resources (DFE, 2012:29). My contention here is that like is being replaced with like, but while Statements exist something needs to be done now to ensure that children who do have them, receive good quality education. The views of advocates of critical pedagogy (e.g. Apple, 2002; Bernstein, 1990 & 1996; Cole, 2004 & 2005; Freire, 1970 & 1974; hooks, 1994 & 2003; Kanpol, 1994 & 1997; Leistyna *et al*, 1996; Nias, 1996) have been used to support the argument that teachers can make a difference to enable the inclusion of children who have Statements. Teachers have the opportunity to be change agents (Fullan, 1999) and to make their classrooms truly inclusive by using the relative autonomy they have within their classrooms and their specific pedagogy- (“*the what* that is transmitted, *how* it is transmitted, and also which student realisations are considered legitimate” (Morais, 2002: 560). There are two acknowledgements here.

The first one is that sometimes the implementation of this pedagogic device can result in 'transgression' (Chapter Three). The second is that often teachers who 'transgress' (see Chapter Three, Six and Seven) do so because they are able to empathise with the child because they have experienced disempowerment themselves either directly or indirectly. The complexity of this situation for both teachers and children is made evident by changing education policies and a discussion of this follows.

## **2.2 Changing education policies**

Throughout the world attempts are being made to provide education for all children (e.g. United Nations, 1993; UNESCO, 1994) and the trend is now to endeavour to educate children who have Statements in mainstream settings (Farrell and Ainscow, 2002). For example in France "compulsory education for disabled children, including them for the first time in provision 'as a right'" (Armstrong *et al*, 2002:65) was introduced in 1975. The trends in Ireland (McDonnell, 2002), United States of America (Ware, 2002) and Sweden (Persson, 2002) show that there were also fundamental policy shifts to promote inclusive education especially following the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994). Education for children regarded as having special needs became a human rights issue but this was within the framework of school effectiveness (Ainscow, 1991; Hegarty, 1990; O'Hanlon, 1995; Pijl and Meijer, 1991; UNESCO, 1994). Some countries such as Australia, Canada, Denmark, Italy and Spain showed progress in implementing the principles of integration by ensuring all children attended their local community schools (Colleys, 2005). However, as some countries were already used to operating separate systems and the provisions were well established, they found it difficult to merge the special schools and

mainstream systems and this resulted in a two-track system (Pijl and Meijer, 1991). For example in Germany “students who are declared eligible for special education must be placed in a special school” (Farrell and Ainscow, 2002:5) and in the Netherlands 7.4% of 11 year-olds are educated in special schools (ibid).

Maintaining a two-track system was not ideal as parallel systems were found to be costly (ibid). In addition, the interpretation of the recommendations of the United Nations Convention especially Article 24 was very subjective (United Nations, 1993a). It stated that education should help children to become independent, but it did not specify exactly where this ‘helping’ should take place. This left a loop-hole in the system, hence, Germany for example cannot be rebuked for breaking a UN agreement. There was a lack of clear guidance and uniformity internationally and nationally which reflected at classroom levels where teachers were left to interpret and implement policy (and continue to do so) within their classrooms, often in a very subjective manner.

Two key education policies (Corbett and Slee, 2000; Farrell and Ainscow, 2002; Lunt and Norwich, 1999.)– i) inclusive education (Inclusion) and ii) raising standards (Standards Agenda) affect the education of children who have Statements in mainstream schools. This is because:

Alongside policies that are promoting notions of inclusion, schools are under even more pressure than ever to raise academic standards (Farrell and Ainscow, 2002:2).

This means that children who have Special Educational Needs (SEN) are left “particularly vulnerable” (Rouse and Florian 1997:324) because (as some teachers explained in Chapters Five to Seven) and as Rouse and Florian explain:

Such students would be unattractive to schools because they would depress the schools’ test results or cost more to educate than they brought into the school in resources. (Rouse and Florian 1997: 328).

This situation has led to the argument that, “for schools the task of becoming inclusive is to swim against the tide of educational reforms” (Rouse and Florian 1997:324). The Standards Agenda creates systems of accountability. It creates a marketised system where accountability is based on raw scores and value added (VA). While some SEN pupils:

start an education stage at a level below the national expectation, it intends that schools be judged for the progress at the national expected rate, ie two levels of progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2... To judge schools against these progress outcomes is damaging, makes no recognition of the impact of special educational needs and undermines holistic learning outcomes that can attest to substantial achievements(ATL, 2011:9-10).

Whilst this study agrees that aspirations should be high for all children, it also advocates for aspirations to be related to the reality of each child’s ability and need. Raw data from national assessments is used in performance tables as an indicator of how well a school is doing (ATL, 2011; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999), resulting in competition between schools and lack of professional trust. The current wave of academies and free schools (DFE, 2012) does not address the issues. Standards and Inclusion “seem incompatible” (Ainscow, 2002:2) and their interaction within the school and the classroom environment can determine the way children who have Statements are educated in mainstream schools (Bernstein, 1990 & 1996; hooks, 1997 & 2003). How and why these two policies (combined) have such an impact on the education of children who have Statements



needs to be understood and the following discussion grapples with the issues this raises through an analysis of both.

### **2.2.1 Inclusive education**

There have been national initiatives in various countries to make education inclusive (McDonnell, 2002; Vlachou-Balafoutit and Zonious-Sideris, 2002; Ware, 2002; Riddell, 2002). In England a significant landmark to include all children in mainstream schools was the policy of integration introduced by the Warnock Report in 1978 (DFE, 1978).

The 1970s saw the beginning of disability movements as well as widespread concerns with civil rights, equal opportunities and human rights in England and around the world (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). These have influenced policy changes, which have impacted on the way children who have Statements are educated.

Prior to this under the 1944 Education Act, there was a three tier education system with a separation of children into different groups- grammar, secondary and technical schools (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). Under this system, children who were considered to be “handicapped” (Lunt and Norwich, 1999:2) were categorised according to disability into one of eleven handicaps under the 1944 Education Act (Lunt and Norwich, 1999:2). Provision for this group of children was in segregated settings (Corbett, 1996; Harris, 2007; Lunt and Norwich, 1999:2), those categorised as the most handicapped were deemed to be “ineducable” and the health service (as opposed to the education department) was responsible for their education (DEE, 2000). Children were categorised into one of several series of categories, for example: ‘maladjusted’ or ‘educationally sub-normal’ (Corbett, 1996; Harris, 2007; Tomlinson, 1982). Such categorisation was based on the assumption that:

There existed a group of pupils clearly distinguishable from the majority and requiring special help, preferably in special places...the model was often referred to as the 'medical approach' (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:2).

In England and Wales the 1972 Education Act gave all children the right to an education and did away with the 'ineducable' category (Tomlinson, 1982). The Warnock Report (DFE, 1978) recommended that the education of all children became the responsibility of the education department and children could have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and attend mainstream schools.

### **The Warnock Report**

This was the first review of the education provision of children who had special educational needs. Its role was to advise the Government on the practicalities involved in the education of 'handicapped' children. The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) formed the basis of the 1981 Act, which introduced Statements. The committee recommended that:

There should be a system of recording as in need of special educational provision those children who, on the basis of a detailed profile of their needs prepared by a multi-professional team, are judged by their local education authority to require special provision not generally available in ordinary school. (DES, 1978:45).

The view of this ruling was that all children belonged "together with their same age in the educational mainstream" (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:2). Warnock argued that:

The principle of educating handicapped and non-handicapped children together, which is described as 'integration' in this country and 'mainstreaming' in the United States of America, and is recognised as a much wider movement of 'normalisation' in Scandinavia and Canada, is the particular expression of a widely held and still growing conviction that, as far as is humanly possible, handicapped people should share the opportunities for self-fulfilment enjoyed by other people. (DES, 1978:99)

According to the Warnock Report (DES, 1978), a child's ability to learn was dependent on the nature of the interaction that the child brought into school and the

nature of the instruction provided by the teacher, thus making the teacher an important element in the process. All teachers became responsible for teaching all pupils, making the practice of depending solely on experts from outside a school unacceptable (DFES, 2001). This responsibility for teaching all children was further reinforced by the development of the National Curriculum in 1988 (Harris, 2007), which emphasised the entitlement of all children to a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Warnock Report recommendations (DES 1978) reconceptualised SEN because it acknowledged the notion that SEN could be as a result of complex interactive factors. It rejected categorisation of disability and it acknowledged that educational aims should be the same for all children although the means of achieving the aims might be different. It also acknowledged that all children have the right to mainstream education regardless of their SEN and it protected the right to education for some children through the use of Statements. At the time of the Warnock Report, it was estimated that only 2% of the 20% of children with special needs would be awarded a Statement (DES, 1978). Statements made it possible for children who had SEN to attend mainstream schools because of the financial support it made available (DES, 1978; DFES, 2001). This was, however, on the condition that their placement was compatible with the provision of effective education for their peers, and that parents were in support of the mainstream placement (Norwich, 1993; DFE, 1994; Harris, 2007).

Advocates of this reconceptualised SEN (e.g. Jordan and Goodey, 1996) criticised segregated provisions as being a form of educational apartheid and some LAs, for example Newham (Rouse and Florian 1997), made a commitment to close all their

special schools. However, there were criticisms against the review recommendations.

### **Criticisms**

The stance taken by the Warnock Report was perceived by some (e.g. Norwich, 1990) as an unrealistic rejection of the medical model, calling instead for a multi-perspective.

Some (e.g. Barton 1986) were not convinced that this new reconceptualised SEN worked to the benefit of the most vulnerable students whom it was meant to protect. This criticism was partly because it focused on integration, which was about 'normalisation'. Which could be perceived as denying the existence of difference. My argument here (an issue which is still a concern today) is that such an approach made value judgments about the lives of children who fell into the category of SEN and thus devalued their lives. Peters (1995) agreed with this view when he criticised such a perception as devaluing the lives of people who appear to be different. For in his view, such a perception implied that the patterns of life of disabled people were not acceptable and their difference was not celebrated. Although not criticising the principles of the work of her committee in 1978, Warnock herself (2005) criticised Statements as the real evil (Warnock, 2005:30). Her focus then, and now, can still be criticised for being on expenditure ("the present system, its profligacy both in time and money" (ibid)) rather than the child. Despite its flaws, some (e.g. Harris, 2007) argue that:

The Warnock Report reflected the views that the medical definitions of special educational needs were stigmatizing and inconsistent with a positive approach towards ensuring that appropriate provision that reflected the child's needs was set in place (Harris, 2007:325).

This led Harris to conclude that as a result of the Warnock Report, the 1981 Act “established a firm presumption of inclusion” (ibid). There is a distinction between inclusion and integration, which should also be clarified. Integration was referring to the concept of integrating children with SEN into a common educational framework. The concept has since progressed to the inclusion of all children to reflect the idea that it is not for SEN children to be somehow fitted in or integrated into the mainstream but that education as a whole should be fully inclusive of all children.

Warnock (DES, 1978) did not envisage the changes about to happen in education policy. The Warnock Report (ibid) was largely implemented in the 1981 Education Act, which brought in Statementing and the integration of children who had Statements into mainstream schools.

Children can be assessed and ‘Statemented’ when they have a learning difficulty, which calls for ‘special’ educational provision to be made for them. The SEN Code of Practice (DFE, 1994), coupled with the following Education Act 1996, increased the legislative clout for including children who had Statements and this still applies today.

With this Act children are described as having learning difficulty if they:

- A. Have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age; or
- B. Have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the Local Education Authority (LEA); or
- C. Are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (A) or (B) above or would do so if special educational provision was not made for them. (Education Act, 1996: section 312).

Special education provision means:

- For children of two or over, education provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age in schools maintained by the LEA, other than special schools in the area; and
- For children under two, education provision of any kind. (ibid)

This was closely followed by the 1997 Green Paper which stated that there:

Are strong educational, as well as social and moral, grounds for educating children with special educational needs, or with disabilities, with their peers (DFEE, 1997: ch 3, paras 1&3).

In England and Wales, the 2001 SENDA strengthened the presumption for inclusion (Education Act, 1996, part 4). The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) in 2001 (Her Majesty's Government, 2001) made it unlawful for schools to discriminate against children who have special educational needs in admissions and provision of education and associated services. The statutory guidance of the SENDA urges schools to use the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) to identify and remove barriers to learning and participation. As a result of this policy and legislation, the number of children who have Statements in mainstream schools is as follows:

- 220,890 (or 2.7%) pupils across all schools in England had Statements of SEN, 54.9% of whom are placed in mainstream schools.
- Of the 27,550 children assessed for SEN during the 2009 calendar year, 26,490 (96.2 per cent) were issued with a Statement for the first time. 6.5 per cent were placed in resourced provision or SEN units in maintained mainstream schools. 62.1 per cent were placed in maintained mainstream schools and 23.6 per cent in special schools. (DFE, 2010)

Harris commented that policy preference for mainstream provision for children who have Statements “in view of the high cost that special educational provision can involve” (Harris, 2007:336), is growing.

### **The Government’s commitment to inclusion since the 1990s**

Inclusive education in England began with the signing of the Salamanca Agreement (UNESCO, 1994) in 1994 and the launching of the SEN Code of Practice in the same year with the creation of the position of SENCOs. In the 1997 Green Paper (DFEE, 1997) the new Labour Government gave public support to the Salamanca Agreement of 1994 (UNESCO, 1994), which calls on governments to adopt the principle of inclusive education (UNESCO, 1994). These gestures towards inclusion led to a presumption that the Government has a policy of inclusion. This presumption arose from both statutory and non-statutory guidance, published by the Labour Government. The Labour Government inherited the existing SEN framework (based on the Warnock Report) and sought to improve it through the SEN and Disability Act (SENDA) 2001, and the 2004 SEN Strategy Removing Barriers to Achievement (DFES, 2004). The latter claimed to set out the Government’s vision for the education of children with SEN and disability (DFES, 2004; Education and Skills Committee, 2006). This vision, which is being pursued by the current Coalition Government (DFE 2011 & 2012):

signalled our commitment to the principle of inclusion and the need to rethink the role of special schools within this context. The SEN And Disability Act (SENDA) 2001 delivered a stronger right to mainstream education, making it clear that where parents want a mainstream place for their child, everything possible should be done to provide it. (DFES, 2004:25)

The vision for SEN outlined in Labour Government publications (e.g. DFEE, 1997; DFES, 2004) up to and including the 2004 SEN Strategy was based on a

commitment to the principle of inclusion. For example The SEN Strategy for Removing Barriers to Achievement (DFES, 2004), refers to the previous Government's "inclusion agenda" (DFES, 2004:34), "developing inclusive practice" (DFES, 2004:31). It launched a new Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) (DFESa, 2004:27 and 31) and claimed to set out the Labour Government's vision for the education of children with SEN and disability and provide clear national leadership (ibid). The Labour Government's vision as set out in its own strategy (DFES, 2004) was based on an old framework that struggled to keep up with the diverse range of needs across the 1.5 million children categorised as having some kind of special educational need (Education and Skills Committee, 2006:9). A framework, which although working towards inclusive education, also has a place for special schools as the SEN Strategy states, that "successful special schools have an important contribution to make in preparing mainstream schools to support their inclusion." (DFES, 2004:38). This position has not been overturned by the current coalition Government's recent Green Paper (DFE, 2011) which argues for:

The "bias towards inclusion" is to end, and the Green Paper suggests that parent power may prevent the closure of special schools which could be saved with Free School status. (Young, 2011, Para 3)

The Warnock SEN framework (DES, 1978) is struggling to remain fit for purpose (Warnock, 2005; Education and Skills, 2006). The failure of the system/framework to cope with the rising number of children who have Statements in mainstream schools is causing high levels of frustration to parents, children, teachers and local authorities (Education and Skills Committee, 2006; DFE, 2011 & 2012).

The aims of the Labour Government's 2004 SEN Strategy (DFES, 2004), the Every Child Matters agenda, and the Warnock Report in 1978 (DES, 1978) have much in



common. They include joined up services, tailoring support around the needs of the children, a wide range of measurements for success, equipping the workforce, and raising standards. The current Government's attempt at reforming SEN provision advocates "a single multi-agency approach" (DFE, 2011:5). The problem this poses for those charged with implementing these initiatives is that the details of exactly how the aims will become a reality for children is not clear. Already there is criticism that "this would reintroduce anti-inclusion laws that were in place until 2001" (Pring, 2011: Para.4). With this lack of policy clarity it is important at this point to discuss what advocates of inclusive education perceive it to be.

### **2.3 What should Inclusive Education be like?**

Warnock (2005) argued that inclusive education was not working for children who have Statements in mainstream schools. She called for Statements to become the passport to special schools. Her views were met with hostile response from Barton (2005) who argued that such views are a reflection of her naivety and ignorance relating to the issues of special educational needs, inclusion and how they contribute to challenging all forms of discrimination and exclusion (Barton, 2005). He argues that:

Inclusive education is about responding to diversity; it is about listening to unfamiliar voices, being open, empowering all members and celebrating 'difference' in dignified ways (Barton, 1997:233).

From an inclusion perspective, an effective school is a school that has inclusive values, and that includes and values a diversity of children (Corbett 1999). Valuing diversity allows for the reconceptualisation of difference and for the production of non-hierarchical plural identity (Ballard 1995, Munro 1997). Hence:

The school that values diversity does not separate or exclude anyone, but instead celebrates the plurality of its community, to the benefit and inclusion of all (Benjamin, 2002).

Evans explains that:

This is the idea that we merit equal though not identical treatment; equal in the sense of 'equally good, and appropriate to us' (Evans, 1995:3).

So how can this be achieved? Barton (1997) argues that achieving this will involve the need for a well-thought-through, adequately resourced and carefully monitored staff development policy helping to translate official rhetoric into substantive terms in the life of all pupils. The operative words being 'all pupils' and the expectation being, if policy and practice are governed by such an equal opportunities policy, then it will be easier to identify inappropriate practices within the school, and as Barton (*ibid*) argues, these should be challenged. However, although teachers generally support the concept of inclusive education (Avramidis, 2005; Barton, 2003; Croll and Moses, 2000), they perceive it as difficult (Abrar *et al*, 2010; Baines *et al*, 1994; Scruggs and Mastropieri, 1996). An acknowledgment that inclusion is difficult is captured in the following quote:

most [teachers] do agree that inclusion is a desirable educational goal. Attitudes change, however, when educators are asked to consider inclusive education in relation to student outcomes in the forms of standardized test scores, grades, and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) goals. Since schools and educators are facing increasing accountability for student performance, teachers are more hesitant toward inclusion when student outcomes are mentioned. (Torreno, 2011: para 2)

Reasons for this conditional support for inclusion have been cited as:

- competitive policy environment (Torreno, 2011; Harris, 2007; Avramidis, 2005)
- lack of training, (*ibid*)
- teacher attitude (Torreno, 2011).

This study acknowledges that:

'inclusive' education policy, as a concept, process and an experienced reality, denies difficulty rather than embraces it. (Rogers, 2007:56).

While most teachers are in favour of inclusion, some studies have shown that school leaders are not always in support of it (Abrar *et al*, 2011; Hodgkinson *et al*, 2009). The question that needs asking is: can Statements be inclusive? Harris explains that:

The head teacher and other staff owe a common law duty of care in the performance of their professional role to refer a seriously under-performing pupil to the LEA (Harris, 2007:329).

If a child has been assessed and placed in the category of Statement, then the provision to meet their needs must be put in place (DFES, 2001). However, this should be done carefully so that their participation within the classroom enriches the learning environment (Barton, 2003), and so that children are treated equally, but not standardised (not treated as one size fits all). Hence, equal treatment should mean equally good but appropriate to the child (Evans, 1995). To get to this point where children get equal treatment demands a good knowledge of the children on the part of the teachers/staff (hooks, 1997 and 2003), leading to Barton's (1997) call for a carefully thought through staff development policy. Within this context, although the Statement is not ideal it can be perceived as an entitlement and used for the benefit of the child (Corbett, 2001). Advocates of inclusive education (e.g. Booth and Ainscow, 2002) argue that it is not an easy option as there are challenging issues to grapple with, for example its non alignment with the standards agenda (see section 2.2). The Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) acknowledges that inclusion is a process and various schools are at various stages of this process. They advise schools to interpret inclusion based on their particular/local context, so it is not something that can be copied exactly from one school to another and they urge schools to approach it as a whole school improvement issue (Booth and Ainscow, 2002). The ideal would be whether schools can make the necessary provision for the

child without the need for a Statement but if that ideal cannot be realised, can teachers use the resources made available by the Statement in such a way that the child does not feel excluded? Some argue that by employing the social model of inclusion this is possible and should be happening. How would this work?

There is an acceptance that people are different in various ways (Barton, 1997; Benjamin, 2002) and Perrin and Nirje stress the “acceptance of a person with their handicap” (Perrin and Nirje, 1985:70). The social model of disability is based on a distinction between the terms impairment and disability. Within this context, impairment is an injury, illness, or any condition, which causes or is likely to cause a loss or difference of physiological or psychological functions. A disabled person is a person who has impairment. The social model, however, locates ‘disability’ “squarely within society” (Oliver, 1996:32) because disability is perceived as the result of negative interactions that take place between a person with impairment and their environment. Section 1(2) of the DDA defines a disabled person as a person who has disability and this is the case if:

He or she has a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on her or his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities (Section 1 para 1).

The social model of disability perceives society as the main contributory factor in disabling people through its systemic barriers (policy) and negative attitudes. It seeks to avoid any form of medicalisation or link to impairment. This model considers attempts to change individuals (normalisation) as discriminatory and prejudiced because of the value judgment non-disabled people make about the lives of disabled people. In fact the very existence of a disabled people’s movement requires disabled people to identify themselves as disabled (Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare,

1996). The social model extends to include all disabled people, (those who have learning difficulties, learning disabilities, or who are mentally handicapped, or people with emotional, mental health or behavioural problems) (Googley, 2001). Including all pupils implies restructuring mainstream schools, where the onus is on the school to meet the needs of all its pupils, removing barriers to learning so that they can all fulfill their learning potential (Ainscow, 1997; Booth, 2001). Organisational arrangements or restructuring should not depend on goodwill since such arrangements are likely to breakdown if the people driving it move or change jobs. As a result Booth and Ainscow (2002) advocate structural changes in schools involving a process whereby school culture, policies and policy implementations are inclusive and transparent to all, resulting in increased pupil participation in both the culture and curricula of mainstream schools. The classroom environment is perceived as an “aspirational” space (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:13) with real potential for learning for all who are part of it. This has implications for pedagogy (Lewis and Norwich, 2005; MacBeath *et al*, 2006) as such an approach:

implies a reforming agenda which requires changes not only in the way that teachers help children but also in the way the curriculum itself is shaped and constructed (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:13).

The rationale behind this is that SEN does not arise out of some deficit within the child, but out of deficiencies in the way schools are organised, and resourced and how the curriculum is presented to the child (Clark *et al*, 1995; Ainscow, 1997; DEE, 2000; Avramidis *et al* 2002). It is informed by how schools define particular pupils, including questionable views of ‘ability’. This led theorists like Ainscow (1997) and Booth (2001) to advocate the restructuring of special needs as a process of school improvement and removing barriers to learning for all, making schools more inclusive. Besides, researchers in this field like Rouse and Florian (1996), who

investigated characteristics of effective inclusive schools have pointed to the ability to create and maintain a conducive learning climate, where responsibility for all children being shared between all staff is a prerequisite. There is a shift towards education for all, and an inclusive classroom is perceived as one which values diversity, respects individuals' learning styles which, at the same time develops a strong sense of community and works towards a common goal (Corbett, 1999; Freire 1974; hooks, 1997 and 2003). To be able to do this, the teacher needs to understand the child well (hooks, 1997) or as Vygotsky (1978) explains it, the teacher understands the child's zone of proximal development so that teaching can be geared in such a way that effective learning can occur.

Hence, at the very least there is considerable confusion over the Government's vision for children who have Statements. The framework (based on Warnock's, DES, 1978) for inclusion is lacking in clear strategic direction (Education and Skills Committee, 2006). Lack of clear strategic direction is not the only issue here, for at the same time as the Government was pursuing its policy of inclusive education, another policy initiative was introduced to run concurrently. This is the Standards Agenda and a discussion of this follows.

## **2.4 The Standards Agenda**

This is the policy agenda aimed at raising standards in education (The Standards Agenda) (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). As the House of Commons Committee argues:

raising attainment in schools is still the main agenda for the Government and, as a result, targets and league tables will continue to drive behaviour in the education sector (House of Commons, 2006:65).

In England and Wales, this Standards Agenda came into being with the Education Reform Act of 1988 (beginning in the 1986 Act) causing significant impact on the educational context in which integration and inclusion policies have to co-exist.

### **The Education Reform Act 1988**

Maclure (1988) described this Act as the most important educational Act since 1944. It introduced the National Curriculum, parental choice, pupil assessments/league tables, open enrolment, as well as local management of schools (Lunt and Norwich 1999) and school accountability and effectiveness. These changes directly affected commitment to an inclusive ethos and in fact worked against the goal of inclusive education (Lunt and Norwich 1999; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Benjamin, 2002; House of Commons, 2006; Harris, 2007). The introduction of market pressures made schools unwilling to admit children who they believed might negatively affect their academic successes and this remains the case today with the creation of Academies and Free Schools (DFE, 2012; Harris & Vasagar, 2012).

Teachers in a 2002 survey conducted by the Audit Commission (Audit Commission, 2002) identified balancing the demands of the standards agenda and making schools inclusive as:

Perhaps the key issue that the Government in England needs to address if committed to pursuing its policy of greater inclusion (Audit Commission, 2002: para. 122).

As a means of making schools and teachers more accountable and competitive the 1988 Act allowed open enrolment, which led to “cream-skimming and hence increased inequality” (Bartlett, 1993: 150). This is where the highest achieving school attract the highest achieving pupils and vice versa. At the same time, it did not quite

define the roles of schools and LEAs, it left LEAs with open-ended commitments and very limited funds. Competition between schools had been introduced in education and these intensified in the 1990s. At the same time, LA support services were severely reduced and funds were increasingly delegated to schools (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). This led to greater competition between schools through performance indicators such as league tables (House of Commons, 2006:62). Responsibility for most pupils was delegated to schools apart from additional needs for Statements. The assumption here was that "schools are best placed to make decisions about support arrangements for pupils experiencing barriers to their learning" (House of Commons, 2006:59-60) and Head Teachers and SENCOs are left to address the individual needs of pupils. However, as there is no 'ring fencing' of SEN funding (and lack of effective monitoring) it can easily be used in other ways by schools (House of Commons, 2006:61).

There is a presumption that market forces are more efficient at allocating scarce resources and that they respond better to individual needs, resulting in the enhancement of educational standards through public accountability (accountability for children who are the subjects of Statements as well) (Harris, 2007). Schools were and still are judged by their academic performance which means that the Standards Agenda is a societal criteria of desirability (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; House of Commons, 2006) with increasing demands for improved performance and accountability. A school's performance links to funding, resulting in competition between schools, which leads to selection based on academic ability and behaviour (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). As well as the above, the introduction of the National Curriculum (QCA, 2008) and the performance of all children being judged by the same criteria regardless of their differing learning needs, only serves to emphasise:



A society dependent on a normalizing culture which is labouring under the myth of cultural essentialism, hanging desperately to the views that social differences are best incidental variances on one, universal, true and essentially human nature (Lemert, 1997:40).

Even before the National Curriculum came into use in 1988, there was the concern that it could be perceived to be overtly bureaucratic, a problem which arose:

From the need to record pupils' attainment frequently and in detail in order to provide data by which overall standards could be measured (DFES, 1987:5).

However, the pursuance of the 'standards agenda', vis-à-vis the inclusion agenda (Tomlinson, 2005), has raised concerns that, within such an education climate, the Statement may not "protect the interests of those children" (Warnock, 2005:27) who receive it or "safeguard" their interest (London SEN Regional Partnership, 2004:1). In the current climate Academies may not have the same legal obligations towards children with special needs as do maintained schools (Harris & Vasagar, 2012). As a result, Warnock now describes the Statement system as a "fish out of water" (Warnock, 2005:27).

This is still a serious concern, despite the previous Government's endorsement of a curriculum and pedagogy built around the concept of personalised learning (Milliband, 2004). It can be argued that children 'with' SEN already benefit from the personalisation inherent in the SEN framework, which provides an individualised assessment of need and tailored provision. In practice this is not always the case due to the pressures of the Standards agenda. In fact the current Government proposes to get rid of the individual education plan (IEP) (DFE, 2011). The previous Government (and now the current coalition Government) did not achieve the promise

made in the 2004 SEN strategy to put children with SEN at the heart of personalised learning (DFES, 2004). Below is an example of this where:

The cohort of pupils being targeted under personalised learning to be a different cohort to those with special educational needs... the personalised learning pathway seems to target those who are just missing those crucial level boundaries or grade boundaries at GCSE level [or Level 4 at KS2]. (Education and Skills committee, 2006:65).

The prominence of standards over inclusion (Benjamin, 2002) means pedagogy caters for the needs of the majority and, with the pressing issue of time (Freire, 1974), often lacks the scope to realise such personalised intentions especially with the expected level of accountability on the part of teachers to achieve set standards as the following quote makes evident:

Because teachers play such a key role, they must be held accountable for their success in sustaining and raising the achievement of their pupils. We will be prepared to act where the performance of teachers or heads fall below acceptable standards (DFEE, 1997: ch5. Para4).

As will be seen in Chapters Five to Seven this level of 'accountability' has been used by some teachers to justify why they are reluctant to include children who have Statements. The level of accountability for teachers and SENCOs is very high making Statements problematic because school staff are "operating in the context of zero tolerance" (Davies *et al*, 1998:1). Yet there is the argument that:

The statement of educational needs enables inclusive practice to continue by increasing the financial and professional support to mainstream educational setting (Anthony and Bogue, 2006:100).

The argument this study makes is that, depending on point of views, theoretically Statements can be exclusionary or inclusive. In practice the pressure of the standards agenda on teachers has forced some to develop practices in their classrooms which excludes some children who have Statements. The risk of falling

“below acceptable standards” (DFEE, 1997:ch5. Para4) has been judged by most teachers in this study as too much to bear (since a consequence is that), the Government “will be prepared to act” (ibid). As a result instead of Statements being used to include children, they are being used as a measure to identify those children who are most unlikely to contribute to raised standards. The Government advocates “high quality education whether in mainstream or special schools” (DFE, 2011:9) yet there is the threat of “new measures into school performance management” (ibid) which relate to the progress of the lowest attainers. Regardless of the theory, in practice the evidence clearly demonstrates that at present Inclusion and the Standards Agendas sit very uncomfortably together. A head teacher (Hodkinson *et al*, 2009) explains why:

I fully support the principle of inclusive education, just not in my school and not when I am about to undergo an OFSTED inspection... There is no way that I am going to put my best, most experienced teachers with them [children who have Statements], it would be an inefficient use of my resources. It is the number of pupils I get to Level 4 that I am judged on and mine and the teachers’ jobs depend on this, not how happy the children are or how many we include... I am concerned I cannot meet government standards and be a paid up member of inclusive education club, it just does not work. (Hodkinson *et al*, 2009:83).

Also the problem is that the provision of financial and professional support made available by the Statement does not necessarily enable inclusion. The way resources made available by Statements are used in mainstream schools is an area of contention (Pinney, 2003) and will be discussed later. Furthermore, it is clear from the literature discussed so far that the standards agenda still remains a higher Government priority. It is the standards agenda, not inclusion, that is at the heart of the existing personalisation agenda (DFES, 2004; Education and Skills Committee, 2006). However, how such complexity and controversy may impact on the education of children who have Statements in mainstream schools is of significant importance

to this study and a discussion of this follows.

#### **2.4.1 Inclusive education for children who have Statements**

Government policy initiatives regarding education present teachers with conflicting needs and duties, which creates a situation rendering it impossible to achieve effective inclusion for children who have Statements (Evans and Lunt, 2002; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). There are “apparent conflicts in government policy between the ‘standard’ and ‘league tables’ discourse and the ‘inclusive schools’ discourse” (Evans and Lunt, 2002:1). Benjamin’s works (2002, 2002A) argue robustly that they contradict each other, a view supported by Gillborn and Youdell (2000), whose work demonstrates that they often operate largely in opposition to each other. Although some (e.g. London Borough of Hackney, 2000) argue that the Standards Agenda does enable inclusive education to flourish, others (e.g. Benjamin, 2002A) see it as having serious implications for the learning of children with Statements in mainstream schools. This has brought into question the efficacy of Statements in promoting inclusive education (Piney 2003, Underwood, 2008; Warnock, 2005; William and Maloney 1999), since it places emphasis on individual needs rather than focusing on inclusive practices (London Borough of Hackney, 2000).

‘Higher’ standards in educational attainment is of course desirable as Holt critically explains the:

education institution is underpinned by normative assumptions of “appropriate” childhood development, whereby, childhood is viewed as a period of preparation for “productive”, conforming adulthood”. (Holt, 2002:1).

However, pursuing this policy at the same time as promoting inclusive education might be perceived as a lack of commitment on the Government's part to inclusion for those children who might never attain the desired standards. As a Headteacher in Holt's (2004) study argues, "Government policy on education is employment orientated, which it has to be to a point" (ibid, p8). Nevertheless, for many of the children in her school, attaining the levels required to get them into jobs is an uphill task - so what about them? Within the current pursuit of the specific grades for all pupils, as advocated by the standards agenda, 'rights' are being 'prioritised' in favour of the majority (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). This means that children who do not meet what society considers to be the 'standard' (Harris & Vasagar, 2012; Benjamin, 2002 and 2002A) (that is level 4 at the end of KS2 and A-C GCSE grades at the end of KS4) (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) are considered to be 'non-conforming' (Foucault, 1979). Nevertheless, they still need to be given "something that will enhance their life...even if they don't get a job" (Holt, 2004:8). This might raise tension for some teachers and a discussion follows.

## **2.5 Contradictions and tensions**

The pressure of the standards agenda on teachers (Farrell and Ainscow 2002:2) means most have chosen to raise the attainment of the majority of children in their class by meeting the majority's needs (see Section 3.2). However, the question that needs to be asked is- who ensures that children who have Statements are included in mainstream schools? Chapter Three includes discussions about some teachers who through their classroom pedagogies go out of their way to be inclusive, but these often come with risks. An understanding of what drives teachers to engage in 'risk' (3.6) is important in this study, hence, the research questions on teachers'

views and beliefs about Statements and inclusion. Some of the arguments against Statements are based on the beliefs that “such categories may encourage too strong a focus on the present ‘failures’ or ‘problems’ experienced by students rather than on their future possibilities and achievements” (Florian *et al*, 2004:118). This is because categorisation can lead to labelling, promoting an emphasis on a deficit model and encouraging professionals to ignore interactive and contextual aspects of teaching and learning (Florian *et al*, 2004:118).

To understand how this works, Foucault’s (1977 & 1979) work has been useful to show how difference is constructed and the effect this may have on the education of children who have Statements in mainstream schools. Foucault highlights the way children are identified as being different, implying that the ‘gaze’ or the perceptions of those responsible for making the identification may be subjective and may have a negative outcome on the child’s education. So how is difference constructed?

### **The construction of difference**

‘Difference’ in this study is determined by the judgments society has made about the child based on what society considers as the ‘standards’ (Oliver, 1998). To be different means the ‘odd one out’, being ‘abnormal’ or not belonging. Its meaning is contrary to the definition of inclusion (section 1.0). Being perceived as different (having the Statement label) has negative connotations because there are implications for belonging to a non-conformist category (Goodson and Dowbiggin, 1990).

When a child is tagged with the Statement label, individual education plans (IEPs) are used to promote their educational development. Whilst this might seem positive and:

may at first glance look humane but in fact [it] operates to reify the subject 'special needs student' and to close down the discursive spaces available to her (Benjamin, 2002a:97)

This is because the pupil is perceived as not promoting the interest of the teacher (Angelides *et al*, 2004), which in today's educational climate means to achieve the 'best' result possible and to improve the school's position in the league table (Benjamin 2002A, Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Foucault explains that:

the whole indefinite domain of the non-conforming is punishable... a pupil's 'offence' is not only a minor infraction, but also inability to carry out his task (Foucault, 1979:178-179).

Inability to carry out a task can be equated to underachievement in today's standard's agenda as seen in Benjamin (2002a) and Gillborn and Youdell (2000), hence, equating children categorised as having 'SEN' as 'non-conformists'. The standards are determined by "a culturally valuable mechanism" (Oliver, 1998:52), and in this study the standards are judged based on the Standard Assessment Tasks (SATs) results. In spite of the campaign to ban SATs (NAHT newsletter to members, (16.4.2010) and the boycott of KS2 SATs by some schools in summer 2010 (Shepherd, 2010) this remains the case. For the 'non-conformist' to attain the 'standard', they have to receive 'interventions' or 'punishment', which is decided by culturally normative means (Oliver, 1994 and 1998). Such punishment (interventions) must be essentially corrective, favouring exercises that are intensified and multiplied forms of training, which are repeated several times (Foucault, 1977). Freire argues against the use of such training because:

For students, the more simply and docilely they receive the contents with which their teachers 'fill' them in the name of knowledge, the less they are

able to think and the more they become merely repetitive (Freire, 1974:125).

Such intervention seeks to 'normalise', hence, the fact that a child needs to be normalised, positions the child as 'abnormal' in a 'negative' way that is not valued. There is acknowledgement here that some children are disadvantaged for whatever reason and that disadvantage needs to be rectified. For example, Gee (1992) and Angelides *et al* (2004) argue that some children run the risk of not being heard because they do not operate within a discourse that is favourable to their teachers' interests. The consequence of this is "multiple and cumulative...[because] knowledge, expertise and identity are all implicated in discourse" (MacLure, 2003:177). What does normalisation entail?

### **Normalisation**

A deficit discourse is set in place by using interventions to correct what society judges to be 'defective' in the child and the outcome is expected to be a normalising effect, where the perceived 'deficit' within the child is corrected. The whole idea of correction is a strong indication that there is something wrong that needs fixing. It implies a deficit perspective that sees special needs as 'within child' making the environment a non-factor. However, who decides what is wrong and what needs fixing, and what is this based on? 'Value-giving' measures establishing the difference in relation to the standard have been used but have met with criticisms from advocates of critical pedagogy, like Freire (1974 and 1997) and hooks (1994 and 2003). For children who do not meet the standards, 'punishment' (Foucault 1977 & 1979) is used to normalise them. The 'punishment', if appropriately meted, normalises the pupil, so that they invariably become 'docile' (Goodson and



Dowbiggin, 1990). However, to be able to do this, the system has to be one that marks or assesses:

the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes; but also punishes and rewards (Foucault, 1979:180).

By assessing as the system requires, issues of contention arise. hooks argues that, “this sorting-out process includes rituals of shaming” (hooks, 2003:99). In Foucault’s work, ‘non-conformists’ are in the ‘class of the bad’. His description of what happens in this class follows:

The class of the ‘bad’ received the most punishment. They were the ‘shameful’ class, for which special regulations were drawn up so that those who belonged to it would always be separated from the others (Foucault, 1979: 182).

Everything about this class is negative: ‘bad’, ‘punishment’, ‘shameful’, ‘regulated’, ‘separated’. There is permanence about the situation that once a child is placed in this class they will “always be separated from the others” (ibid). Parallels can be drawn between this ‘class of the bad’ and children who have Statements, judging by the interventions they receive. In this case study, school children who have Statements were generally referred to as ‘Statemented pupils’ (a category which is used in the school census data base). The permanence of the term ‘Statemented’ is parallel to that of the concept of ‘always be[ing] separated from the others’. The idea that they are always separated from the rest and can never aspire to attain the standard is in direct collision with the child’s human rights. This is very evident in Gillborn and Youdell’s (2000) work where ‘setting’ ensures this happens and difference is made obvious because such a system ‘spaces out’ (Armstrong, 2003) those who do not meet the standard, which, in this case, are usually those who have Statements.

The argument here is that sometimes when schools say they are including children, it is often based on an integration or individual model (Oliver, 1994 and 1996) backed up by “the stereotypes of disability that call forth pity, fear and patronising attitude” (DEE, 2002:41). The assessments carried out during the statutory assessment process seek advice from different perspectives (many of these are from medical/ quasi medical professionals such as speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, clinical psychologists, paediatricians as well as the parents and the school staff). This medical focus is reflected in the new proposal (DFE, 2012) where Statements have been renamed Education and Health Care Plans. The focus here is on the child’s difficulties rather than on their educational needs, and the intention is to normalise the child through interventions from various professionals, because the child is viewed as negatively different (DEE, 2002). As a result, the child might internalise this negative view, leading to low self-esteem and poor achievement creating children like those in Foucault’s class of shame (Foucault, 1977). Foucault’s analogy of the ‘non-conformist’ makes transparent a system and situation (the creation of difference) which is socially constructed. This creates a cycle of dependency and exclusion, which might be difficult to break and it could thus be argued that the process of Statementing creates special needs. The way the system works when children have Statements is on individual adjustment rather than institutional reforms (Corbett, 1999), hence no major restructuring is needed on the part of the school (Booth, 1996A) even though from a policy perspective with the advent of the SENDA (DFES, 2001) schools must be seen to make reasonable adjustments. This system has created unequal power relations within schools and again this negatively impacts on the education of pupils who have Statements and a discussion of this follows.

### 2.5.1 Power relations

For normalisation to occur, there is a high dependence on the professional judgments of those who have the duty to identify 'abnormality' or difference in relation to other differences and which positions the child in today's "'shameful' class" (Foucault, 1979:183) or category of 'statemented pupil'. Power relations, in this study, imply "the relationships between structures and people, and the historically shaped and socially shared understanding of people's roles and relationships" (Hilferty, 2008:165). With the advent of 'Every Child Matters', (now Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural aspects of learning) schools have to work with other agencies (for example health, social care, police and all other agencies who might be working for the benefit of the child) so that there is a concerted effort to effectively meet the child's needs of education, health, safety, well-being and economic progress. This means schools have to work in ways that they had not done before. Hence, multi-agency working is now the norm, and this has implications on power relations, which is discussed in two parts: staff (in relation to outside professionals and in relation to other staff within the school) and the children.

Taken at face value, the whole system of testing and assessment within an educational climate where there is zero tolerance for not conforming to the Standards Agenda (Benjamin, 2002; Education and Skills Committee, 2006) may present the teacher as victim who also has to conform within a context of zero tolerance (Davies *et al*, 1998). The reasons for such an assumption may be found in Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* where he highlights a culture of oppression in education. His book describes the maintenance of oppression through the education system where the pedagogy has become a banking system resulting from the pressures of the Standards Agenda where the student is viewed as an

empty account to be filled by the teacher and which “transforms students into receiving objects. It attempts to control thinking and action, leads men and women to adjust to the world, and inhibits their creative power” (Freire, 1970: 77). He writes of a culture of silence - where the teacher (the oppressed) does not get to speak back to the oppressor (policy maker) because of fear of reprimand and zero tolerance. This has created the notion of ‘deprofessionalised’ teachers. In this work, I argue that this is not always the case, that in fact teachers within the context of their classrooms have the power to explore the “the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradiction so that both are simultaneously students and teachers” (Freire, 1970:72). For example teachers like Miss Titch recognise that “their fundamental objective is to fight alongside the people for the recovery of the people’s stolen humanity” (Freire, 1970:95), not to “win the people over” to their side (Freire, 1970, p. 95) (as seen in Chapters Five, Six and Seven).

### **School staff**

There are various views on power relations and school staff, especially among teachers. For example, one view is that of collaboration, as advocated by the ‘every child matters’ initiative, where:

Social workers, speech and language therapists, teachers and TAs working together to identify needs ... and to identify strategies to support children, agree targets and monitor progress in learning (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:26).

MacBeath *et al* (ibid) argue that while this is the ideal and can work very well for the child, this model is often the exception rather than the norm since such a model relies “on a happy combination of expertise, teamwork and a considerable investment of time” (ibid). Resource limitation makes this difficult to attain. In

addition, teachers are “driven by outsiders with imposed policies” (Dadds, 1997:3) leading to the drive to achieve the standards (Benjamin, 2002A), often taking precedence over inclusion in the classroom (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). With this view is the assumption that the power, voice and authority of the outside expert is elevated and valued, as opposed to that of the people who actually know the children (that is, the teacher and parents). As a result most teachers often become ‘dogma-driven’ as Dadds (1997) describes it, leading some (e.g. MacBeath *et al*) to describe such an approach as “anti-school and anti-learning culture” (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:12).

Others challenge this view that teachers are ‘dogma-driven’ and lacking in judgement, arguing that, actually, the quality of provision and opportunities for children rest with the teachers (Eisner, 2005 cited in MacBeath *et al* 2006; hooks, 2003). There is an advocacy for the development of ‘the expert within’ (Dadds, 1997) through effective training (Barton, 1997). However, within the ‘statementing’ policy arena, the perceptions of the external experts still seem to carry more weight than that of the teachers, and this sometimes causes resentment. For example:

Class teachers were often disappointed and even offended not to have the opportunity to directly discuss individual children in their class with educational psychologists during their assessment visits, especially when they were the ones required to work extra hours to make sure all the paperwork was complete and as they knew the child best (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:26).

Tomlinson (1982 and 2005) also views professional involvement as suspicious, usually motivated by personal interest rather than the interest of the child. Freire argues that “in this rigid, vertical structure of relationships there is no room for dialogue” (Freire, 1974:120), yet through this process, the decision made is based

on the most powerful voice in this policy arena (which is usually not the teacher or the parents). Their:

eye becomes the depository and source of clarity; it has the power to bring the truth to light that it receives only to the extent that it has brought it to light (Foucault, 1979:xiii)

The issue here is the one raised by Tomlinson (2005) that professionals are motivated by personal interests. Young (2011) explains this as:

a “perverse incentive” to over-identify children as having SEN, with the label perpetuating a culture of low expectations without the right support being put in place. (Young, 2011:para5)

There seems to be an assumption here that ‘seeing can be selective’ and subjective- to serve their personal interest rather than the child’s. The question here is whose ‘gaze’ is it, and how does this impact on the type of ‘provision’ and ‘education’ the child receives as a result?’ As Corbett (1996) argues: discourses are specific to disciplines. So history and the context within which a ‘gaze’ is interpreted are important, as they establish an individual or profession within a context and within a discourse, hence, establishing preconceptions. Freire explains that, “there exists... a solid link between the present and the past, within which the present points to the future” (Freire, 1974:132). This has implications for power relations, because the professional who is doing the gazing will have a certain degree of influence, which reflects the ‘clout’ their gaze commands within the policy arena (Armstrong, 2003), and which, in this study, is the classroom and the school. This gaze, as critical theorists (e.g. Freire, 1974 and 1998; hooks, 1994 and 2003; Kanpol, 1994 and 1996) argue, is influenced very strongly by personal experience. What implication does the ‘gaze’ (perception) have within the school context, and how does this impact on the power relations within school? More importantly, how does the gaze affect the way teachers perceive a child and how does the teacher’s perception

affect the way they implement policy within their practice? These are all critical questions as they impact on how teachers carry out, enact or recreate policy in the classroom.

How does policy manifest within the classroom? Hilferty (2008) argues that this relates to three central power issues: the rights of teachers to participate in policy making, the recognition of school management of the teachers' expertise and the pursuit of increased professional status for teachers. Within this social context of the school, who has the clout to make things happen? How much power do the Headteacher, the SENCO, the class teacher or the LSA have, and how do these contribute to the normalisation effect? Also how do the dynamics of the relationships between the school professionals impact on the inclusion of pupils who have Statements? Oliver (1998) argues that, as professionals control services, normalisation enables professionals to have a key role in the debate and delivery of services. Statements, due to their deficit derivation, are situated within this process of normalisation because of the assessment and 'punishment' that they mete out against the 'offence'. Who decides which 'punishment' is meted out to the non-conformist? This is done through the Statementing process- the end product of which is the 'Statement text'.

### **The Statement text**

This is an amalgamation of various reports from various agencies where issues are contested, changed and negotiated (Fulcher, 1999; Trowler, 1998), and "only certain influences and agendas are recognised as legitimate, only certain voices are heard in any point in time" (Ball,1994:5). In this arena, where everyone discusses and

quibbles for prominence under the guise of 'every child matters' and multi-agency working, do teachers believe that their discourse is strong enough to assume equality with the other discourses? Are they accepting that their position in the power hierarchy is inferior to others? Or are they implying that in today's educational environment, where every child matters and extended schooling is the norm, the distribution, and redistribution, of power is done in such a way that different people can do certain things and not others?

There is caution from Ball (1994) that, after the battle in the arena where various discourses contest for prominence, (Armstrong, 2003; Larsen, 2001), meaning of the text often becomes blurred. The argument here is not against putting things in writing, but that, instead of just accepting what is given teachers especially, and school staff in general, have to interrogate text and interpret it in the context of their own culture, ideology, history and resources (Fulcher, 1999; Trowler, 1998; Booth and Ainscow 2002). Within the classroom, teachers still have a lot of influence and can decide whether or not a child is included or excluded. Do they sit the child on the 'bench of the ignorant' (Foucault, 1977), and view them as 'deviant' (Oliver, 1998), or do they value the child's diversity (Benjamin, 2002)? This is a very powerful position to be in, regardless of prior assessments and, as Salvia and Munson (1986) argue, teachers are not just following what policies dictate, but they are also allowing personal experiences to impact on their choices and practices (Cole, 2004; Lewis and Norwich, 2005; Nias, 1996).

However, while professionals become empowered by the culturally determined 'standard', the process of normalisation does not challenge the legitimacy of



professionals, instead, it gives them continued authority and legitimates their practice (Oliver, 1998:52). So, while, on the surface, there is this drive to get children to achieve the standards (standards agenda), normalisation fails to address the 'disabling' society they live in. The result is that differences (Benjamin, 2002A) are being made very obvious, and the 'punishment' (Foucault, 1977) or 'Statement' effect, in an effort to attain normality for all, often maintains the "normal/abnormal dichotomy" (Oliver, 1994:12).

### **The children**

Children who are 'deviant' from the 'standard', and whom professionals believe, even with 'punishment' (or interventions), will not be able to achieve the norm, are educated within another type of discourse, which Benjamin (2002A) describes as the consolation discourse. They are perceived as being of 'second priority' (Vlachou, 1997), a perception where values and priorities are contrary to equity (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). This is because "schools are operating in a hostile legislative context" (Rouse and Florian, 1997:324) where market place principles have replaced principles of equity, social progress and altruism (Rouse and Florian, 1997; Barton 1997).

Within the consolation discourse, below-national-norm (pre-national curriculum levels or P-levels) and achievements are presented as success. Benjamin describes this practice as a "'consolation discourse' of success" (Benjamin, 2002A:97), "a cousin of the self-esteem discourse" (ibid:108). Within this study, the issue is not that some children's attainment maybe significantly behind others' and this study is not advocating a denial of difference (Jenkinson, 1997; Peters, 1995). However, the contention here is that difference should be valued (Barton, 1997 & 2003; Benjamin,

2002) and that all children should be given opportunities to achieve the best they can. Ainscow's advocacy is for attainment in the inclusive context to be more transformative than normative (Ainscow, 1999) as this will make the system better for everyone. Evaluation of SEN children's work more often praises effort rather than real assessment of the learning. There are lots of 'well done', 'good try' and 'good effort'. The consolation discourse of individual success is deployed where staff judge that a pupil is:

inherently unable to aspire to reach the prestigious grades that count as success for the majority, and values their individual progress, even though such non-normative progress cannot be recognized within the dominant notions of 'success' (Benjamin, 2002A:108).

Benjamin (2002A) argues that teachers who deploy this discourse work in the present, and do not take account of the future. Parallels of this view can be drawn from Foucault's analysis of the children of the Christian schools who:

Must never be placed in a 'lesson' of which they are not yet capable, for this would expose them to the danger of being unable to learn anything (Foucault, 1977:179)

In today's context, children who operate within this discourse have individual education plans (IEPs), wherein, like the children of the Christian schools:

the duration of each stage is fixed by regulation and a pupil who at the end of three examinations has been unable to pass into higher order must be placed, well in evidence, on the bench of the 'ignorant' (Foucault, 1977: 179)

Freire argues that "if people are assumed to be... ignorant, there must be people who think of them in that way" (Freire, 1974:118). However:

by affirming the absolute ignorance of others, they reveal their own ignorance... This supposes that ignorance is always present in others, never in the person who alienates (ibid).

Often, in mainstream schools, the 'ignorant' are children who have Statements, and, in the discursive field constructed by the standards agenda, "bright futures cannot be

imagined for those students whose performance does not reach 'expected levels'" (Benjamin, 2002A:108). This means that, under the guise of inclusive education, children who have Statements might be treated less favourably compared with their peers, because, measured against the 'norm', they are perceived as 'negatively' different. Also, sometimes as OFSTED inspectors observed:

some schools [that] identified pupils as having special educational needs when their needs were no different from those of most other pupils. (Douglas Silas Solicitors, 2010:8)

Hence funding could be used more equitably for:

There are significant problems relating to the funding of provision for SEN. These problems concern... the lack of transparency in the funding process and the failure to monitor how the funding is spent. (Keates, 2005:2)

The problem this presents for inclusion in a society where success is judged by how many Level 4s or grade A-Cs (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) a child achieves is how can we avoid a hierarchy in which some institutions are seen as 'better' or 'worse' than others, so that those condemned as 'worse' feel excluded in a very strong sense of the term? (Wilson, 2000:301).

Besides, the assumption of 'one size fits all' (especially in relation to the norm) defeats the purpose of what inclusion sets out to achieve: individualised learning within a context where diversity is valued, allowing for the reconceptualisation of difference (Ballard 1995, Munro 1997). Instead, what 'one size fits all' seems to achieve is a two tier system where certain schools take only certain children, resulting in ghetto/'sink' schools (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000).

This raises questions about what an inclusive school is, and highlights the dilemma faced by schools that are committed to inclusive education—should they judge their

success in terms of how inclusive they are, or should they be judged on their educational output in terms of examination results? If effectiveness is measured in terms of attainment, how are the standards set? Inclusion, within this discourse of 'specialness', implies unequal participation, selection, setting different standards, having different expectations and generally encouraging policies and practices of exclusion (Benjamin, 2002 & 2002A; Corbett, 1996), and this manifests in different ways.

Benjamin (2002A) and Gillborn and Youdell (2000) showed that such categorisation only leads to inequality of treatment depending on which label the pupil is 'tagged' with. Besides, even when two children are 'tagged' with the same label, equality of treatment cannot always be guaranteed (Benjamin, 2002 and 2002A; Salvia and Munson 1986). Benjamin (2002A) argues that this is because the concept of inclusion is underpinned by the SEN discourse of 'equal but different'. Some (e.g. Angelides *et al*, 2004; Ross 2000) argue that, even with the above, not all children can be effectively included and reasons for this are culturally determined. This is because mainstream provision for pupils who have Statements is different, and depends on the perception society has about their 'SEN', resulting in cultural marginalisation (Angelides *et al*, 2004; and Gee 1992) and a discussion of this follows.

### **2.5.2 Cultural Marginalisation**

Farrell (2001) and Benjamin (2002) argue that teachers are generally positive about the idea of inclusion, particularly for pupils with physical and sensory difficulties, and less so for those perceived to have emotional and behavioural difficulties (Croll and Moses, 2000; Ross, 2000; Benjamin, 2002; Angelides *et al*, 2004). This makes the

existence of a hierarchy of SEN obvious, even within schools that claim to be inclusive. Hence, the effectiveness of inclusive education on academic achievement can be dependent on the nature of the child's perceived SEN (Salvia and Munson, 1986). According to Salvia and Munson, these are factors that, in a matter of speaking, are related to the child and staff attitudes are positive or negative depending on how the child is categorised. The question is whether barriers to learning are created by staff perception of the type of disability and the educational needs the child is exhibiting, as Clough and Lindsay (1991) argue. This sort of attitude to inclusion has been described by Angelides *et al* (2004) and Gee (1992), as cultural marginalisation, because we live in a society where high achievers and quiet children are seen to promote the interests of the teacher. Low achievers—for example, children who have been diagnosed with Down's syndrome (Cunningham *et al*, 1998) and children who lack social, emotional and behavioural skills—violate teachers' interests, and those with Statements often fall in the second category. Cunningham *et al*, (1998) suggested that, in such situations, mainstream placements yield marginal academic benefits. This sort of attitude defeats the intentions of inclusive education as set in 'The Index for Inclusion' (Booth *et al* 2002), where inclusion is seen as the removal of barriers to learning. Cultural marginalisation manifests in various ways, one of which is the use of resources which can further position the child as different, depending on the way resources are used to include (or not to include) the child.

### **2.5.3 Use of Resources**

Concerns have been raised about how well Statements are working when they often "provide resources to schools in a way that fails to support inclusive practice"

(Pinney, 2003:3). How are barriers to learning removed in the classroom? The extra resources attached to the Statement are often in the form of a Teaching Assistants (TA) or learning support assistants (LSAs). However:

researchers analysed the effects of TA support on 8,200 pupils, across seven year groups in England and Wales, and found that those who received the most support from TAs made less progress than similar pupils with less TA support, even after controlling for pupil factors that might confound the relationship, such as prior attainment and level of special educational need (SEN). (Blatchford *et al*, 2010:1)

Sometimes the TA/LSA is left to teach the child (Tennant, 2001; Blatchford *et al*, 2010). This is because attitudes are still not in tune with the practices of inclusion (Booth and Ainscow 1998, Mittler 2000, Lacey 2001; Blatchford *et al*, 2010). For example, TAs/LSAs are “left to teach, because the teacher did not know how to meet the complex needs of pupils” (Lacey, 2001:164) and some teachers just leave the TA/LSA to teach the child, because they do not know how to break things down for the child (ibid:165), a view shared by Lorenz (1998). Lorenz noted that TAs/LSAs are being left to paper-over the cracks of a poorly differentiated curriculum, an example of the ineffective use of TAs/LSAs. They are not given time to communicate and plan effectively with teachers (Connell, 2009), and TAs/LSAs complain that the work is not pitched at the level of the child (Lorenz, 1998; Blatchford *et al*, 2010). As research shows:

There has been a drift toward TAs becoming, in effect, the primary educators of such pupils. Teachers like this arrangement, because they can then teach the rest of the class, in the knowledge that the children in most need get more individual attention. But the more support pupils get from TAs, the less they get from teachers. (Blatchford *et al*, 2010:1).

Furthermore:

TA-to-pupil interactions were found to be less effective and less educationally valuable compared with teacher-to-pupil interactions. Perhaps then it is unsurprising that the negative effects of TA support on academic progress was more marked for pupils with the highest levels of SEN (Webster *et al*, 2010:1-2).

TAs/LSAs do not often know the teacher's expectations (Balshaw, 1999), yet they are expected to clarify instructions for the child, acting as an 'accessor' (Tennant, 2001), which requires good subject knowledge as well as a command of different methods of teaching. Hence, the TA/LSA is doing "the most difficult role of all" (Tennant, 2001:186) and this requires training. TAs/LSAs are not trained teachers.

Besides, when the TA/LSA works with a group of children, they are often directed to support the pupil with a Statement who is placed in lower ability groups, which are made up of children with difficult behaviour (Lacey, 2001). The crucial point, for this study is some class teachers assume that having an TA/LSA means there is no further need for any other resource to support the child (Balshaw, 1992; Underwood, 2008), and, in their practice, they consider the TA/LSA as solely responsible for implementing the child's Individual Education Plan (Derrington *et al*, 1996). Some might question whether this still happens today, but as Underwood's (2008) interview with a class teacher makes evident:

I'm not participating that much...you see...because when she's in the room, the Education Assistants are with her, and I can go over and talk to her and do a few things, but then you know what it's like when there are twenty-four other children in the room (Underwood, 2008:38).

The teacher in this quote (Brenda) is not aware of what is in the child's IEP and what the Education Assistant had been doing with the child but the child's mother later revealed that the child had been working on the programme with the Education assistants and making progress. This class teacher does not see herself as being responsible for this child's learning, in fact she:

does not view herself as part of the solution to breaking down barriers for Karen's learning; rather the barriers are described as being a result of Karen's individual disabilities (Underwood, 2008:39).

(I hasten to add that practices like this were one of the main triggers of this study).

The professional standards for teachers from September 2007 states clearly in C10 that teachers on the main scale (Core or C) (STR 24/2005) should:

Have a good up-to-date knowledge and understanding of a range of teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies and know how to use and adapt them, including how to personalise learning and provide opportunities for all learners to achieve their potential (C10) (Extract from the Rewards and Incentives Group's (RIG) evidence (Section 9 'The New Teacher Professionalism') to the School Teacher's Review Body (STRB) on May 2005)

Within the current educational climate of a 'curriculum for all' and personalised learning, the teacher has been placed centre stage in the realisation of inclusive education for pupils who have Statements as the National Standards for teachers further states in C19 that teachers must:

Know how to make effective personalised provision for those they teach, including those for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs or disabilities, and how to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion in their teaching. (ibid)

Having the standards is one thing, but implementing and embedding them within teachers' classroom practices is another, for as Vlachou-Balafouti and Zoniou-Sideris found out in Greece, "the quality of children's education has been merely dependent on the nature and degree of teacher's commitment and goodwill" (Vlachou-Balafouti and Zoniou-Sideris, 2002:38).

Rose (2000,) conducted a study to examine the approaches used to provide access to learning for Key Stage 2 (KS2) children in a school described by OFSTED as being committed to inclusive education. Rose concluded that this was the case because there was effective management of LSAs, and this provided benefit for the whole class, not just for the pupil who has the Statement. There was good



collaboration between the LSA and the class teacher and, although the LSA was appointed initially for the designated child, in this school the approach was to allocate an LSA to a named teacher, not the child. This is a good example of Clark *et al's* (1995) advocated method of school restructuring and effective organisation as a means of effective inclusion. It also shows how SENCOs, school management and the school's inclusion policy can impact on the experience of pupils within the classroom. As well as the above, contradictions to inclusive education exist in other forms, for example through the continued existence of special schools and the next section examines why this is the case.

#### **2.5.4 Continuing existence of special schools**

Warnock (2005) argues that Statements cannot be looked at in isolation, but that their usefulness will only be understood if they are looked at in the context of special schools and inclusion. 'Special schools', in this context, means a segregated setting "supporting children and young people with the most severe and complex SEN" (DFES, 2003:14). The previous government's strategies for removing barriers to achievement (DFES, 2004; Education and Skills Committee, 2006) was to guarantee the continued existence of special schools: "we believe that special schools have an important role to play within the overall spectrum of provision for children with SEN" (DFES, 2004:34). This strategy is still the coalition government's policy (Cameron, 2010). The recommendations of the Special Schools Working Group (DFES; 2003) ensure that the need for special schools, and their availability, will continue. Whilst the purpose of this thesis is not to argue against the existence of special schools, it still acknowledges the difficulties their continuing existence might have on the

Government's commitment to inclusive education, since their existence offers stakeholders the choice not to include.

Thus inclusive education appears to be problematic because the concept of inclusion and special schools do not align and so children are excluded from full participation (Holt, 2004) "Inclusion brings a stronger right to be different and still centrally placed and participating" (Culham and Nind, 2003:74). By including directives that schools have to take reasonable steps to anticipate and remove barriers to learning (SENDA, 2001), the statutory framework might be perceived as giving schools, and other stakeholders, get-out clauses so they do not have to include. The word 'reasonable' is very subjective and open to interpretation and this lack of clarity and specificity is also evident in the SEN Code of Practice (DFES, 2001):

- (3) If a statement is maintained under section 324 for the child, he must be educated in a mainstream school unless that is incompatible with –
  - (a) the wishes of his parent, or (b) the provision of efficient education for other children. (DFES, 2001:25)

Again, a determined school can always find arguments against inclusion, if they choose to do so. Comments in a private paper by Warnock (2005) reinforce the view that the efficacy of Statements needs to be examined, as policy and government 'spin' seems to be working in the opposite direction; therefore, playing tug of war with children's education. Messages from successive governments are contradictory, as, on the one hand, they:

signaled our commitment to the principle of inclusion and the need to rethink the role of special schools within this context (DFES, 2004:25);

on the other, the strategy recognises that some children:

require more specialist provision than those currently available in most mainstream schools (ibid:36)

This view is supported by some parents (Harris 2008), who:

bitterly resisted the closure of special schools believing their children benefit from the specialist care they offer (Clark, 2005:6).

It is also shared by various professionals in government who argue that “for children with severe and complex needs the statement should continue to provide a guarantee of special schools or unit provision” (National Assembly for Wales, 2006:14) it has also been signalled as the way forward by the new Government under Cameron (Bartley, 2010; DFE 2011). This support for special schools was enhanced by Warnock when she described the removal of pupils from special schools and their placement in mainstream schools as a “disastrous legacy” (Phillips, 2005:7) arguing that:

Governments must come to recognize that, even if inclusion is an ideal for society in general, it may not always be an ideal for schools (Phillips, 2005:7).

Support from some parts of the media for special schools has also been made obvious when Warnock is described as “A monstrous ego who has destroyed so much of our moral and social heritage” (Phillips, 2005:7). This refers to her 1978 recommendation to educate children with Statements in mainstream schools. Criticism for Warnock also comes from those who seek inclusion (e.g. Barton, 2005) because she introduced Statements. Warnock now calls for a review of the current system, and suggests strengthening the role of special schools (Warnock, 2005). So, even with the support of the Statement, if a child does not measure up to the standards, schools can exercise their right to refuse to include them.

Being faced with the demands of the market economy in education, schools are finding it difficult to implement inclusion in the way that advocates of inclusive education (e.g. Armstrong, 2003; Barton, 1997; Corbett, 1996) advise and this has detrimental effects on children who have Statements in mainstream schools. The

continuing existence of special schools is problematic within the scope of this study because as some have argued, “ ‘special’ education – excludes disabled people from full participation in society” (Holt, 2004:2). They do not often provide formal educational accreditation which therefore excludes some young people from the labour market (Gleeson, 1999), and thus reinforces negative differences (Thomas 1997). As one parent who moved his child from a mainstream to a special school testified, “academic expectations for Sally have been much higher in a mainstream school rather than a special school, and she achieved more as a result” (Shepherd, 2009:1). However, inclusion is not without difficulties, as some critiques have pointed out. It can be inadequately funded (Holt, 2004), it can present limited opportunities for disabled children to develop positive disabled identities (Cook *et al*, 2001) and result in children with SEN in mainstream schools facing exclusion and being labelled as ‘other’ via negative representation of their difference (Valentine and Skelton, 2003). The issue of what to do if someone within an inclusive ethos chooses “to exercise a right to be outside of mainstream provision” (Culham and Nind, 2003:74) is still unresolved for inclusionists. Against this backdrop of the above discussions, ‘where is inclusive education in mainstream schools?’ I now turn to where inclusive education is heading. What is the ideal – what should inclusion look like? What is the way forward regarding children who are the subjects of Statements in mainstream schools? These questions are considered in the next section.

## **2.6 Summary**

Within education, children who have Statements in mainstream schools are perceived as ‘negatively’ different. The Statement has become part of the normalizing process where children who have Statements are sometimes made to sit

on the bench of the ignorant in the class of shame (Foucault, 1977). On the other hand, there is the call for inclusive education which calls for education for all where all children are valued for who they are and are given equality of participation in an inclusive environment (Barton, 2003). However, in the current educational climate with the Standards Agenda taking precedence over Inclusive Education (Lunt and Norwich, 1999), the pressures of accountability, the demands of the Standards Agenda can make it difficult for teachers to implement 'effective' inclusion. As things are at the moment, Statements are still a statutory requirement and the Statement is a legal document (Harris, 2008) and until such a time when they cease to exist, once they are granted, they must be implemented (ibid). The proposed Education and Health Care Plan (DFE, 2011 & 2012) with all the assessment it proposes before membership, will in the view of this study, still position the bearers of plans as 'different'. Inclusion within this study is a matter of perception and perceptions come with the label.

However, as the policy of Statementing children within an inclusive ethos stands, it excludes rather than includes. Already the coalition Government has completed its consultation in reforming the education of children who have special educational needs and there is some hope that there will be positive change. However, until such a change in policy occurs, it is still very difficult to ensure that resources made available to facilitate inclusion of pupils who have Statements are used for the purpose for which they are intended.

The existence of (two) policies that do not align does not help the situation of the children who have Statements. The question is what can be done to enable these

children to receive effective education now? Is there a middle ground between the two extremes? Some researchers (e.g. Cole, 2005) have argued that implementing the demands of the Statement and Inclusion in the current educational climate within a whole school sometimes requires a SENCO and staff who are prepared to subvert existing policy (Cole, 2005). Whilst it is contradictory for SENCOs to be responsible for inclusion, because of the sheer contradiction of the two concepts of SEN and inclusion (Benjamin, 2002A), SENCOs are still responsible for inclusion and SEN in most schools (MacBeath *et al*, 2006). Contradictory because SEN works on a deficit model of disability, whilst Inclusion is underpinned by a social model of disability (Culham and Nind, 2003:73), however, the question could be whether the lessons learned from the management of SEN can provide the foundations for effective management of Inclusion? In other words, can the lessons learned from SEN be used to manage Inclusion better? It is not an ideal situation, but until there is a transformation in policy (Ainscow, 1999), school staff will continue to have to make the best of a bad situation. For subversion to be successful, the SENCO and staff are usually emotionally engaged (Nias, 1996), the Head supports such subversion, with parental support and there needs to be "a caring, nurturing climate to support these difficult processes" (Dadds, 1997:9). At the whole school level, subversion could mean the SENCO might not always have regards for the SEN Code of Practice (DFES, 2001), for example, in some cases, meeting the child's needs in other ways instead of making referrals for statutory assessment. Does this mean that transgression of the current policies through subversion is the way forward and what would this mean for the education of children who are the subject of Statements? Attention now turns to the second part of the literature review and the focus of it is transgression and what it offers to teachers and children alike.

## Chapter Three

### Teaching beyond the Boundaries

#### 3.1 Introduction

Pedagogical practices which improve standards such as promoting meaningful dialogue, making the classroom exciting, a teacher being caring and having moral purpose are all consistent with good contemporary educational practices. Within the pressurised context of today's educational environment (2.4), implementing these universally accepted features of 'good practice' against the demands of achieving ever higher standards can be challenging for teachers (ATL, 2011). As the current focus on higher standards fails:

to take into account the individual needs of children and their teachers, or local circumstances. They also fail to take into account the prior experiential knowledge that teachers might usefully bring to bear on any analysis of children's progress. (Gray, 2007:194).

This chapter focuses on teachers and what they can do to ensure that children who have Statements are included in their classroom. The argument here is that even with the Statement and its negative connotations (Chapter Two) teachers *can* make a difference to the education of children who have a Statement if they elect to do so. Some teachers are able to include children who have Statements in their class by transgressing (1a) policy. It is not often 'good practice', but as things stand, this seems to be the only way they can ensure that some children get their entitlement. This can be risky because it might reduce the focus on standards (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Wilson, 2000) due to the high level of teacher engagement needed (hooks, 1994). The chapter begins by looking at how and why teachers transgress, and what transgression looks like in the classroom and how it benefits the education

of children who have Statements. In this chapter, the implementation of a pedagogy that encourages participation for all has been used to explain how transgression (see 3.2) manifests within the classroom and studies of critical pedagogy such as Apple (2002), Freire (1974) and hooks (1994 & 2003) have informed on the discussion. There is an acknowledgement of the risks of transgression and this is followed by a discussion of why, even with the risk involved, some teachers find the need to transgress and others do not. What drives teachers who transgress? How do they perceive themselves within the policy arena, and most importantly how do their actions impact on the learning of children who are the subject of a Statement? The key question for this chapter is: is it the 'statutory' in 'Statements', or is it teacher affectivity that enables inclusion or exclusion of a child?

### **3.2 What is the boundary?**

Transgression means teaching beyond the boundaries, as opposed to teaching within the boundaries set by the 'standard', or, as hooks describes it, "a movement against and beyond boundaries" (hooks, 1994:12). Kanpol (1997) argues that understanding boundary breaking requires first an understanding of acts of conformity to the dominant value structure—an approach which:

embrace[s] depersonalised methods for educating students, that often translate into the regulation and standardization of teacher practices and curricula. As such, the role of the teacher (who is "trained") is reduced to that of a passive, "objective," and "efficient" distributor of information. (Leistyna and Woodrum, 1996:1).

The teacher who 'transgressed' in this study actually just implemented 'good practice' but against the school's pursuit of standards, it seemed like she was transgressing various policies (see Chapters Five, Six and Seven). For teachers to be able to do this, they need to know and go "beyond the boundaries of what is



acceptable, so that we can think and rethink" (hooks, 1994:12) in order to create a new vision. This also implies an element of resistance, which "can be viewed as more of a hopeful and emancipatory sign" (Kanpol, 1997:34), as opposed to "teachers bending policy and creating rule-breaking activities" (ibid). Critical pedagogy underpins this approach to teaching, and this happens when teachers interrogate what they are being asked to do.

As Gray argues, "standardised procedures fail to take into account the individual needs of children and their teachers, or local circumstances" (Gray, 2007:194). The role of the teacher seems to be a passive one. However, not all teachers accept a passive role nor do they conform to the standards of fulfilling the expectation of ensuring pupils attain Level 4 in the SATs by the time they leave year six. Some teachers question the purpose of teaching to a 'measurement' and look for alternatives where their practice is guided by the concept of 'critical pedagogy' (Apple, 2002; Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994; Kanpol, 1994 and 1997). This involves an engagement with the issue of what schools are, whom they serve and what multiple functions they have (Kanpol, 1997:80). Such an engagement acknowledges the existence of multiple realities that occur in schools, "in particular, those realities that alienate and subordinate...students and professional staff" (Kanpol, 1997:80). Such realities put institutional concerns before human interest, causing tension. However, being critical implies recognition of the fact that tensions inherent in schools and classrooms are "political and relate directly to social and cultural conflicts revolving around...dominant oppressive values" (ibid). Pedagogy is considered to be value laden in practice, and teaching in the classrooms is one of the strategies used to realise this value-laden pedagogy. Within their classrooms, different teachers can decide to make their own judgment on what they consider constitutes correct

knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Kanpol, 1994 and 1997). The individual actions of teachers within their classrooms, makes the classroom very important as the outgoing QCA Director of Curriculum writes, “it is not what reviews say; it is what teachers do that really matters” (Waters, 2009:17).

In her book, *Spaced Out*, Armstrong (2003) looked at the physical space and how its usage may include or exclude some members of the classroom. This concept of the physical space and its implications has also been the focus of Steedman’s (1987) work, entitled ‘Prison Houses’- a feeling later reiterated by hooks when she described the classroom as:

A place I hated...[it] began to feel more like a prison, a place of punishment and confinement rather than a place of promise and possibility (hooks, 1994:4).

This image of the classroom resonates with the classroom in Foucault’s ‘Discipline and Punishment’ (Foucault, 1979). The question is: why is the imagery of the classroom so bleak? Kanpol argues that this is because schools and classrooms connected very little to children’s “everyday experiences... The school’s middle-class, competitive logic simply made no sense” (Kanpol, 1997:34). The sort of connective pedagogy that Corbett (2001) spoke about and Vygotsky (1978) described can be lacking in some settings. hook’s classroom experience as a student can be used to explain how and why this may be the case, as she writes:

tormented by the classroom reality...[where teachers] often used the classroom to enact rituals of control that were about domination and unjust exercise of power (hooks, 1994:5).

Such rituals in today’s education environment present a constant pressure on all pupils to conform to the same model (Foucault, 1977; MacBeath *et al*, 2006) because of the demands of the standards agenda (Benjamin, 2002A; Gillborn and

Youdell, 2000). For children who have Statements such an environment can cause the classroom to cease to be “a place of pleasure or ecstasy” (hooks, 1994:4) as Statements are seen as part of the normalising process (See section 2.2). This, as well as teachers’ sometimes negative perception of inclusion (OFSTED, 2004), especially the inclusion of children who have Statements, has led to some children’s participation within the classroom being marginalised (Angelides *et al*, 2004; and Gee 1992).

The issue is whether this happens because teachers assume they are required to implement policies that have been decided elsewhere and they feel powerless to do what they believe is the right thing- that is, to have moral purpose (Fullan, 1999) in their career. Ball (1990A) argued that the discourse surrounding this is a “discourse of derision” (Osborn *et al*, 2000:45), which is a political construction of teachers’ work (Gewirtz, 1997; Ball, 1990) shaped by whether or not the teacher can set targets, teach to the National Curriculum recommendations and successfully get children to meet the ‘standards’ as set by the Government (Benjamin, 2002 and 2002A; Helsby, 1999). Such a perception:

requires that teachers make intellectual demands upon their pupils and that they spend time and energy not on children’s social and emotional needs but upon their own teaching (Nias, 1997:16).

In Frosties’ Staff Handbook, one of the guidelines for teachers states that “Work should be set of a suitable standard for the class”. The contention here is whether the suitable standard for the class is suitable for every member of the class or does one size fit all? (Hornby,1999). Within this educational environment, what constitutes a ‘good’ teacher and can a ‘good’ teacher meet the needs of children who have Statements? Is a teacher who is good at meeting the standard also good at meeting

the needs of a child who has a Statement? The Government construction of a 'good' teacher is a teacher who teaches to meet the standard set by the Government for their class (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Osborn *et al*, 2000). Within this discourse, a 'good teacher' is synonymous with an 'effective teacher', and teachers are perceived "as instructors rather than as organizers and facilitators" (Cole, 2004:29). Underlying this Government constructed discourse of a teacher is an assumption that teachers "will be both willing and able to adapt their practice in appropriate directions" (Osborn *et al*, 2000:46). The role of teachers within this discourse is to:

get on straightforwardly with the job of implementing the new curriculum and assessment procedures... teachers should be clear about what needs to be done and should be given training where necessary in doing it (Croll, 1996:14)

The Coalition Government's proposals to reform SEN provision echoes this view when it acknowledges that, "schools... have been part of the problem. Teachers have not always had the training to identify children's needs or provide the right help" (Young, 2011: para4). So where there are failures within this discourse, the blame can often be seen as arising from teacher capability, thus seeing policy implementation as problematic. This discourse "elevates the power, voice and authority of the outside expert... whilst failing to value and cultivate the inner expertise of the teacher" (Dadds, 1997:3). David Cameron's pledge to introduce "'crack teams' of medical experts" (Cameron, 2010:1) is evidence of the consistency of the Government's view regardless of the party in power. Others argue that teachers straying from the 'business of teaching and learning' might contribute to teacher work overload, which can be detrimental to both pupils and teachers (Nias, 1997). As a German teacher in Nias' study points out:

The trouble with English teachers is that they care too much, and about the wrong things. I care if my pupils do not learn as they should. That's enough (Nias, 1997:11)

The focus of this 'cognitive aim' is on teaching, learning and attainment, and any distractions from these are discouraged. This role of the teacher as implementer of policy that has been centrally formulated is refuted by the view that the teachers' role should be an affective one because pursuing a cognitive aim does not always work in the interest of pupils who are the subject of Statements. Why is this the case? The next section looks at the affective aim and how it may impact on the education of children who are the subject of Statements.

### **3.3 The affective aim**

Research (Cole, 2004; Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994; Kanpol, 1997) has shown that not all teachers conform to the standards as dictated by the standards agenda (which is that children should achieve level 4 in KS2 SATs and GCSE A-C grades at the end of KS4). Some teachers are making the choice to teach differently in order to engage pupils effectively within their classrooms. hooks' reason was her longing:

passionately to teach differently from the way I had been taught (hooks, 1994:7).

hooks was referring to the way she was taught and the challenges she experienced as a black female in the segregated American school system and later on when she had to attend a white school. In Kanpol's research, Betty's (a teacher):

official and hidden curriculum was both consciously and unconsciously used for the purpose of challenging forms of alienation, operation and subordination (Kanpol, 1997:35).

In their effort to challenge the inequalities presented by a 'regular' classroom that conforms to the demands of the dominant expectation some teachers have decided to transgress in their classrooms, and to teach differently. What does teaching differently entail, and how can this way of teaching possibly effectively engage pupils

who have Statements in a mainstream class? It can be argued that teachers already have the power to engage pupils who have Statements when the Government advises teachers to provide appropriate access to the curriculum for every child (DFES, 2001:51). Others have gone further to argue that the real power rests with “the teacher in the classroom” (MPs debate, 23/07/2010). However, the deciding factor within the classroom seems to be the pressure of the ‘standards agenda’ as Freire (1974) argues, in this race to achieve the standards, time is of the essence. He writes that:

there is ‘no time to lose,’ ‘there is a syllabus to be completed.’ Once again in the name of time, which is not to be wasted... (Freire, 1974:125)

Such urgency can result in the transfer of knowledge becoming passive and hooked on the “banking system” (hooks, 1994:14), where “the only thing for the [teacher] to do is to recount the facts which must then be memorized” (Freire, 1974:123). Freire argues that such an engagement does not encourage dialogue, which problematically translates the learning to the child’s reality (or experience). Effective teaching according to Freire is:

to present the material in such a way as to encourage students to think critically so that they might give their own interpretation to the data. (Freire, 1974:124)

Freire argues that teaching should be presented problematically, as “pupils ought to discover its relation to something in human life” (ibid). The only way education can become meaningful is when children are able to generalise knowledge, that is, “the objectivity of this truth in one system has to be shown problematically...[and] translated into concrete experience in another” (ibid). This is the reason for learning/teaching; as he says “challenge is the basic to the constitution of knowledge” (Freire, 1974:125). Freire uses a magic analogy to explain the absence and seriousness of effective dialogue when he writes:

when a people perceive a concrete fact of reality without 'entering into' it critically in order to be able to 'look at' it from within, faced with the appearance of a mastery, and being unsure of themselves, they assume the magic posture...finding themselves unable to apprehend the challenge in its authentic relationships with other facts (Freire, 1974:103).

Freire's advocacy for meaningful dialogue in education stresses the importance of action and reflection: "praxis" (Freire, 1974:102). That by reflecting on their actions in relation to the world around them, human beings (teachers and pupils) are beings of praxis, and only through dialogue and problematising can knowledge be transformed. Apple (1982) argues that the very nature of the educational institution makes it impossible for the role of the teacher to be neutral and he rejects the traditional views of instruction and assessment as a neutral process because schools are sites for organising knowledge and power. He argues that teachers' attempts to address inequality within the school environment are mitigated by external modes of control, which are often regularised by outside agents. This in my view is part of the reason why the whole concept of 'praxis' as Freire described, is appealing, yet complex.

The concern is that challenging inequalities in the classroom can sometimes be absent in this 'urgent' teaching environment where time is an issue and meeting GCSE (Gillborn and Youdel, 2000) and SATs targets can determine the reputation of a school (Lunt and Norwich, 1999; MacBeath *et al*, 2006). The meaningful dialogue that Friere advocates is contrary to Gove's (the current Education Secretary) whose preferred choice is to have "independent educational psychologists...[to] assess each child and create a 'Special Needs Profile' for them" (Tuckey, 2010:5).

Pursuing standards exclusively can exclude children who are the subjects of Statements. As hooks explains:

to enter [a] classroom setting...with a will to share the desire to encourage excitement, was to transgress...[because] excitement could not be generated without full recognition of the fact that there could never be an absolute set agenda governing teaching practices (hooks, 1994:7).

hooks is transgressing because she does not have a set agenda to govern her practice. In most classrooms in the schools I have worked in, one of the management requirements is for there to be a class timetable. As one teacher said to me “the best lessons I have taught are those I have not planned for, because they come naturally from the children’s questioning” (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch). For hooks, transgression ensured she realised her passion for excitement in learning when she wrote that the “classroom should be an exciting place never boring” (hooks, 1994:7). This notion of pleasure in the classroom could be viewed as “potentially disruptive of the atmosphere of seriousness assumed to be essential to the learning process” (hooks, 1994:7) that would guarantee attainment of the expected standard. For example, in March 2008, in my capacity as an Assistant Head, I was having a discussion with a teacher about her lessons being too formal and her response was:

how can I make it less formal when they have come into my class not being able to read, write or add numbers? They have SATs very soon, and they have not covered half the syllabus, how is being less formal going to ensure they get the grade? (Discussion with class teacher, 2005).

To this teacher, the risk of not meeting the standards was not worth taking. She knew the pressure she would be under if the school’s league table position was poor as a result of her teaching. She also knew that she had limited time to cover the prescribed syllabus, so time was an issue. This teacher wanted to conform to the norm, and was not going to transgress, putting her professional reputation on the



line. This meant that she was not addressing the individual needs of the pupil who was the subject of a Statement. Whereas, when students are seen in their particularity as individuals and interacted with according to their needs, they tend to be able to connect to the curriculum and find lessons, and the classroom, exciting (Corbett, 2001; Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994:7).

How does a teacher go about creating an exciting classroom where the students can be seen in their particularity and interacted with according to their needs? hooks (1994 and 2003) suggests that this is when they are able to create an environment which stimulates intellectual/academic engagement. She argues that this can only happen effectively if the teacher can create a classroom community. Her argument is based on her belief that:

our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing one another's presence. (hooks, 1994:8).

A classroom which generates the kind of excitement described above has to be one that values diversity as described by Barton (1997), where there is ongoing recognition of everyone's contribution to the dynamics of the class (this idea of a classroom community is explored in chapters five and six where the class teacher actively includes all the children in her class). A view shared by Freire when he writes:

for true education incarnates the permanent search of people together with others for their becoming more fully human in the world in which they exist. (Freire, 1974:96).

Every one contributes (viewed constructively as resources), and hooks argues that such contribution can "enhance the capacity of any class to create an open learning environment" (hooks, 1994:8). Within such a classroom, the traditional notion of the

teacher, as being solely responsible for classroom dynamics, is deconstructed in favour of all within the room sharing that responsibility; however, the teacher has to 'set the scene' (Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994 and 2003; Kanpol, 1997; Leistyna *et al*, 1996). hooks advocates classrooms to be communal places that can create and sustain a learning environment that encourages intellectual openness and pleasure in learning (hooks, 1994 and 2003). Can teachers create such communal classrooms? Do they have the power to do so? The answer to this question depends on how the teacher perceives their role and why.

### **3.4 The Teachers' perception of their role**

Whatever role a teacher adopts, depends on whether they are driven by an affective aim or a cognitive aim (Nias, 1997). In fact, Salzberger-Wittenberg, *et al*, (1983) argued that teaching is a matter for the heart as well as the head. This is important, because a classroom is a place where:

teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. The empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risk...most [teachers] must practice being vulnerable in the classroom, being wholly present in mind, body, and spirit (hooks, 1994:21)

By engaging in such a holistic way, teachers embrace the challenge of self-actualisation, and, as hooks argues, they will be "better able to create pedagogical practices that engage students, providing them with...capacity to live fully and deeply" (hooks, 1994:22). What does this mean for the education of children who are the subjects of Statement?

Various studies have shown that it is how teachers' personal and professional lives interact within the classroom (Cole, 2004; Osborn *et al*, 2000; Nias, 1996 & 1997; Steedman, 1987) that decides how policies are implemented. Studies (e.g. Dadds,

1997) that challenge “the politically dominant and hostile image of primary teachers as dogma-driven...and needing to be driven by outsiders with imposed policies” (Dadds, 1997:3) have argued that the teacher is an “inner professional expert” (ibid) who needs to be valued and cultivated by the system. Fullan (1991) argues that ‘outside experts’ may have solutions that might be wrong, or difficult to implement, but the teacher often knows the child well. Secondly, a dependence on outside agencies might discourage teachers from valuing their own inner expertise (a view shared by Dadds, 1996 and 1997). Such dependence can often foster an atmosphere of “a delivery notion of school improvement” (Dadds, 1997:4), presenting teachers as “empty vessels waiting, like technical operatives, to receive packages of reform from the outside...[which can be implemented] unproblematically to insider practice” (ibid).

However, teachers bring with them their own understanding, experiences, values, beliefs and wisdom (Cole, 2004; Osborn *et al*, 2000; Dadds, 1997; Nias, 1996; Steedman, 1987; Apple, 1986) to their practice, which affect the way they interpret policies. These shape the role a teacher adopts in the policy arena, and, depending on the level of feelings and convictions, some teachers might decide to subvert policy—that which Croll describes as “opponents of Government policy” (Croll, 1996:15). This is especially the case when teachers are “driven by a strong sense of social justice” (Nias, 1997). Subversion is usually by choice on an individual level, and:

the choices and decisions that teachers make are purely...specific to them...the overall policy impact will be to dilute the effects of a policy initiative (Croll, 1996:18).

Relating specifically to this study, research suggests that where they have personally experienced the effect of SEN or Statement teachers tend to include children who have Statements (Cole, 2004). This is because they are able to empathise, and:

unless pupils and teachers can relate as people... little learning is likely to take place (Nias, 1997:16)

Hence, as policy-makers (as indeed every teacher is within their classroom) (Ball, 1994), teachers “need to question carefully what we care about and why, and who most benefits from teachers’ caring” (Nias, 1997:11). If teachers very strongly feel a sense of social justice and altruism, then it is possible that certain policies, for example giving children Statements, can be subverted. This is because of the ‘lack’ of equality in the way ‘difference’ is constructed within schools (see section 2.3.1). As Croll (1996) reports, policy subversion is often not something that individual teachers or institutions would own up to because of the difficulties it might present. Teachers often tend to subvert policies in a covert, rather than overt, way. For example, in Croll’s (1996) study, even though teachers supported subversion, they did not acknowledge that during interviews, although they supported union action by refusing to carry out statutory assessment and SATs as required by the Government in 1993 (Croll, 1996:15).

As already stated, teachers also include pupils who have Statements effectively if they have ‘a moral purpose’ (Dadds, 1997; Fullan, 1999) and see themselves as agents of change. The works of Cole (2004), Osborn *et al* (2000), Nias (1989, 1996, 1997) and Dadds (1997) have shown that where teachers perceive their role as ‘moral agents’ (Osborn *et al*, 2000), making emotional connections (Cole, 2004) between children and their learning and reaching out to the child, be it as a ‘matter of

good faith' (Cole, 2004), or because it is the right thing to do, instead of just because it is dictated by a policy, inclusion can be more effective. What are these values and experiences that impact on teachers' practices and, more importantly, why do some teachers have such deep emotional relationships with their work? Nias (1996) explains that this is because it is a job which involves "interaction among people and inevitably therefore has an emotional dimension" (Nias, 1996:296). For 'people-based' professions:

The work of many teachers is unique ...in that it involves intensive personal interactions, often in crowded conditions, with large number of pupils who are frequently energetic, spontaneous, immature and preoccupied with their own interest" (Nias, 1996:296)

Within this unique setting is the expectation that "relationships developed in them will be part of the children's learning" (ibid). Teachers need to have a moral purpose (Fullan, 1999; Nias, 1999) as well as a strong conviction that what they are teaching matters and they need to be able to communicate this to their pupils. At the centre of being able to do this, Nias argues, is teachers' ability "to question what they are doing and the reasons why" (Nias, 1997:15).

Another reason for teacher affectivity is the fact that:

teachers invest their 'selves' in their work often so closely merging their sense of personal and professional identity that the classroom...becomes a main site for their self-esteem and fulfillment and so too for their vulnerability (Nias, 1996:297).

How does this self-esteem manifest? This can be positive when they feel they are effectively assisting all pupils to learn while managing their classroom effectively. Dadds (1997) reports on the work of a teacher (Vicky) who had not experienced 'disability' first hand, but, within her practice, had embraced the challenges of

teaching two 'disabled' pupils, and how this led to a new mastery of her practice.

This experience was described by Dadds as one that:

had to be felt, lived and achieved for it to be practical knowledge. It was constructed, not delivered (Dadds, 1997:5)

When teachers make the policy decision to go beyond the 'cognitive' aim, and its "teacherly perspective" (Dadds, 1997:5), stepping into other ways of seeing and valuing children apart from the 'standards agenda', then they can begin to empathise and include children effectively. In Dadds' (1997) study, Vicky reported how she felt after supporting one of the pupils who had a fit:

I am a little elated. I've got through the first one and it felt like a hurdle I knew I would have to take. He had come out of it okay. I felt a bit pleased with myself and relieved. I knew that if it happened again, I could do it again (Dadds, 1997:5)

Being able to address this child's 'special needs' was not enough for this teacher; she also made the policy decision to ensure that the pressure remains on the child to achieve the best of their ability, as she says "we owe it to them as we do to the other 29 in the class" (ibid). Caring for children, in Vicky's opinion, involves making them ambitious and safe. However, this happened because 'caring' is also central to her practice; moreover she considers the fact that she has been entrusted to teach these two pupils as 'my boss trusting me'.

Vicky's determination as a result of her 'caring' value shows how teachers have enormous of influence over what actually happens within the classroom. So, although this study is about the inclusion of pupils who have Statements in mainstream schools, the onus of making this happen is on the teachers. The Statement discourse is deficit and it is often difficult to function positively within an inclusive ethos. However, if a teacher's values are within the affective paradigm, s/he

can go that extra mile to ensure that children who are subjects of Statements are included. Within the current statutory framework with its 'get out clauses', enforcing the child's statutory rights seems to have become a matter of 'good faith', as Cole (2004) describes it. Enforcing children's statutory right can be effective when teachers have what Fullan (1999) describes as a 'moral purpose', often with emotional attachment to the whole concept of being 'disempowered'. It has been argued that:

Good teachers grow stronger when they involve each child as a member of a class of active learners by offering each child the individualized challenges and supports necessary for learning... Inclusion is fundamental to learning... (O'Brien and Forest, 1989 cited in Thomas and Vaughan, 2004:90).

O'Brien and Forest (ibid), and other researchers (e.g. Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994; Karpol, 1994 and 1997), have focused on the importance of the teacher in the implementation of inclusion and the two way nature of the classroom—where good teachers grow stronger when they involve each child and children learning when teachers offer them appropriate challenges and support. The notion of the 'good teacher' was also raised by Ball (1990A), but what role do teachers play within the policy arena? This question is important, because, although this study acknowledges the conflicts that 'non-alignment' of Government policies have created in the inclusion of pupils who are the subjects of Statements in mainstream schools, it actually focuses on the teacher's predisposition at a personal level to include children who have Statements. The importance of a teacher's predisposition is captured by a quote I received during a training day, which states:

I have come to a frightening conclusion. I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humour, hurt or heal. In

all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis is escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanised or dehumanised. (Ginott, 1972:15-16).

The above is an indication of the immense power the teacher has within a classroom practice, or what Steedman describes as “Prison-house” (Steedman, 1987:117), and the possible impact of that power on a child’s life. Why do some teachers inspire, humour and heal, while others torture, humiliate and hurt? How does this translate when teachers interpret the policy of inclusive education in relation to children who have Statements within their practice? One of the ways teachers can do this is through their pedagogy. What pedagogy should a teacher adopt in order to enable the effective inclusion of children who are the subjects of Statements?

### **3.5 Pedagogy**

hooks argues that teachers who transgress effectively have a total conviction in what they do. She writes:

those of us who teach also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in this manner that respects and cares for the soul of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary condition where learning can most deeply and intimately begin (hooks, 1994:13).

Achieving the above requires teachers to “transgress those boundaries that would confine each pupil to a rote, assembly-line approach to learning” (ibid). When teachers transgress such boundaries, they make the role of the teacher quite clear.

The teacher takes on the role of an educator who is:

not to ‘fill’ the educatee with ‘knowledge,’ technical or otherwise. It is rather to attempt to move towards a new way of thinking in both educator and educatee, through the dialogical relationship between both. The flow is both direction (Freire, 1974:125).



Freire's (1974) work in this area provides the link between theory and practice. He explains:

As s/he [the teacher] dialogues with pupils, s/he must draw their attention to the points that are unclear or naive, always looking at them problematically. (Freire, 1974:124-125).

Vygotsky (1978) builds on this thinking with his study on the child's zone of proximal development and how to support the child to move on to the next stage, and so, too, did Brunner (1986) with his concept of scaffolding. Whatever name researchers give to this process, one of its foundation blocks is the teacher's need to know the student well. hooks writes about her teachers' determination that the children in their classes achieved their best:

teachers worked with us and for us to ensure that we would fulfil our intellectual destiny and by so doing uplift our race. My teachers were on a mission. To fulfil that mission, my teachers made sure that they 'knew' us. (hooks, 1994:2-3)

As well as a good knowledge of the children, a teacher's perception of education should be one, which includes openness to active participation by all the participants in the classroom and one, which encourages "conscientization" (Freire, 1974:148). This creates what hooks describes as an "engaging pedagogy" (hooks, 1994:13), where pupils interact with each other through dialogue and supporting each other, thus leading to creativity and knowledge transformation (Freire, 1974; hooks, 1994). This is because passiveness in education discourages dialogue and communication, and prevents educational transformation—the type of transformation which occurs when the child is at their zone of proximal development, and is scaffolded by the teacher just enough to create new knowledge for them. The current "banking system" (hooks, 1994:14), operating under the pressure of time limitation and a

syllabus which must be covered (Freire, 1974), does not allow for this, and so inhibits creativity. Freire explains why this is the case:

creativity does not develop within an empty formalism, but within the praxis of human beings with each other in the world and with the world. (Freire, 1974:151)

Pupils who have Statements would thrive in such an engaged, pedagogical practice, especially if the teacher's approach to knowledge is an holistic one. An holistic approach is one favoured by hooks (1994) and Thich Nhat Hanh (cited in hooks, 1994), and this occurs when "...human beings [are] striving not just for knowledge in books, but knowledge about how to live in the world" (hooks, 1994:14-15). Such an approach resonates with New Labour's philosophy of social inclusion, in particular with the introduction of Every Child Matters. However, pursuing contrasting policies in education concurrently (such as the standards agenda and inclusion), coupled with the standards agenda taking precedence over inclusive education (Benjamin, 2002A; Lunt and Norwich 1999), makes it difficult for an holistic approach to become embedded into classrooms where children who have Statements are being educated.

Such an engaging pedagogy with an holistic approach requires teachers to be committed to "the processes of self-actualisation that promotes their own well-being (hooks, 1994:15), for, as Thich Nhat Hanh (cited in hooks, 1994) argues, an unhappy teacher cannot be an effective teacher. This is where Freire's (1974) concept of the 'praxis' comes in, as teachers need to reflect on their own experiences, and this impacts on their practice, for, as Kanpol, argues:

unless teachers are able to understand their own oppressive experiences, the curriculum they chose to teach would be less meaningful for both teacher and student (Kanpol,1997:35).

Being able to 'deliver' the National Curriculum, and even using rote learning for the purpose of getting the grades in the SATs, seems to be a requirement, as evidenced through the standardisation of the National Curriculum (DFEE, 1999). Realising such an holistic approach requires transgression, as the educational environment in today's classrooms "promotes and supports compartmentalization" (hooks, 1994:16), as seen in Gillborn and Youdell's (2000) case-study schools, where there is a different agenda for children who have Statements. In Gillborn and Youdell's (2000) study, pupils who have Statements face the risk of becoming estranged from education if they are not positively engaged.

On the contrary, an engaged pedagogy with an holistic approach, as advocated by hooks (1994) and Thich Nhat Hanh (cited in hooks, 1994), values student expression, and both teacher and pupil grow, empowered by the experience. Here, the teacher models for the children so the children are not frightened to take risk, because they know they will be supported within their 'communal' classroom. They practice being vulnerable in a safe environment, and the teacher, understanding where the child is experiencing difficulties, supports them appropriately. This is the type of environment that enables effective inclusion to thrive. However, to achieve this, the teacher needs to have a 'strong enough' conviction to transgress the expectation of teaching to ensure that the children cover the syllabus prescribed by the National Curriculum within a given time. I describe it as 'strong enough' conviction, because transgression comes with risks. What are these risks?

### **3.6 Risks of transgression**

Transgression is dangerous and can have serious implications. In one of hooks's classes, her students felt "transgressing boundaries was frightening" (hooks, 1994:9)

In addition, realising the benefits of transgression requires time, and this might mean that the standards' for the class and the school may suffer. The price for 'failure', in the eyes of the standards agenda, is extremely high today when schools are increasingly accountable (Benjamin, 2002 and 2002A; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). The teacher risks attracting negative attention to the class and school. The contextual valued added of the school judged against the standard criteria may be low, since the benefits of an engaged pedagogy are not measured. Weighed against the standard agenda, some teachers can be reluctant to transgress in order to include pupils who have a Statement, however, some feel so strongly that they go ahead and transgress despite the risk. Through an engagement with how teachers' perception of teaching is formed- whether they have a cognitive or an affective aim in a way sheds a light to the question of why some teachers transgress and others do not. As the discussion above has shown this is determined by what they consider to be 'right' for them. When teachers have an affective aim, this brings their teaching and the policies they make within their classroom into a social context which goes wider than their classroom. This is important to this study on two levels- how teachers' personal experiences impact on their classroom practice, and how this, in turn, impacts on the education of pupils who are the subject of Statements of SEN.

For as some studies argue (e.g. Woods and Jeffrey, 2005; Cole, 2004; Salvia and Munson, 1986), teachers' personal experiences (either directly or indirectly) impact on their practice. Also, research points to the need to understand inclusive education not merely as placing children in mainstream schools (Barton, 2003; Corbett, 2001), but as connective pedagogy (Corbett, 2001) where the teacher knows the child well,

(as described by hooks (1994)). hooks argues that teachers should work with and for children, ensuring that children fulfil their intellectual destiny. Nevertheless, the benefits of such an holistic approach can be enriching, as both teachers and pupils collectively support each other developing skills such as empathy, dialogue and communication. Such an environment benefits pupils who have Statements, as their teacher and classmates get to know them well, and they feel confident to take educational risks, leading to a transformation of their learning. Therefore, what the discussion in this chapter has shown is that when Statements are used effectively, it is because the teacher is able to transgress, and this often happens because the teacher has been able to empathise with the child. This presents a complex policy arena where personal issues come into play within the classroom and these, more than the 'statutory' in Statements determine whether or not the child is effectively included. When teachers have a cognitive aim, they often focus on the standards and the needs of the majority, with little or no challenge to be accountable for the needs of the minority, especially if they manage to get a good position on the league table (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). The purpose of this study is to examine the practice of those who effectively engage the 'minority' as well as the majority. Why and how do they do it? It is important that lessons learnt from this study can be used to inform other practices or at least make it evident to other teachers that having a cognitive aim is not the only approach, as a lot more satisfaction (for both children and teacher) can be gained by adopting an affective aim? Having established the theoretical framework of this study in chapter two and three, the aim of this study was still to explore the factors enable inclusion for children who had Statements in mainstream schools and Chapter Four will focus on how this study was conducted.

## Chapter Four

### Research design and methodological issues

#### 4.0 Introduction

In section 1.3 I argued that including children who have Statements in mainstream schools is largely an issue of perspective, beliefs and views, hence, the research questions (1.2). This section sets out the design and process within which the research was conducted to find out what these perspectives were and how they impact on children's education. Whilst the ethical issues associated with the study run throughout this chapter, a detailed engagement with the issue of insider research was necessary, as the research was carried out within my own place of work. The research design is presented and the methods of data collection and analysis are discussed. However, researching "what happens when teachers endeavour to turn policy and principles into practice" (Broached, 2002:25) is very complex. This research was carried out within a particular policy context (see Chapters Two and Three) - one which has created contradictory policies and practices resulting in considerable complexities. Such complexities and contradictions impacted on the methodology so the next section looks at research within a policy context.

#### 4.1 Research in a policy context

Ball (1994) identified the failure on the part of analysts to define conceptually what they mean by policy as being one of the conceptual problems with policy research.

His rationale for taking this view was that “much rests on the meaning or possible meanings that we give to policy” (Ball, 1994:4). For example it can affect how we research and how we interpret what we find. Studies on how teachers interpret and implement policies are emerging (e.g. Larsen, 2001; Looney, 2004), however, as Conley and Goldman (1995) noted, there are relatively few studies that systematically examine the process by which educators interpret policies.

One such study was Maguire and Ball (1994), in which they identified three kinds of policy research in the U.K- elite studies, trajectory studies and implementation studies. The first kind is research involving senior policy makers, which they referred to as ‘elite studies’. This sort of policy research weighs favourably on what the policy makers would like to happen. Viewed in such light, policy could be defined as:

a specification of principles and actions, related to educational issues, which are followed or which should be followed and which are designed to bring about desired goals (Trowler, 1998:48)

Such a perception of policy has been criticised for not reflecting the struggle involved in the policy process, as it creates an artificial separation between policy generation and policy implementation (Bowe *et al*, 1996:273). MacBeath *et al* (2006) describe this as the ‘first world of inclusion’, which is:

A world of fine intentions, but it is one that makes bold claims and with high rhetoric yet fails to follow through the consequences of the initiatives it espouses...[and] is often blind to context and the day-to-day realities of life in schools and classrooms (MacBeath *et al*, 2006:12)

Trajectory-study research follows the various stages of development of a policy. This type of research will only be plausible if policy has clear-cut stages with defined boundaries. Some, like Fulcher (1999), agree with MacBeath *et al* that such a theoretical standpoint is often different from what really occurs in practice. Fulcher

(ibid) questions the discrepancy that is so often cited between policy and practice where policy is made at one level and implemented at another level. To many (e.g. Armstrong, 2003; Fulcher, 1999; Trowler, 1998; Bowe *et al*, 1996; Ball, 1994), policy is complex and fluid. This is because it consists of elements of unpredictability (Fullan, 1993) and interaction that no one could have possibly figured out (Senge, 1990). Codd (1988) and Ball (1990) suggest a shift from policy intention to policy impact, and this leads on to Maguire and Ball's (1994) third type of research approach: implementation studies.

Maguire and Ball (1994) describe implementation studies as research in which policy text is translated into practice. In this type of research, subjectivity becomes an important issue (Jensen and Peshkin, 1992), and Rizvi and Kemis (1987) reiterate this view when they argue that interpretation is an important factor when dealing with policy. There is no guarantee that policy generators' intentions will be realised. This is because, as Bowe *et al* (1996) argue, there is often a dramatic transformation when legislative texts are contextualised in schools, for even the small matter of free will plays a big part on how policy is implemented (Ball 1990, Trowler 1998, Fullan 1999). For, as Apple puts it:

It is fought for on the job itself in subtle and even 'unconscious' (one might say 'cultural') ways. (Apple, 1989:48).

This is the type of research where policy is conceptualised as a continuous cycle, involving multiple power struggles as a result of the interconnections and contestation between competing discourses and ideologies (Larsen, 2001). Policy implementation reflects the life-worlds where society is seen as highly fluid, continually constructed and reconstructed. Here, things do not have to fit just one set of values; instead multiple sets of values and diversity are celebrated (Trowler,



1998). In Maguire and Ball's typology, this study will fall in the implementation research category.

Placing this study as implementation research has implications on the theoretical complexity of the study in general. For the child, it raises the issues of power relations, identity and knowledge, due to the way difference is constructed and perceived (Foucault, 1979; Oliver, 1998) within society. As other studies (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Benjamin, 2002 & 2002A; Armstrong, 2003) have shown, the implications of these for the pupils can be immense often leading to 'normalisation' and marginalisation.

However, there are also implications for the teacher, for example subjectivity can be an issue, as Rizvi and Kemis (1978) argue. This is due to the interpretation that staff give to the whole concept of inclusion and their role in this implementation phase. Do they see themselves as policy makers, or do they see their position as one where decisions are made for them and all they have to do is 'follow' instructions? Besides, the interactions can also be unpredictable (Senge, 1990) within this policy arena. For example, if another member of staff is present, will a teacher implement policy in their 'usual' manner? Also, the position/or perception of the researcher within the organisation might impact on the data, as reactions might be different if the person who is answering/asking the questions is a senior or junior member of staff.

Since policy is complex, and is continuously being contextualised, (Fulcher, 1999; Armstrong, 2003) a degree of unpredictability is to be anticipated. This study looks at the interaction of social participants in the classroom situation where the teacher is

expected to use appropriate language, preparation and differentiation (Vygotsky, 1978) to include the child. Some (e.g. Hilferty, 2008; Tomlinson, 1982 and 2005) argue that social situations like this raise questions about power relations and make evident the nature of conflict involved in such interactions (Manset-Williamson and Rogers 2002; Tomlinson, 1982). In the educational climate of today the dominant discourse of success prevails due to the National Curriculum and league table expectations (Lunt and Norwich, 1999; Benjamin, 2002a). Foucault describes this as “the technologies of normalisation” (Foucault, 1976:137) which seem to have become the ‘norm’. Such a state of affairs results in some (e.g. DEE, 2000) arguing that this only perpetuates a vicious cycle where SEN is seen as being within the child. However, Fullan (1999) argues that, in such situations, power and coercion play a significant part, while others describe the classroom as ‘an arena’ (Fulcher, 1999) where various discourses are contested and the most powerful one wins or influences the policy process the most. Thus, researching policy is complex due to the nature of policy itself. This complexity will have definite implications for the research methodology and these are discussed in the next section.

## **4.2 Methodological implications**

Donmoyer (1995) argues that policy research can occur within either a positivist (telling it as it is), or an interpretative (exposing problems and providing further questions instead of answers) paradigm.

Placing this research as implementation study reflects the real-life nature of policy, where, as Trowler argues, things do not have to fit just one set of values (Trowler, 1998). In this study, there is a focus on the implementation of policy within the

classroom, which some, like Goldstein and Blatchford (1998), argue is beyond the scope of a positivist paradigm. The methodology for this research had to reflect the fluid and changing nature of policy as outcome are often difficult to control (Bowe *et al's* (1992)). This study goes beyond a positive paradigm and assumes an interpretative position hence making the role of the researcher within this interpretative paradigm very important.

#### **4.2.1 The Role of the Researcher**

Taylor and colleagues (1997) state that:

What we 'see' when we examine the processes involved in the development and implementation of any particular policy is framed by larger questions, which are themselves linked to the normative positions we might adopt about education and its role in creating conditions for social production or transformation. (Taylor *et al*, 1997:18-19)

To be able to realise the above during this study, as a researcher I needed to be vigilant to take note of the multiple sets of values that exist (Trowler, 1998) in the classroom situation. The reason for this, as Fullan (1999) argues is, teachers' reactions in the implementation phase are an important factor in achieving or not achieving educational change. Saunders (1985) explains that several things may happen:

- the same policy may be interpreted differently
- or it may become an adaptive extension
- or it may be accommodated to fit the general shape of existing practice
- or it might be contained or absorbed by existing school practises.

Attention to various value positions and power relations have therefore impacted on the type of research instrument adopted for this work. As a result, an interpretative stance on the part of the researcher was assumed. The intention was for the

research to reflect the multiple values, fluidity and complexities of the classroom situation through the actions and interpretations of the participants hence the use of specific instruments of data collection and a discussion of this is important, but, before this, an explanation of the research design follows.

### **4.3 Research Design**

In Chapter Two, I examined the implications of having a Statement in mainstream school in today's educational climate. This, combined with my own experience of working within such an environment, enabled me to formulate the questions I wanted to ask and answer in this study, as well as how the data was to be collected (Taylor *et al's*, 1997). Cohen and Manion (1994) argue that a good deal of exploratory work has to be done before a decision on design is arrived at (Robson, 2004). However, as discussed in the last chapter, transgression comes with risks (hooks, 1994), hence teachers might not be overt about transgression for fear of reprimand. Besides, what people consider to be transgression may vary, thus impacting on the design of this study. This is one of the reasons why participant observation was one of the choices of data collection.

Moreover, I particularly wanted the complexity of policy implementation and the contentions surrounding it to be reflected in this research. The design is a single-school, case study (Creswell, 1999) design using qualitative method. A case can be "a person, an event, a program, an organisation, a time period, a critical event or a community" (Patton, 1990:54). The focus is on the inclusion of a boy (Alex), defined as 'autistic' (Alex's Statement of SEN, 2003), who has a Statement. I observed (twenty lesson observations altogether) his in-depth inclusion in two mainstream classrooms over a period of two years, being taught by two different teachers who

both claimed to be inclusive and were both supposedly implementing the same inclusion policy. Although small, this sample is rich, and a great deal can be learned from it as it provides what can be described as “more valid portrayals, better basis for personal understanding of what is going on, and solid grounds for considering action” (Stakes, 1981:32). This study interprets the case study in depth and detail, in context and holistically.

The preference for a single school, case study approach was because the purpose of this study was to find out, interrogate and report what was happening. This paid attention to details as it answered the question, ““what is going on?”” (Bouma and Atkinson, 1987:106). This sort of single school, case study design has been used effectively by other researchers in the past (Manset-Williamson and Rogers, 2002; Flem *et al*, 2004; Ring and Travers 2005), and seems to be the most appropriate method when in-depth information is required. I realise that I am “seeking to say something sensible about a complex, relatively poorly controlled, and generally ‘messy’ situation” (Robson, 2004:4) where predictability is absent, as no two children or situations are the same. Hence, the attractions of a qualitative approach, bearing in mind that “the ideals of absolute objectivity and value-free...are impossible to attain in practice and of questionable desirability...” (Patton, 1990:55). Besides, the sample for this study is very small (good reasons for choosing qualitative methods as Silverman (2005) argues), hence my preference for qualitative research methods. How was the research done? The next section explains how data was collected for this research.

#### 4.4 Data Collection

Having decided to investigate the factors that enable inclusion of children who have Statements of special educational needs in mainstream classrooms, my next task was to identify or recruit my research participants. As the school SENCO I had no difficulty in gaining access to teachers and parents, in fact, I had sixteen children to choose from and the only problem was whether their parents would give consent, their teachers would be happy to take part, or the school would give me permission to carryout my research in the school. There were significant ethical issues to grapple with, for example the fact that I already had information about the potential candidates for the study (children I could choose for the study). I also had some prior knowledge of various teachers' practices within the school.

Teachers were eager to talk to me primarily as a result of the topic. I then looked at all the children I could possible choose from, and eventually selected Alex (not his real name) to be the focus child of the study. I also identified teachers for the study and these were teachers with children who had Statements in their classroom, or were teaching children who were going through the process of statutory assessment. Having done that, I approached the Headteacher to explain my intention to carryout research in her school. We discussed what I planned to research and agreed that I should put my proposal in writing for approval. I submitted my research proposal (which was the same one I submitted to the Institute when I applied for the course), together with a letter asking for permission. The next day I received a written consent giving me permission to use the school as a site for my research.

Having secured permission from the Headteacher I then turned my attention to the teachers. I approached them individually and had a similar discussion to the one I

had with the Headteacher with them. I explained that I had been given permission by the Headteacher but still needed their permission to come into their classroom. My reason for doing this was for the teachers to be able to give an 'educated' consent or refusal. Out of the twelve teachers I approached, only one did not want to be part of the study and her reason was "it doesn't matter what teachers think, what is the point and who listens to them?" (Discussion with class teacher at Frosties, 2005). During these meetings, we agreed ground rules for observation (Appendix Two). Due to time constraints, I could only work with five teachers (two of whom were Alex's year one and two teachers) and for this study I chose the ones I felt represented what I assumed (from the literature- Chapters Two and Three and my experience of working as the school SENCO) at the time to have held different perspectives. The class teachers and staff in my focus classrooms were given a verbal explanation of what I was researching, hence, disclosure was "overt" (Patton, 1990: 209). I was very reassuring on the issue of how I intended to enter the field (that is their classrooms) especially as I had a position of 'power' (being the SENCO) within the school. For example, although the teachers seemed to expect me to be the school 'expert' when it came to inclusive education – I explained that I was coming to learn about how they included children who had Statements in their classroom. I also assured staff that any information collected as a result of this research would not be personalised. As a result all the names have been changed during reporting and confidentiality was paramount. Based on the teachers' interest in participating in the study, I then identified three children as potential participants and again went through the process of gaining parental consent. I met one-to-one with their mothers (the fathers were not known to the school) where I explained my research intention and they asked me questions about it. All three parents were happy to give consent but

were concerned that their child would be named and they did 'not want everyone to know'. I guaranteed all the parents anonymity- that names would be changed, including the names of the teachers and the school. I had consent forms ready for them to sign if they were happy to do so and they had the option to change their minds about it if they wanted to do so at any time. Two of them signed, one did not. Out of the two children with parental consent, one was later not used because it transpired that he was going to have the same teacher over two years.

Since I was aware that carrying out such an in-depth study with only one child posed certain risks, (for example, the child going on long holidays, being off school, or even parents withdrawing their consent) I had a plan B. The plan B was that I collected the same data on an under study child as I did with the focus child (Alex). Plan B was with a child who was diagnosed as 'autistic' in Mr. Broom's class. The same consent process with parents and Headteacher was followed but this data was kept just in case something happened with the first child. Although the data was not used directly, the views of his teacher (Mr. Broom) about his classroom practice have been reported in this study. Also, I actually set out to compare two practices where the child was constant but the teacher was the variable. Had something happened where I could not continue my research with Alex, then both the child and the teacher would have been variables and that would have been less than ideal. Having secured consents I then set out to collect data. How did I do it?

Data collection was not sequential, as I had to do things concurrently. For example, during observations, I sometimes checked the child's Statement in the SEN folder in the classroom just to double check targets set against what was actually happening in the classroom. For example when I observed Alex being asked by the class



teacher to go to his corner while the rest of the class carried on with a lesson on the carpet, I checked the Statement in the SEN folder to see the recommendations on his learning and interactions with his peers. Hence, recording of how data was collected has not been discussed in chronological order (and it should not be taken as such except where indicated for example observations were done before interviews) but rather as an explanation of what was done and how it was done. Discussion of methods of data collection follows looking at source documents.

#### **4.4.1 Source documents**

For the purpose of this study, critical engagement with various documents was necessary in understanding the reasoning behind inclusive educational practices in schools and these were referred to throughout the study. Central to this was *The SEN Code of Practice* (DFES, 2001), which states what the Government implies by inclusive education, as well as the school's policy for inclusion. The SA1 (Appendix Three) submission papers (the beginning of statutory assessment) for children were examined, especially section six of the form, which asked for additional provision likely to be needed and the reasons why. As well as this, the SA2 (Appendix Four) form was looked at to analyse the school's case for obtaining a Statement for the child and how the support was going to be used. This was weighed against what was happening in the classroom. Here, as in everywhere else in this work, the contents of the documents were analysed. The reason for this, as Tomlinson (1982) alleges, was that these professionals might present a public impression of doing it in the child's best interest, when in fact they might have actually been supporting a Statement because this would secure extra resources and transfer the responsibility for the child onto another person. This form of data collection lent itself to this study

because, as some theorists (Robson, 2004; Creswell, 1994) have argued, it was unobtrusive and it offered me the opportunity to obtain the language and words of the informants (Creswell, 1994).

#### **4.4.2 Participant Observation**

Two classes were observed over two years: a Year One and a Year Two class. These two classes were chosen because the Year One class was Alex's class last year, and the Year Two class was his current class. Before going to the class I had agreed observation times and dates with the class teacher so that both the teacher, LSA and Alex were in the class. There were ten observations (of 30-45mins each) in each class, usually during Literacy or Numeracy lessons and a couple of foundation subjects in the afternoon. Observation began with a look at the class teacher's plan for the lesson- this provided evidence of what the teacher intended for the focus child to learn from the lesson. Due to ethical concerns (see section 4.6.5) I was reluctant to interrupt teaching, I avoided talking to the teacher during the lesson unless it was absolutely necessary for example if there was a health and safety reason (fortunately none occurred during observation). However, I responded appropriately when the staff or children in the class spoke to me for example when children asked me for support with their work I supported them, but often after gaining an approving nod from the teacher (this was discussed and agreed during our meeting before going into their classrooms).

Since I already worked in the school, there was no need of familiarisation of the site, everyone (staff and children) was used to me coming in and out of classes and the teachers seemed relaxed with me in their classroom. I needed to have a good

understanding of the learning experiences of children who had Statements. I wanted “to watch what happens” (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995:70). As Robson argues, “observation...seems to be pre-eminently the appropriate technique for getting at ‘real life’ in the real world” (Robson, 2004:310), a view shared by Becker and Geer (1986). Some have even gone further to identify observation as “the most complete form of sociological datum” (Becker and Geer, 1970:133, cited in Patton, 1990:25).

Of the ten observations in each class, two were part of the school’s monitoring cycle where I had to carry out joint observations (one Numeracy lesson for 30 minutes and one Literacy lesson for 30 minutes with either the Deputy Head or with the Headteacher). These were OFSTED style observations that were graded and it was done as part of my job as the Inclusion Manager. The Headteacher was happy for me to use the data collected in my study because “that is part of your job and it gives a ‘real’ picture” (Discussion with the previous Headteacher). I stress the word ‘real’ because describing an OFSTED style observation as ‘real’ is debatable but also ‘real’ because that was the reality of my job. However, it was obvious that switching roles to an OFSTED style observer and making judgements on teachers’ practices conflicted with my role as a researcher. In that role, I was no longer a learner as I promised them on entry to their classrooms (see 4.4). I had become a judge who had the capability of grading their ‘ability’ as teachers. I felt that this was ethically uncomfortable so I have not included the two observations in my analysis.

During the entire observation of the lessons, I maintained the position of “observer as participant” (Merriam, 1988:93). On occasions I supported children in a non-conspicuous way, and I did not refuse when children asked me questions. I worked

with groups of children when the teacher worked with other groups. The teacher asked children to show me their work. However, I never worked with Alex, and I did not get involved in classroom management—for example, if children came to ask me for permission to go to the toilet, I directed them to the teacher. The children did not know why I was there, and Alex was not aware that I was observing the way his teacher and LSA included him. All the time, I was observing how Alex was (or was not) being included. During lessons, I would position myself in different parts of the classroom, but usually somewhere where I could see or hear what Alex was doing, and also to see what the teacher or the rest of the class were doing. I made notes and useful reminders while in the class, and, after observation, I wrote up what I had observed. I also kept a diary. However, as it has been argued that “what we see is guided by what we are looking for” (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995:70-71), the research questions, to a large extent, determined what was observed. This does not imply that I ignored things that were not favourable to my way of thinking. Instead, I believe that seeing other perspectives helped to give a bigger picture and provided a better basis for personal understanding. In fact, my findings from the observations were moderated by the teachers to check for accuracy of what I observed and for interpretation and implied meaning. They had the opportunity to challenge what I had seen (and recorded) and offer an alternate interpretation if they believed mine did not reflect their intentions. My commitment was to understand how children who had Statements were being included in mainstream classrooms, although, as May argues, “participant observation is not an easy method to perform or analyse” (May, 1997:155). I believed this method (in this study) offered a good insight to this social situation, as I was able to see this child’s reactions and actions even though he was not verbally fluent. Information from observation complemented data from other

methods. The focus of observation was to find out whether or not a Statement enabled inclusion through the quality of Alex's educational experiences. By educational experience, I am coming from the theoretical standpoints of theorists like Vygotsky (1978), Bruner (1986) and Wood (1988), who argue that higher mental functions can be achieved through effective participation and teaching. Hence, what I was seeking to observe (like Manset-Williamson and Rogers, 2002) was whether the teacher knew what the child could do. Was this evident in the targets set for the child in their Statement? Was there any evidence of differentiation in the set task, as in Flem *et al's* study (2004)? How was the child supported during lessons? How did the LSA support the child and support inclusion? Was the child a 'member' of the class? (Observation Schedule Appendix Five).

Observation was just one of the methods of data collection to describe what was happening; other methods of data collection were also used, for example, interviews. This is because I needed to find out why things were done in a particular way and what perceptions staff had of Statements and inclusion.

#### **4.4.3 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews (Appendix One) were conducted with the school staff. As Bouma and Atkinson argue, "one aim of this approach is to understand others, it follows ...to ask them about themselves" (Bouma and Atkinson, 1995:214).

The samples for the interview include the then current head teacher, an ex-deputy head (who was current during the fieldwork and was part of both the current and

previous senior management team), five classroom teachers and three LSAs. Did their value positions influence the way they implement the policy of inclusion in their classrooms and how did these impact on Alex's inclusion? Did they see themselves as playing an important role in the policy process? As well as the formal interview, I also had discussions with staff during observations and around the school and the information, which some of them volunteered, have been reported as discussions. I interviewed teachers who did not have the focus child in their classroom in order to be able to gain a broader perspective within the school context, whether policy implementation was uniform, following the school's inclusion policy, or whether, as Fulcher (1999) argues, policy was constantly being contextualised. Also being an insider (I knew each of the interviewees personally, and I worked in this same institution), rather than viewing the interviews purely as a context for data gathering, I treated the interviews as a process of joined meaning making (Mishler, 1986). I wanted to understand the reason behind the fluidity of policy within the classroom level, what interpretation teachers gave to it and how this impacted on the education of children who were the subjects of Statements.

Interviewing members of the management team enabled me to gain contextual background to policy decisions associated with this particular policy and to learn how it tied in with all the other policies of the school (Larsen, 2001). The LSAs were asked questions that would enable them to articulate their views, allowing me to interpret their role in the inclusion process.

Information from interviews has been triangulated with data from the other data sets (Looney, 2004; Miles and Huberman, 1994) in order to make sense of what is

happening. For example if Miss Sugar said in the interview that her practice was inclusive I then looked for evidence in her practice (from the observation to offer further insight into her practice) before accepting or refuting that view. Observation also provided a vehicle for Alex's view through his reactions to what was happening in the classroom. His contribution in this process was made transparent during observations by the ways in which he expressed his feelings, for example:

Alex did not seem to want to continue with his task, he started to make distressing noises, shut his eyes and ears. (I wasn't surprised, especially as everybody else was doing something else on the carpet and he was stuck with these two ladies in a corner). (Diary notes: 17/06/05).

So, although Alex was not interviewed (as his speech was very limited), he gave me a great deal of insight through his expressions and reactions into how he felt about his provision in the setting (Booth and Booth, 1996).

Predetermined questions were used only to shape the interview content in a way that satisfied my research interest, yet without restricting the interviewees. As some theorists argue (for example, Robson 2004, Creswell 1994), interviews could be opportunities for researchers to refocus their questions. Besides, as Creswell (1994) argues, it also affords the opportunity for participants to provide some historical background to their behaviour. Why did I use interviews? There are several reasons for this, one of which was that they "yield rich insights into people's experiences, opinions, aspirations, attitudes and feelings" (May, 1997:109).

In this study, interviews helped to explore the research questions: how did teachers view Statements, and what did they believe about inclusion with regard to pupils who have Statements? Understanding the teachers' views on these questions provided a better insight into the state of policy within the classroom arena (Fulcher, 1999).

Evaluating the learning experience of pupils who had Statements was done so in this study based on the assumption that the “perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (Patton, 1990: 278), hence, the need of actually seeking the opinions of those involved in implementing inclusive education in the classroom.

The interviews were in four sections relating to the research questions, and they were semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured because there were general areas to discuss with the interviewee, and the conversation was not exactly the same with each person. I did not have identical questions to ask each of them, rather I had specific areas to cover and the discussion shaped what was covered. However, interviewees were probed further for clarification, bearing in mind that all the interviewees did not have the same role. I had to modify the questions accordingly. The intention was to explore what Statements meant to the school staff and to find out what difference existed between what they say and what they actually do. Data collected has been analysed under the research questions headings, along side data collected from observations. As explained above, triangulation was used to cross check data from all the sources: did they complement each other or were there contradictions?

Although some (e.g. Bouma and Atkinson, 1995) caution against interviewing people you know, limited resources and lack of time forced me to carry out my fieldwork in a site with which I was very familiar and knew the interviewees in a professional capacity. This potentially presented difficulties due to insider effect, as discussed later. The next section gives a brief account of how the interviews were carried out.



## **The interview**

All the research participants except Alex (see 4.5.1) were interviewed once. Interviews lasted approximately forty-five minutes to an hour, and each one was individually negotiated through an initial formal letter to the previous Headteacher in 2005 and subsequently at a personal level. This was discussed with the current Headteacher, and there was an agreement that the consent given by the previous head would be respected. Interviews were conducted face to face and at a mutually convenient time and location (usually at school during lunch time for LSAs and after school with class teachers. A one hour appointment was made with the current Headteacher during the school day to conduct her interview, while the Deputy Head's was done out of school, during our lunch break on a day we went out for a course). I personally tape recorded and transcribed all the interviews. Having collected the raw data, how was I going to present this information to the reader?

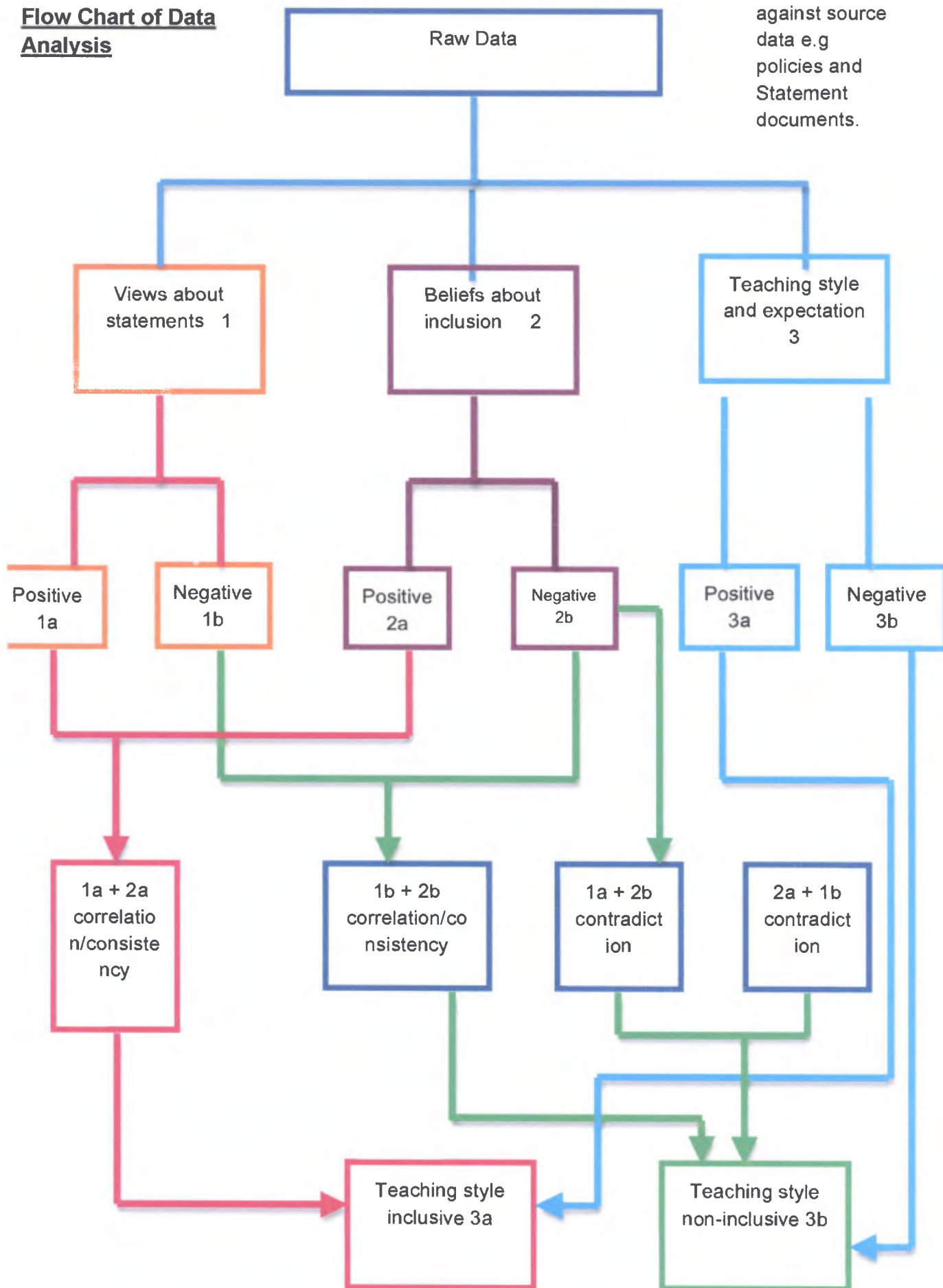
## **4.5 Data analysis**

This research has been placed within an interpretative paradigm, where the focus was on the research participants within the context of policy implementation in their social context. Insight into the way policy affected all concerned had been explored using the literature presented so far (see chapters two and three).

Data from interviews and observation was input using Microsoft Word. It was then analysed using content analysis, which involves identifying, coding and categorising the primary patterns in the data. Microsoft Word's Track Changes and the Edit-Find tool function were used to track, code and comment on the data during analysis.

**Flow Chart of Data Analysis**

Checked against source data e.g policies and Statement documents.



Although use of software for qualitative analysis has been criticised for alienating the researcher from their data (Kelle *et al*, 1995), using track changes in this case allowed for a great deal of intimacy with the data. Besides, it also offered opportunities for comments to be made, relating the data to relevant policy literature discussed earlier, which is in line with the interpretative nature of this work. Content analysis (after data collection) began with a systematic assembling of the data, breaking the data into incidents and a summary of the observation or view expressed during interview. Then the incidents or views were coded with a number, which stood for a particular research question issue. For example if there were ten incidents or views that related to teacher's view on Statements, they were all coded as 1 (Views about Statements), 2 (Beliefs about Statements) and 3 (Effect on Teaching Style and Expectation). These views or incidents were further subdivided into 1a (positive views) or 1b (negative views), so that all the positive views about Statements were put together in a logical manner to form a coherent interpretation, and the same for the negative views (see Data Analysis Flow Chart above). The views expressed were either consensus or very polarised, making an ambivalent category unnecessary.

When it came to data analysis, research participants played a major part as after having written the observations and interview notes, I took my findings back to them to check if that was what they meant or whether their views were reflected accurately. I also took my ideas back to them for consideration and validation. Having the research participants to moderate my research findings (transcripts of interviews and observations) they were able to make transparent their individual perspectives and interpretations, their shared vocabulary, fears and constraints. At

this point I believe it is important to present the participants in their social context- Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, teachers and LSAs talking about their perceptions of the inclusion of children who had Statements.

#### **4.5.1 The participants**

##### **The Headteacher**

Fifty year old white female who took over from the previous head (and who had been in post for six months). Joined Frosties six months into my field work. In her initial address to staff, she described herself as an inclusive head whose vision for the school was to make it more inclusive. She also stated that if anyone did not feel that they could share her vision of making the school more inclusive, then they should be thinking of leaving. She trained in England and did not live in the Frosties Primary School area.

##### **The Deputy Head**

Fifty-seven year old white female, who had worked in the school for about 35 years, and whose duties were mainly pastoral. She prided herself with having a child-centred approach to teaching. She joined the school in 1970, straight after teachers' training college, and had taught there ever since. At the time of the study she was not classroom based, but had taught within the last three years.

##### **Miss Dunstans**

Fifty-four-year-old female with thirty years Reception teaching experience in Frosties Primary School. In the last seven years, she had taught two boys who had Statements and she described herself as an "experienced" teacher. She was born in Africa, and lived there with her missionary parents when she was younger, returning to England as a teenager.

**Miss Grange**

Fifty-two-year-old, white Australian who arrived in England to teach in 2005. Prior to this, she had taught in Australia for more than twenty-five years. Her teaching experience in Australia mostly involved teaching Aboriginal children in Aboriginal schools. She did not live in Aboriginal communities, but went there to teach. At Frosties, she taught a Reception class in which there was a boy who was going through the 'Statementing' process.

**Mr Broom**

A thirty-five-year-old, white South-African teacher. Had been in post for just under a year. He was born, raised and educated in South Africa. He came to England in 2004, and taught in other inner city schools with diverse pupil populations before coming to Frosties. He taught a year four class.

**Miss Sugar**

A black Year One teacher in her late forties who had been teaching in Frosties for twenty years. She was born in the West Indies, trained and worked there before arriving in England to work. She taught Alex in Year One.

**Miss Titch**

Alex's Year Two (and current) teacher. Forty-four year old, black female of West Indian origin. Born in the West Indies and brought to England when she was about three. She grew up in an inner city area, the same area where she worked. She had been teaching at Frosties for six years. Prior to that she had taught as an NQT in another inner city school for one year.

### **Miss Shelley**

A thirty-five year old, black lady of West Indian origin, who was born and brought up in England. She had been working in Frosties for two years, as a learning support assistant (LSA). Prior to this, she worked as an LSA in a special school for three years. She is Alex's current LSA, but she also shadowed Harriet, Alex's former LSA, in year one, before she went on maternity leave. She had experience of working with both Miss Titch and Miss Sugar. She also has a nephew who was diagnosed as autistic.

### **Miss Harriet**

A forty-three year old, black LSA who has been in post for three years. She supported Alex in Nursery, Reception and most of year one, before she went on maternity leave. She achieved her NVQ in child-care, and then joined Frosties when Alex was in the Nursery.

### **Miss Danii**

A thirty-two-year-old LSA who had been in the school for five years. She had worked with various children who had Statements and several teachers. She was one of the longest serving LSAs at Frosties. She was of mixed-race heritage, but described herself as 'black'. She was born and brought up in an inner city area of England, and had lived in that area all her life.

### **Alex**

A seven-year-old, black boy of African and Caribbean origin. He lived with his mother and two older siblings (teenagers). His mother had recently remarried. His father had another family, and only saw Alex occasionally for short, hourly visits. Alex had been attending Frosties since Nursery. He had a Statement of SEN just as he started Nursery, which was initiated by other agencies who were involved with him before he

started school. His Statement was finalised when he started Nursery. Alex's communication difficulties were severe. He did not speak (apart from babble), at home or at school until a year and a half before the start of this study. During the previous school year he had been diagnosed as autistic. He had always had one-to-one support in the form of an LSA, and additional support weekly, in the form of a learning support teacher. At the beginning of fieldwork Alex was six.

### **The site: Frosties School**

Frosties Primary School was a mainstream, local-authority school, which served a very deprived, inner city area—both socially and economically. The catchment area consisted of a large, 1930s estate, some low-rise estates and about 30% private housing, which was either owner-occupied or rented. There was a high level of parental unemployment and one-parent families.

The majority of the teaching staff were of white South African origin (Afrikaans) with a steadily increasing number of Australian staff. There were 25 teaching staff and 27 LSAs in the school. There were also several support staff to cover the creative arts (dance, music, drama, debates and public speaking) as well as administrators.

Forty-six different languages had been registered as first languages of the children in the school, and 52% of the pupils were eligible for free school meals. There were also a significant number of vulnerable families—refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers—and children living with an extended family member. There were 580 pupils on role, and 215 were in the special educational needs profiling system. Of these, 15 had Statements of SEN. The ethnic mix of the school was very diverse, with the majority (70%) of the pupils being non-white.

Analysis was followed by reporting findings in the next chapter, however, there were some related issues, which need to be discussed at this point in order to understand this work in its context.

## **4.6 Related Issues**

There are five issues specifically related to this study and discussions of these follows.

### **4.6.1 Ethical Considerations**

The ethical guidelines issued by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004 & 2011) were followed: Aims of the research were shared with all participants. Before commencing data collection, permission was sought from the Headteacher. This was in a form of research proposal and a letter, stating the reason for the research, my reason for choosing this specific site for the fieldwork and how the findings would be reported back to the school. I also identified the research participants and my commitment to confidentiality and treatment of the participants and site with dignity and respect (see sections 4.4, 4.4.2, 4.4.3).

During my initial meeting with classroom staff, the aim of publishing this study after completion was also discussed with all participants and all were happy with this, provided that their names and the name of the school were changed. The Headteacher had already given consent for the work to be published. However, there are still issues around anonymity, because, as Smyth and Holian argue:



Publishing research findings under your real name, which are about your organization can have both ethical and political implications. While you maybe able to preserve anonymity in one sense, even if you do not name the organization or key members, the details are hardly confidential when your affiliation allows the focus to be easily identified. (Smyth and Holian, 2008:44)

This became even more important as some participants shared some very private information that they did not want to be traced back to them. Miss Titch has read this work and is happy with the way she has been represented within this thesis and does not think the content can be traced back to her. Since carrying out this study, all the teachers and SMT (myself included) have left Frosties Primary School for various reasons. Initial consultation with the Headteacher was that research findings from this study would be shared, so that the school could use it as an opportunity for introspection and reflection. This has not been possible at Frosties, but it has been informative and relevant in other settings I have worked in resulting in better inclusion for pupils and staff.

#### **4.6.2 Validity Issue**

As 'insider research', this study might be criticised for being less credible and lacking in validity, because:

insider researchers are native to the setting and, therefore, they are perceived to be prone to charges of being too close and thereby not attaining the distance and objectivity necessary for valid research (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007:27).

However, the view taken in this study is that knowledge is socially constructed and "all research is embedded within a system of values and promotes some model of human interaction" (Brydon-Miller *et al*, 2003:11). Engaging with and reporting issues as they happen in my own place of work, for me, allowed for understanding to unfold in a 'naturalistic' way without being "sanitized" (Smyth and Holian, 2008:35). Whether

or not someone comes into an organisation or they are part of it, “all observation is theory or value laden, and dependent on past experience of the observer” (Smyth and Holian, 2008:37), making pure objectivity unrealistic in human situations.

An ethical dilemma of being a senior manager observing practice, which I deemed to be not of the ‘best’ (4.6.5) was of huge concern. It made me aware of my own professional skills in approaching teachers whose practice I deemed to be ‘exclusionary’. I have since developed my own insights into inclusion and exclusion and within my role, I now use a coaching model to address any issues that arise.

As advocated by Altrichter *et al* (2002) and Kemmis and MacTaggart (2000), I ensured that I reflected on the links between theory and practice, understanding the meanings that emerged and their significance and sharing the knowledge that this study generated so that practice could improve. What I learned in this study has impacted significantly in my current setting for example in the way training is provided for *all* staff and the influence of the Inclusion Manager in the SMT. This has resulted in knowledge being presented within its natural context without being “filtered through a research approach concerned with only admitting data that is regarded as objective, measurable and triangulated” (Smyth and Holian, 2008:37). This study offers a unique perspective from within because of my knowledge of the history and culture of the people and the site, and, using Brannick and Coghlan’s argument, it is valid, because it:

provides important information about what organizations are really like, which traditional approaches may not be able to uncover. (Brannick and Coghlan, 2007:72).

There was also the added challenge of carrying out this study within my place of work: being an 'insider' and a discussion of this follows.

#### **4.6.3 Challenges of insider research**

There were implications for doing my fieldwork in my place of work, which, as Howlett and Ramesh (1995:7) advise, should be made transparent in order to explore my frame of reference from the start. In doing this, I am acknowledging that collection and analysis of data are not free from ethical concerns (Smyth and Holian, 2008; Stanley and Wise, 1993). Besides, as this research is a qualitative one, it impacts on myself (as the researcher), and the researched in ways that were difficult to predict (Delamont, 1992). As Sikes and Potts argue, such "insidership" (Sikes and Potts, 2008:3) can, in itself, come under scrutiny. Coghlan and Brannick (2002 and 2005) identified three main issues that need addressing when carrying out 'insider' research, and this was indeed the case in this study. These are role duality, pre-understanding and access. A discussion of these follows.

#### **Role duality**

As an 'insider' researcher at Frosties, there were times when there were tensions between my role as a researcher and my role as a member of the SMT. For example, when Alex was excluded from an activity I judged he could have participated effectively in, this is how I noted my feelings in my research journal:

it was unfair that Alex was left out of the activity of making card for the headteacher. Why has Miss Sugar taken that decision? ... Why is the LSA being used to make him different (he is not being taught by the class teacher)? This is not what I had advised during INSET. I felt like I should have asked why he could not do the activity. Alex did not seem to want to continue with his task, he started to make distressing noises, shutting his eyes and ears. (I wasn't surprised, especially as the other children were

doing something else on the carpet and he was stuck with these two ladies in a corner). If I had interfered, how would that have influenced my data though? Besides, was it right to keep quiet to protect my findings, while Alex was treated unfairly? Was it right to put my research interest above my work interest? I did not say anything and left instead. I can see Alex's distressed face and hear his noises. They stay in my head. Was he expecting me to do something? Was I right to walk away? (Diary notes: 17/06/05)

Being a participant observer, I considered the dilemma to be about whether it was alright for me to 'participate' and encourage Alex to join the activity, and, if I had done so, how would the teacher have perceived my participation? Would she have felt undermined, especially as I was in a senior position at work? Smyth and Holian (2008) argue that role duality and the tensions this creates can be very serious if the researcher is a manager, because "power and authority issues can become especially significant in that case" (Smyth and Holian, 2008:39). The above diary note shows a change of relationship between the class teacher and me. An unintentional outcome of this study has been the ethical dilemma this raised for me. I had obtained new information about her practice; her unwillingness to include Alex. With my position in the school, I could have used this information as "scrutiny and assessment" (Sikes and Potts, 2008:4) of her ability to include. However tempting it was to 'kill two birds with one stone', I had to resist, because doing so would have possibly 'broken trust' (Alvesson, 2003:167) and constrained information, behaviour and relationship. Wearing my SENCO/Inclusion Manager hat, I could have very easily got involved (in a nice way- providing guidance) however, as:

I did not want to 'adulterate' my data, I had to 'stick' with the role of a researcher, but felt really guilty about doing that, and this provoked personal questioning experiences for me. (Diary, 17/06/05).

Taking the above stance was necessary, as the reason for this study is to show what really goes on, how people really act, interact, talk and accomplish things. Changing

roles during data collection would have made the study less credible. However, the two observations carried out with the Heateacher and Deputy Headteacher as part of the school's monitoring cycle was not perceived by staff to be problematic. One teacher said to me, "I don't see any problem with that because it is part of your job and you are just doing your job" (Discussion with class teacher) a view which, as mentioned earlier, the Headteacher shared.

As mentioned above, 'power relations' is an issue. However, sometimes participants were "politically conscious actors...[holding] specific versions of how 'reality' preferably should be understood" (Alvesson, 2003:170). For example, when I interviewed Miss Shelley notes show that:

There was constant assumption during the interview that I know what she is talking about, for example, 'you know, sometimes just the way he plays, he is more outgoing, he copies off his friends, you know him, boys things: pushing, kicking and running', (Diary, 24/06/06).

Also, there was assumption that she knew what I was expecting her to do. For example, when Miss Shelley says:

You know, Me and Miss Titch. You know, because if we, sort of, just went the way...you know, just follow the way, just followed the road, down the way it has always been, he would have still not been included (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley).

What this quote shows first of all is the spirit of transgression in this practice- they had to follow a different 'way' otherwise "he would have still not been included". Also back to the assumption that she knew what I expected of her- could this be because my position on inclusive education was made very clear when I did staff INSET in January that year? Could this assumed knowledge of my belief also be because I have worked very closely with Shelley and Miss Titch? Alvesson argues that, if the subject matter engages an "empathetic understanding" (Alvesson, 2003:170), it may

trigger sympathy from the participants and make them want to agree with or please the researcher. For example, when Miss Shelley says:

I am happy as I am going. You (referring to me) are there, so, if I need anything, I know I can come and ask, which I have done (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley).

But this is straight away counteracted with:

There is always someone I can go to, I know that, and which sometimes I feel I don't ask for too much, because I go everywhere, the internet I can get things from, but I know that you are always there if I do need something and I know that I can (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley).

This led me to wonder whether she thought I was judging her ability to do her job. There seemed to be a lack of distinction here between my role as her line manager (Inclusion Manager/SENCO) and my role as the researcher, as my diary notes below show:

Is she being cautious to ensure that I see her as competent, especially as I monitor her work and she is answerable to me? Is she telling me what she thinks I ought to hear, or I expected to hear? (Diary, 24/02/06)

A similar struggle to understand the meaning behind responses occurred when I interviewed the deputy head. It was a:

Weird interview! Don't understand why she felt very strongly to prove to me that she is pro-inclusion. I have just become the Inclusion Manager, she has told me on several occasions that the Head does not think I can do anything wrong. Was she telling me what she thought I wanted to hear, or what she thought the head wanted to hear? Does she think I will report back to the head? We had discussed anonymity and I hope she understands that nothing is going back to the head. I felt uneasy, as if she does not trust me. However, it could be me making judgments on her responses. Am I right in judging her from the past? Is it possible that with the new Headteacher she could have changed her mindset to a more inclusive one? (Diary, 25/02/06)

The issue of an insider being the senior colleague was explored by Looney (2004), but the deep seated unease I felt interviewing the Deputy Head seemed quite intense, and I put it down to the fact that I felt 'trust' was an issue. The feeling of unease and doubts I had after interviewing the Deputy Head might have been a similar feeling she was experiencing herself. Was she using me as a vehicle to make the Headteacher see her in a favourable light? If she felt the Headteacher thought I could do nothing wrong and that I was on 'the head's side', because I was perceived as pro-inclusion, why did she agree to talk to me? Where did trust fit in this agenda, and to what lengths were people willing to go to tell me what they thought I wanted to hear? The interview with Miss Dunstons left me with mixed feelings.

I felt excited that Miss Dunstons was telling me the right rhetoric. In fact, her response to her views about inclusion could have been taken out of the inclusion INSET I ran. When she says

'I feel that the child is to be included all the time, although sometimes they do work on their own, but I will be in charge of what they will do to a certain extent, having met with the LSA, or, in some cases, when I was unhappy with what the LSA was doing with the child, I would set the targets and the activities for the child so he would get what he needs from his IEP'. (Diary, 16/03/06)

Was it right to carry out these interviews a couple of months after the Inclusion INSET I ran? What choice did I have? Running the INSET on inclusion might have made my position transparent, and the dilemma this posed for me was whether my colleagues were telling me what they thought I wanted to hear. However, as I had explained to all interviewees, that whatever was discussed during the interview was going to be confidential, I was hoping that they were honest with me and engaged into a genuine dialogue. Nevertheless, that element of doubt and trust persisted on both my side and the interviewees, as my interview with Miss Titch portrayed.

It was a difficult interview, as she spoke very quietly and said very little. She seemed quite emotional during the interview, but did not elaborate much for example:

The child belongs to the class and I hated the way we had the classroom set out when Alex came in, because he was taken away, he was tucked in a corner with his back towards us, and I just didn't feel he belonged to the class. (silence, then sighs). If he is statemented, he might be treated a little differently and I would be a little bit more tolerant than if he did not have a Statement (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Was there something she was trying to tell me? How far could I prompt her? And, if I prompted her, would I be forcing her to share things that she was reluctant to share? I knew she spoke quietly, but, when talking about Statements and inclusion, her manner was unusually subdued. I understand the argument that interviews can be ineffective if the interviewee is not articulate (Creswell 1994, Robson 2002); however, I later found out that Miss Titch's lack of articulation was an indication of deep emotional and historical feelings towards the subject under discussion. This became very clear when, a day after her interview, she walked into my office and disclosed her personal experience of SEN and how this affected her practice, but asked me to ensure that this information cannot be traced back to her due to its very sensitive nature. I have used the information but called it 'confidential talk' instead of interview. What was it about the interview format that made her reluctant to share that information even though she eventually offered it? Was it about trusting the researcher? This was one of the benefits of being an 'insider' in my situation, because she might have only offered that information because I am a friend and felt it might help me to understand her actions better. This raises issues, about how much participants believe in the confidential nature in which data was collected,



analysed and reported. Were there others who had sensitive issues relating to this topic, and what did they consider to be at stake by talking to me honestly?

This shows “how far my work position and my own predisposition” (Durrant, 2003:72) might affect my data collection and analysis. I also recognise that, as a member of the SMT, I am operating from a position of power (Ball, 1983), as I have some status in the school. I could have treated Miss Sugar’s ‘exclusion’ (as I perceived the situation) as a capability issue, but that would have been unethical as I went into her classroom in the position of a researcher. Nevertheless, as an Inclusion Manager I had just observed one of the children in the school being excluded, and that was something I felt I could not just dismiss because ‘it was during a research observation’. I had seen the ‘truth’ but what was I supposed to do with it when I felt ‘gagged’ by the role that I was obliged to adopt? As an insider researcher, I was able to address this issue very subtly without drawing attention to the source. For example, after my research I did some work with the class teacher specifically around including Alex more and preparing him for year two. As well as that, without disclosing any information to the SMT, I managed to make a very strong case as to whose class Alex should go to in year two. Fortunately for me, the Deputy Head (in her role as being in charge of pastoral support) had noticed that Miss Sugar was not always inclusive. The complication for me was not just one of being an insider in the organisation, but the struggle of deciding which role I should assume and when, especially when things were not going on as I believed they ought to. For example, during the observation, when Alex was left out, I made certain judgments that, if I had carried through, would have compromised my role as a researcher and would have affected power relations and, subsequently, my research. I was only able to

make the judgment because of my knowledge of the class, the child and the staff. This was not the only dilemma I encountered as an insider researcher.

How would participants separate my role as a researcher and as an Inclusion Manager/SENCO? I was aware that this might have seemed confusing. During the first few days of the observations, I believe I was viewed as an Inclusion Manager/SENCO. However, as I went back subsequently to the focus classrooms, my role as a researcher became more dominant.

### **Pre-understanding**

I approached this study with an ample insight of the practice within the school, which in a way gave me an advantage over an outsider coming in (Alvesson, 2003; Coghlan and Brannick, 2002). I had been actively involved in drawing up and implementing the school's action plan and in training staff to improve access to the curriculum for all children, and children with special educational needs in particular. I was also actively involved in the hiring of LSAs, their induction and their subsequent training needs and the training needs of all teachers in connection with inclusion. I also monitored teachers as necessary or on a termly basis, resulting in feedback on how to make their teaching better accessible to all children. So, I was part of the discourse founded on planning and using reasonable strategies to achieve inclusive education for all. I was in a position at work where I exercised power. By being able to observe colleagues' work through regular or impromptu observations, I had the opportunity of seeing how this policy of inclusive education was actually implemented at the grassroots level (or so I thought). The risk however, was to ensure that this prior knowledge and familiarity with the site and its practices did not

limit my critical perception. Instead as Coghlan and Brannick (2002 and 2005) and Smyth and Holian (2008) advocate, I stayed in touch with my feelings of disempowerment. Keeping a reflective diary and attending regular supervision meetings enabled me to stay critical and focused throughout.

There were some other hurdles to overcome, one of which was access. The issue of access has been discussed in section 4.4, however, access to the site was not the only issue. Literature also shows that, as an insider researcher, there are other difficulties to be encountered. Coghlan and Brannick (2002 and 2005) argued that being an 'insider' may hinder access to information within an organisation due to the researcher's position in the hierarchy or due to prior history of conflicts. As the Inclusion Manager, I interviewed the Deputy Head, who was senior in position. This was difficult for me, because I knew the 'political atmosphere' of the school, as my notes indicate:

The new head's first staff meeting. Head announces that the SMT structure in this school is expensive and wasteful so she is expecting that in three years time the school will only have one deputy head instead of two. Who is going to leave? Oops jobs at stake! She also explained the new teaching and leadership responsibilities (TLR) system. Everyone is uneasy. People walked off after meeting in small groups. I can only guess what they were talking about (Diary: 12/09/05).

The Deputy Head's job was one of those that was possibly on the line to be axed as soon as possible, how would this information affect her response during her interview? Besides, the Headteacher expressed her vision for the school as that of ensuring that it became very inclusive:

How are all these changes going to affect my work and my research? Are people going to become inclusive, because the head expects them to be? Is she really going to sack people? One of the deputy heads keeps telling people that their job is at stake! (Diary: Summary September 05).

I was worried that, with the arrival of the new head, she might have an impact on the data I collect—will that be such a bad thing? I felt that it will be a good thing if this Headteacher could actually empower staff to become more inclusive, and, because of my struggles with SMT in the past, I knew that the arrival of this Headteacher would sit uneasily with both of them, especially as one of them applied for the position of head, but did not even get an interview. So, when the deputies wanted to sit in my one-to-one meeting with the new head (which every middle manager in the school had) I refused. Their wanting to sit in my meeting created suspicion in my mind, and I had a lot of questions, for example:

Were they trying to stop me from saying something? If so, were they aware that they were not doing all they should for children perceived to be SEN? Was this an acknowledgement that they were not meeting their statutory duty? Did they know that, as a SENCO, I felt undervalued just like the children I was working for? Did they expect me to be quiet about the past? If I spoke would I be perceived as a whistle blower? We had had our run-ins in the past and I am sure both deputies were aware of how dissatisfied I was with the support I had from the SMT, for example when SMT constantly refused to take any actions on my continuous feedback on teachers' lack of interest in the teaching and learning of children who were perceived as having SEN. (Diary: 06/09/05).

This is the type of information, which an outsider might not have had, but at the same time it was problematic for me, because these people were going to be part of my research. This left me wondering and concerned about the responses I got from the Deputy Head. Nevertheless, I need to explain here that I am aware that the difference between the researcher and the researched in terms of power and influence could be criticised. However, having read Halpin's (1994:200) work about restricting research to uncontroversial issues, I have decided not to be constrained by this difficulty. I realised that I needed to be very careful how I positioned myself as a member of the SMT and a researcher. In fact, "investigating and reporting on a

safe and superficial aspect...” (Durrant, 2003:73) would not be a challenge worth researching.

Robson (1993) provides a useful picture of the advantages and disadvantages of researching as an insider. From the positive perspective, there is reduced traveling time and cost, as well as access to valuable information and history that would take an outsider a long time to gather. On my own part, my role as an Inclusion Manager/SENCO provided access to notes and minutes of meetings (especially leading up to a statement being granted). There could have been some sensitivity about how this might be used by myself (as they would not normally be made public). This is part of the reason why consent was sought from parents. In addition, the names of the school, professionals and children involved have been changed in case any of the information needed to be reported. Access to such information enabled me to cross reference information and data.

Although this research can be classified as insider research, I was not directly involved in the teaching of these children. I was in an advisory role, and I coordinated the resources needed to implement an effective inclusive curriculum, but it was down to the class teacher to ensure that direct teaching was inclusive for all children.

In this chapter I have made my position as transparent as possible. This is because I had knowledge of the site and participants and this could have influenced the way my data was analysed, regardless of how detached I tried to be (Arnold, 1994:190).

Getting the balance right, so that the narrative from the data could be achieved, was essential here rather than over censorship.

## **4.7 Summary**

This research has been placed within an interpretative paradigm, and this has impacted on the research design. Due to limited finance and time, the research had to be an insider research, with all the challenges that this presents and which have been discussed earlier. An insider has 'insight' into the particular complexities of the context.

Placing this study within an interpretative paradigm offered the opportunity to engage with the data and issues raised in a very deep way, giving the researched opportunities to interpret their practice in a way that they do not often do. Data was collected using participant observation, and, after the periods of observation, there were interviews with the class teachers, LSAs and members of the SMT. The interpretative nature of the research also allowed myself (as the researcher) to engage with the data in a very critical way, relating it to the literature and exploring the consequence of policy being contextualised and made at all levels, as argued by Armstrong (2003) and Fulcher (1999).

Subsequent chapters will present the outcomes of the analysis of the observation and interviews. The process of analysis arose from the theoretical framework set out in chapters two and three. Although various methods of data collection were used, interpretation of the outcome will be presented to show the relationship between the

research questions and the data collected. Having set the scene, I now return to staffs' views about Statements of SEN. What view do teachers hold about Statements, and how does that view impact on their practice? Does it impact at all? The next chapter examines teacher perception, teacher understanding of Statements and the operational realities of this in the classroom.

## Chapter Five

### Staffs' views about Statements

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on teachers and other classroom staff, because research has identified this group of professionals as change agents (Fullan 1999, Nind 2005). In fact, Nind even went as far as saying “that inclusion is an issue primarily for teachers” (Nind, 2005:273). Whilst that is not the view assumed in this study (since I do not believe that they are the only stakeholders in the inclusion process), “what happens when teachers endeavour to turn policy into practice” (Broached, 2002:25) is crucial. Crucial because they are at the front line of the implementation of this policy, for, as research has shown, inclusion is a pedagogical as well as a rights issue (Corbett, 2001; Nind and Cochrane, 2002). Teachers' views about Statements came from the semi-structured interview (see 4.4.3 and 4.4.3.1) and observation data and these were analysed (see 4.5).

Chapter Five begins with staffs' definitions of a Statement. Here some of the issues they have about Statements such as their expectations, preconceptions, worries, power relations and any contradictions are discussed. The next section looks at whether they believe a Statement is a 'good' thing. Different perspectives are presented depending on the role of the member of staff, their beliefs, values, experiences as well as the educational climate in which they are operating. In this study, various perceptions emerged about Statements. Perceptions were mostly positive, dependent on the stance and experience of the member of staff. Where



staff had personal experience of special educational needs, they tended to support Statements and used the resources it made available to enable the child to be included effectively. Some were in favour of Statements because it made available the resources needed to hire someone else to work with the child, hence, enabling the child to cease to be their responsibility. In spite of the differences with regards to their reasons for being in favour of Statements, all staff discussed the reservations they had of Statements. The chapter concludes with teachers' views on Statements at Frosties and how that contributed to the level of inclusion experienced by a child like Alex. What did staff think about Statements, what are they and how were they perceived? A discussion of this follows.

## **5.2 Staffs' views on Statements**

Staff expressed their views about Statements

- They defined a Statement
- They explained what they believed it meant to have a child with a Statement in their class
- And, most importantly, how they perceived their role to be with regards to children who have a Statement.

As the Government's own strategy for removing barriers to achievement for pupils who have SEN states:

It is about the quality of their experience; how they are helped to learn, achieve and participate fully in the life of the school (DFES, 2004:25).

This is the official policy intention for all children, including children who have Statements, so resources made available as a result of Statements should be "used to raise achievement of pupils with SEN" (DFES, 2001:96). The data shows that various professionals within school held different views on Statements for various

reasons. Discussion in this chapter begins with the understanding and views that school staff had about Statements.

### **5.2.1 What do staff understand Statements to be?**

I wanted to find out what staff knew about Statements, what they thought Statements could achieve, and how staff perceived their role in relation to this. Hence, staff were asked to explain the meaning of a Statement. Most of the definitions had a very strong sense of 'something wrong' with the child or a 'problem' within the child that needed 'fixing', and Miss Sugar's definition below was typical of the views expressed:

I think Statements mean you have discovered what the child's problem is, and you have come up with a programme of study for that child (Interview, Class Teacher: Miss Sugar).

Prevailing perceptions within the school seemed to focus on "'failures' or 'problems' experienced by students" (Florian *et al*, 2004:118). Consensus was in line with the views expressed in section 2.3.2 that special educational need was 'within child'. This consensus seemed to be judged against the Government standards set for children and schools (as evidenced in Chapter Seven)- a system that marks or assesses "the gaps, hierarchizes qualities, skills and aptitudes" (Foucault, 1977:180). The causality of this problem was placed 'squarely' within the child, as Miss Grange explained:

I think he needs professionals to look at him to try and diagnose really what's going on with him neurologically, because there appears to be some sort of problem there. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange)

What the above quote makes evident is the complexity of the issue of Statements and inclusion raised earlier in Chapters One, Two and Three. For although I argued that it is the non-alignment of Government policies in education that has created a climate which is hostile to including children who have Statements in mainstream

schools, Miss Grange's view above also makes transparent the position of many teachers in this debate. Including pupils who have Statements vis-à-vis the standards agenda may have given some school staff the option to exclude (see section 2.2.1) since the decision to include or exclude within a classroom practice is to a large extent the teacher's (e.g. Lingard, 2005; Hayes *et al*, 2005; Lingard *et al* 2003; Nind, 2005).

Some school staff sincerely believed they did not have the expertise and training necessary to 'teach' the child. For example in nine of the ten Year One observations the LSA was teaching Alex while the teacher taught the rest of the class. Even on the one occasion when the LSA was late and the teacher had Alex working on the same table where she was, he was doing a self directed task of spelling pop stars' names, then the teacher gave him a random dot-to-dot sheet to complete. The rest of the class was doing story writing. For a child to be categorised as 'Statemented', staff expected a thorough assessment by the 'right' professionals, that is, "somebody who knows exactly what he needs at every stage of his development..." (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Grange). That 'somebody':

would be able to come in and actually assess him as a psychologist or whatever, to be able to tell whether he does ... process information the same as everybody else. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Otherwise the assessment "might be masking something else we don't really know" (ibid). Needing someone to "tell whether he does...process information the same as everybody else" (ibid) implies 'difference' of a 'negative' nature. The above quote shows that even before the expected 'diagnosis' or 'discovery', this teacher expressed ideas about the child, which were different from her ideas about 'everybody else', and this positioned the child as an 'othered' or 'odd' one within the

group as manifested by the Year One observations in which Alex's work was observed to be always different from the rest of the class. His participation in the Year One class was different (see Chapter Six) but whether this was due just to the teacher's perception of Statements the issue was that it led to a classroom with different expectations for different children (Chapter Seven) and which generally encouraged policies and practices of exclusion (Benjamin, 2002 and 2002A; Corbett, 1996). Was Alex perceived as being of 'second priority' (hooks, 1994 and 2003; Vlachou, 1997) in Year One as a result of the Statement? In other words did Miss Sugar put the needs of the majority over Alex's needs (See chapters six and seven) and was Alex's experience parallel to those in Foucault's (1977) 'class of shame'? Sections 6.2 and 6.3 discuss evidence from observation and interview data and both indicate that in Year One Alex's experience could be paralleled to the children in Foucault's class of shame (ibid). Within the current 'hostile legislative context' (Rouse and Florian, 1997:324) in which Frosties School operated, where market place principles had replaced principles of equity, social progress and altruism (Rouse and Florian, 1997; Barton 1997), a child who, for example has behavioural difficulties:

... brings to the attention of everybody involved in the school that they are not going to progress, (Interview, Teacher: Miss Grange).

What this means for some teachers like Miss Grange is that the Statement provides the signal to deploy the consolation discourse (see 2.5.1 section b). Alex was observed in Year One repeating activities which he had already mastered. Every day, his visual timetable was the same, the activities were the same, he was learning to spell words he could already spell, and was making up the same sentences he had made every day I had been in the class. On top of all this, he was being taught by the LSA. Such a child, from the point of view expressed above, sits on the bench

of the ignorant (Foucault, 1977). There were parallels between staff definitions of Statements, how they viewed membership of the 'Statement' category and how Foucault's (1977) 'class of shame' membership was gained. In both cases, there is a high dependence on the professional judgments of those who have the duty to identify 'abnormality' or difference in relation to other differences (Foucault, 1977:183).

Although to an extent policy (see section 3.5) defined what teachers did, within the classroom context at Frosties, the 'medicalisation' of children's needs seemed to have been a choice some teachers chose, for not all the teachers subscribed to such a view (see section 5.3). The Statements, which were intended to set out how the needs of a child could be met in order to provide extra help and support to get the most out of the education system (National Assembly of Wales, 2006: Chair's Foreword) in fact provided the excuse to exclude. For how can a child get the most out of a system that positions them as 'negatively different'?

Also, within Frosties School, there was an assumption by the majority of teachers that where Statements were concerned, the teacher's expertise did not count. This was as a result of teachers' over reliance on 'professionals' such as educational psychologists and members of the medical profession. In Year One, Alex was observed engaged in activities which the 'specialist' teacher from the local authority had suggested. The class teacher did not plan his work or teach him. If, as Miss Sugar and Miss Grange suggested, a Statement meant "there appears to be some sort of problem" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange), a clinical problem would of course be beyond a teacher's expertise. The teachers who expressed such a view

felt unskilled and unwilling to engage with the child as they would have done if such a 'diagnosis' (I use the word in line with their medical perception) had not been given. So when in Chapters Six and Seven Alex showed distress, Miss Sugar either asked him to stop or got the LSA to take him to his corner. Frosties school had a problem with teachers not understanding the SEN Code of Practice in England as Miss Grange explained:

I've got very little background in what that actually means in this country. It's being able to have him acknowledged as needing extra support and if that doesn't happen and the support isn't, what happens when he is statemented? I haven't got much idea. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange).

She did not know the difference between 'School Action Plus' and the 'Statementing' stage of the SEN profiling system (see 2.2.1 section b). Three out of the four teachers, who expressed such deficit perspective of 'Statements', were trained abroad. This echoes the concerns raised by the Headteacher when she said, "we've got a lot of overseas trained teachers who obviously know nothing about inclusion" (Interview: Head Teacher). Miss Grange agreed when she said:

Inclusion in Australia means something different, and I can't think of what we call it (Interview; Teacher: Miss Grange).

Besides, as Miss Grange added, "we don't have the skills to be able to diagnose that sort of thing..." (Interview; Teacher: Miss Grange). One of the issues that this raises was that, at Frosties, there were some teachers who were in positions to make decisions about what went into children's Statements or who were in positions to implement the recommendations of a Statement, yet they did not understand the system. So what did this say about teachers' assessments and teacher self efficacy, if, according to some teachers what was needed to 'solve' someone like Alex's 'problems' was "...official documents issued by agencies of the state" (Codd, 1988: 235)?

As the discussion has shown, policy implementation was not all about contextualising policy, it was also about power, and throughout this study power relations within the school context have been analysed (Ball, 1994; Foucault, 1971). Having explored staff understandings of Statements to ascertain their views on the definition of Statements (see section 1.0), the discussion now focuses on staff views of what happened when a child had a Statement. To begin with, did staff view Statements as a good thing?

### **5.3 Is a Statement a good thing?**

In both statutory assessment (SA) forms - (SA1 and SA2- see appendices Two and Three) schools have to make a case for how they think the Statement will benefit the child and how the extra resources provided by the Statement would be used to improve the child's access to education (DFES 2001, SEN TOOL KIT; DFES, 2001, SEN Code of Practice). My understanding as a SENCO and how I always approached this was to be very clear about the intended objectives that the special educational provision aimed to meet and how that benefitted the child's participation as a learner in the school. I did this with both the parents and the teachers.

Findings from the data indicated that different professionals in Frosties School held different views on Statements (see Chapter One) with three perspectives emerging from the data: a very resolved Head; Statements as an entitlement; and Statements as a means of acquiring extra resources. Through these discussions, the power relations emerge, making obvious the positions of professionals beginning with that of the Headteacher.

### 5.3.1 A Resolved Head

“There’s a lot of controversy I think about ... Statements” (Interview: Head Teacher), but the Headteacher of Frosties School was very clear where she stood on the subject. She was in favour of Statements, and explained why:

I think we need the Statement, because I am passionate about keeping all... as many children as possible with SEN in mainstream. And I think unless you have the Statements you don’t tend to get the funding to keep them in the school (Interview: Head Teacher).

As manager, she also needed to balance her books and be able to make sure that children who had Statements participated effectively by providing the resources as she explained:

ok you can say a Statement is for the benefit of the Headteacher and the bursar, because it releases more money (Interview: HeadTeacher).

However, she also understood that the school culture needed to change, so, within a couple of months of her arrival in the school, she had set up a Family Care Team. She raised the profile of SEN within the school by promoting the SENCO to an Assistant Head and a member of the SMT, thus ensuring that the special needs perspective was heard within the core policy-making arena of the school (the SMT). Studies (Cole, 2005; Corbett, 2001) have shown that, where this is the case, the implementation of inclusion can be positive. Within a year of arriving at Frosties, she established a very sound pastoral support resource base, so that the inclusion of all pupils was maximised. As well as the funding needs, the Headteacher perceived the purpose of the Statement from the ‘rights’ perspective (Corbett, 2001; Nind and Cochrane, 2002) as, she explained:

To me the Statement, the use of Statements and pastoral support programmes, things like that, ensures the child’s right really that they do get the education they are entitled to. (Interview: Head teacher).



She argued that the Statement was a means to inclusion. The other side of this argument is that made by Warnock (2005) that the Statement is the real evil, because even the perception which the tag of a Statement created (like the views of Miss Grange and Miss Sugar above) did not ensure inclusion. To the Headteacher especially, funding from Statements seemed to be the only feasible way of ensuring that children's educational rights were met. That in itself is contradictory and this situation is at risk of being perpetuated by the proposed "Education, Health and Care Plan" (DFE, 2011:5). Although the name may change, the concept will remain the same – that of the deficit discourse (2.5.1b). The Headteacher believed that anyone who used the extra resources a Statement makes available to schools with the intention of excluding the child:

shouldn't be in teaching. You don't think like that. Statement, though, is to ensure that that child gets what they deserve. (Interview: Head Teacher).

So the Statement in her view helped to ensure that the child had a school placement and required schools to implement the correct support for them. What she did not think about was 'the self-interest' of professionals involved in the Statementing process (section 2.5.1). For the 'business' of Statementing benefits various professionals: the array of assessments (SA1 and SA2) involved are very costly, for example extra support is needed for the teacher in class and the LSA's job (created for Statements). This Headteacher had first hand experience of SEN and was able to empathise, as she said:

My own son didn't have a Statement, and he had severe EBD problems, and I wanted him to have a Statement (Interview: Head Teacher).

As a result she saw the Statement (via her son's experience) as a 'safety net' (Warnock, 2005) for the children and explained why:

because I knew, without it, Headteachers, where I was living, would just kick him out. Which is what happened! He was just excluded. If he'd been

in a different authority, where he'd have got a Statement for his EBD behaviour, that wouldn't have happened. That would have helped him. You can't exclude a child with a Statement, not without putting all those other systems in place. If they haven't got the Statement, you can kick them out, can't you? It protects the child's right, I think (Interview: Head Teacher).

Her position towards Statements was influenced very heavily by her own experience as the parent of a child who had SEN (National Assembly for Wales, 2006; Clark, 2005). She was resolved to remove barriers that stood in the way of the 'right' education and support (DFES, 2004). What she did within the school went beyond 'good' management, because, when she felt the formal process of doing things was not supportive, she became creative and took risks. For example, operating a Nurture Group on a deficit budget against the advice of the LA; applying for funding from a city firm for a Family Care Team to support vulnerable pupils and their families; and hiring learning support assistants against the advice of the school's business manager. So she set the example of 'transgressing' which we would see Miss Titch doing in subsequent sections of this study. She strongly believed that Statements were positive except for the one small technicality that Statements are also labels. Even on this point, she argued that labels are socially constructed and not issues that were within the child:

Well, I guess labelling a child sometimes can be negative, but I think it's the way it's handled by the adults. Isn't it? And the family (Interview: Head Teacher).

The Headteacher's perception of a Statement seemed to her to be straight forward- she believed that Statements enabled inclusion. The view that it was down to resources and resources only, did not take into consideration individual teachers' perceptions nor did it take the impact of the educational climate in which the Statement existed into consideration. For, as Ball (1994) argues, policy is made at all

levels, and as seen in Chapter Three (see 3.3 and 3.4), teachers make the policies within their classroom that affect the quality of inclusion for children who have Statements. What did the other members of staff think about Statements and did they have a similar view to the Headteacher?

### **5.3.2 Statements as entitlement**

There was overwhelming agreement that Statements made available the much needed funding for individual children:

Well, I straight away think that there's going to be additional help for that child and, in this case, LSA. (Interview, Teacher: Miss Sugar)

The sort of support Miss Sugar was advocating here was one that was supposed to ensure that:

The child is going to get some extra support to help him to get through the school year or years. There will be resources provided for him to help him to achieve that (Interview; Class Teacher: Miss Titch).

This is why even though Miss Sugar was not observed actively 'including' Alex in her classroom she probably with some support, might be able to convert 'the talk' into practice. Both Alex's teachers agreed on the fact that what the Statement made available was 'additional help' or 'extra support', the operative words being 'additional' and 'extra'. In Chapter Seven this concept of 'extra' or 'additional' is engaged with in terms of - was it additional to quality first teaching by the teacher or was it instead of quality first teaching by the teacher? Thus, the majority view was that a Statement was necessary because it provided the resources needed to educate children with "extreme educational needs" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Dunstans) in mainstream classrooms and schools. This view is in line with the official intention of Statements (DFES, 2001; SENDA, 2001; the Education Act 1996), as the intention in section 324 of the Education Act 1996 states that LEAs have the duty to

arrange the educational provision laid out in a child's Statement. It "strengthens the rights of pupils with statements...to mainstream education" (CSIE, 2002:1). Miss Titch saw the extra resources brought by a Statement as necessary and as "extra support to help him get through school year in [sic] year out" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch). As opposed to being the main or only support, the support was treated as additional to what she offered the child. For example, Miss Titch was observed during most of the field studies to be teaching Alex with other groups of children, while the LSA worked with other groups of children. She created opportunities for small group work facilitated by an adult, informal peer/paired discussion, she used visual, kinesthetic and auditory approaches to learning, and encouraged a variety of ways of recording work (see Chapter Seven). This was also the way the SMT wanted extra support to be used, as the Deputy Head explained:

There will be times when an LSA is working with the child on his own. There will be times when the teacher is working with the child on his own, while the LSA works with the rest of the children. And there may be times when the child is with a group with the LSA and times when he is with a group with the teacher. (Interview: Deputy Head).

The Government's own strategy for removing barriers to achievement (DFES, 2004), the National Assembly of Wales (2006) and Tenant (2001) advocate this model of using support staff. In one teacher's view (talking about another child):

Without the extra support, it will be horrendous, because in the classroom, if he is not directed or redirected at almost everything that he does, he totally excludes himself from the group, refuses to participate and it's chaos in the classroom. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange)

However, extra resources did not necessarily mean the child was included. Some teachers used the extra resources in ways that were not always inclusive even though the child was in their classroom. This is discussed in the next section which focusses on the use of resources.

### 5.3.3 Use of Statement resources

There were some members of staff who perceived Statements as a means of securing extra resources with the intention to include, but found it difficult to use the resources in the way they were intended:

that person would spend a lot of time with that child to ensure that the child is learning, they're grasping concepts, they're making progress, they're using the knowledge they acquire through one-to-one assistance... (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Sugar).

The intention here was to enable the child to make progress and use knowledge. In Alex's Year One class, he was taught by the teacher for ten minutes (see chapter seven) during carpet time and, after that, "the LSA can help to build on that and extend the child's learning" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Sugar). She did not say how this extension was going to be done. So while a qualified teacher taught the rest of the class, the LSA taught Alex. Corbett (2001) advocates a system where the LSA is not attached to the child with a Statement only, but one where the teacher and LSA work with all the children as good practice. Miss Sugar's perception of Alex can, in a way, be argued to be the creation of the educational environment within which both Alex and Miss Sugar existed, as discussed in Chapter Two which positions Alex as 'negatively' different because his ability was not up to the standard for his class. Such a perception has led critics like Nirje (1985), to criticise this way of thinking as devaluing the lives of those who appear to be different. While the idea of having an extra pair of hands is often viewed as a positive reason for getting a Statement, the above quote makes transparent two issues about Statements.

The first one is "that person would spend a lot of time with that child" (ibid), so the child spent less time with anyone else in the class and be confined to their 'chair', or

'bench of the ignorant'. In Chapters Six and Seven discussions about Alex's experiences in Years One and Two provide evidence that in Year One he worked almost exclusively with his LSA, with very little social contact with the other children. In Year Two, his experience was different as he became a member of the classroom community, made friends, worked with other children, and worked with the teacher as well as the other adults in the class. In Year One, the LSA was a powerful symbol of Alex's exclusion within the classroom. The 'standards agenda' (Benjamin, 2002A; Lunt and Norwich, 1999) pressurises the teacher to cater for the majority. One teacher's view on this was:

I think people might talk the talk but don't walk the walk. And it's very easy to say 'well, I speak to my children like this, I do this and, yes, I include all...' and it's quite another thing to deliver in this setting, so I think the more that we talk about it in an open environment as possible, the more that we can actually find out what people are actually doing. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange)

However, Miss Titch insisted that the Statement could only be beneficial "if it is used for the child" or, as the Deputy Head agrees, "if it means the child is getting what they need". So how was a Statement beneficial to Alex? Miss Shelley felt the Statement:

helps him to be able to come to this school and get the support that he needs that he won't necessarily get in a special needs school. (Interview, LSA: Shelley).

Others who argued that a Statement enabled a child to be educated shared this view:

with other children their own age in the same place. They can teach them as they go along which I've seen he's learnt a lot as he's been going along by speaking to the other children and the children speaking to him. I find even though he doesn't speak as much about things as they do, they teach him. I ask them to speak to him as much as possible just... ordinary things. (Interview, LSA: Shelley).

This is in line with the statutory guidance (see section 2.3). Miss Shelley further highlighted why she supported Statements:

I think without a Statement he will just be left behind, so I think the Statement is good for him. (Interview: LSA: Miss Shelley).

Opinions about pupils with Statements being in mainstream placement were found to be conditional, in line with the Code of Practice (DFES, 2001) and the SENDA (DFES, 2001), even though the right to mainstream education is assumed to be increased. Some teachers, like Miss Grange, used the fact that a child had a Statement to argue against their placement in a mainstream school as the following quote indicates:

if his behaviour is diagnosed, and then we know what we are working with and they say 'yes he has got low level autism', then I think he would benefit from a special needs environment... (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange)

This teacher's expressed position is only possible because of the lack of clarity and specificity in the current Code of Practice (DFES, 2001) and the Green Paper (DFE, 2011), which advises that the decision to include should take into account whether a child's admission to the school does not adversely affect the education of their peers.

Parents will also be able to express a preference for their child to attend a particular school and this should be met unless this would not provide the best education for the child, disrupt the education of other children, or be an inefficient use of resources. (Young, 2011: Para 3)

There is no doubt that the current coalition Government supports the existence of special schools (DFE, 2011 & 2012). However, the debate on whether or not these should exist when inclusion is being promoted is still polarised and unresolved (Barton, 2003 & 2005; Norwich, 2000; Warnock, 2005; Young 2011). The official position so far is still "special schools have an important role to play within the overall spectrum of provision for children with SEN" (DFES, 2004:34) and pledges to end

the “bias towards inclusion” (Young, 2011: Para 3). Of course, some parents want special schools for their children (Shepherd, 2009) and some theorists argue that:

the inclusion policy has resulted in disturbed youngsters wrecking lessons for thousands of pupils in mainstream schools. Ofsted last year reported disruption in most schools across the country (Clark, 2005:6).

The above indicates a tendency to favour the equality of the majority over that of the minority. All staff said that while they would not treat a child less favourably because of their SEN, they found the issue of placement difficult to decide. However, certain ‘needs’ were valued more than others, for example, when Danii spoke about the differential experiences of two children (who both had Statements) in Mr. Broom’s class. One was supported by the teacher and the other was supported by the LSA. The consensus, however, was that it was beneficial for children who had Statements to be in mainstream schools. As Miss Titch explained, knowing the needs of the child made her want to support them even more. Miss Titch was one of those respondents who refused to be negative about Statements throughout. She was adamant that the child’s place was in the classroom and the child must not be made to feel any different just because of their ‘label’. During observations, Alex worked with other children, in groups with both the LSA and the teacher and sometimes he worked independently. Miss Titch disclosed in a private conversation the links between her own experience as a pupil and how this has affected her perception of Statements and her approach to inclusion. The Headteacher and Miss Shelley did not believe that labels necessarily imply negativity and they stressed that it depended on how they are used. They too disclosed that they had very close relations who had Statements of Special Educational Needs, hence their passion to ensure that all children, regardless of their labels, were educated within the discourse of commonality. Interestingly, this information was not asked for - it was volunteered.



Some teachers found the Statement empowering. For example Miss Grange explained that:

it gives the teacher more knowledge and more skill and more direction on how to...deliver what the child needs...more information...I've got to be able to pass on into his practices, you know, things that I need to do to be able to redirect him, or it gives me the skills to be able to assist him and then he benefits from it, in an ideal world. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Whilst empowering teachers with such knowledge and skills, this idea of 'delivering what the child needs' presents the child as a 'passive' learner. What about what the child wants? As well as being 'docile' (2.5.b) the Statement positioned the child as being 'different' (see section 2.5.a)—a difference that needed 'normalising' (2.5.b), implying that the child was not good enough. Alex's experience in Year One (see Chapters Six and Seven) marginalised him. Diagnosis of 'needs' type was very important to teachers like Miss Grange, as in her views, diagnosis 'automatically' lead to 'a programme' that will meet their needs. This view was shared by Mr. Broom who argued that a Statement:

say[s] what their needs are as well. If it's rightly implemented in the school and you have the resources and you have the teachers helping you, like the support to help you in class, I think it's a very good thing to have. (Interview; Class Teacher: Mr. Broom)

The implication here is that a Statement is not just to have the 'child's problems discovered', as Miss Sugar expresses but to ensure that there are resources to support 'the teachers' and implement the Statement 'rightly'. There was a lot of emphasis on the fact that, once the child has a Statement, there would be 'programmes' that would ensure progress. The problem this raises is: what if the 'diagnosis' is incorrect and the child is bombarded with multiple forms of corrective training (Foucault, 1977) for the wrong 'condition'?

When the LSAs spoke about the benefits of Statements, the focus was on planning and teaching the child. One of the LSAs was very passionate about the need for a Statement to provide resources that would enable effective planning. She explained:

I feel that he [Mr. Broom] should do different planning so you can meet the... statemented children's needs. When I say 'do separate planning' I mean sit down with me as an LSA, and you say 'we do separate planning', you know, to meet the child's needs. You know, to include the child as well in activities in classroom activities...also. (Interview: LSA: Miss Danii)

In this LSA's view, time for planning is crucial and should have been considered as an effective way of spending the extra resources. By not planning effectively for the child, because he had a Statement, the class teacher was perceived by this LSA as lowering expectations for him (Florian *et al*, 2004; DFE, 2011). The problem was pointed out by the same LSA who cautioned that the resources provided were not often used, as was intended in the Statement when she said:

I think, when a teacher does the planning for the class, I think he should actually do a separate planning as well for the statemented children. I do believe in inclusion as well, but I feel that he should do different planning so you can meet...the statemented children's needs. (Interview: LSA: Danii)

The above quote seems to insinuate that the teacher did not plan for the child in a way that included the child as well as take their individual needs into account. This leads back to the question, "how well are statutory assessment and Statements helping to meet children's needs today" (Pinney, 2002:118), especially if they provide "resources to schools in a way that fails to support inclusive practice" (Pinney, 2003:3)?

The extra resources provided were often in the form of an LSA (2.5.3). However, having an LSA enabled some teachers (observed in year one) to abdicate responsibility for that child to the LSA (2.5.3). In Miss Sugar's class leaving the LSA to get on with teaching Alex, marginalised Alex's position in the class (Gillborn and

Youdell, 2000; Benjamin 2002). His position was lower than everyone else in the class, because his needs were 'so complex' according to the teacher that she did not even teach him (see Chapter Seven). As a result of the Statement, he was excluded from the dominant classroom discourse of success (Benjamin 2002A). This type of practice has been criticised by some for not being in tune with the practice of inclusion (Mittler, 2000; Booth & Ainscow, 1998; Lacey, 2001). Another teacher argued that whether or not a Statement was effective did not only depend on the teacher:

It depends very much on the quality of the LSA because, quite frankly, they can be a pain in the neck if they are not willing to work with the teacher. It's true isn't it? (Interview; Class teacher: Miss Dunstans)

The three views expressed so far, show how in spite of the policy and teacher's view on the written policy, it was how the teacher actually translated the policy within their practice that made a difference. As Ball (1994), Fulcher (1999) and Armstrong (2003) argue, policy is made at different levels and teachers interpret policy documents within their context (see Chapters Six and Seven) not just as professionals but as individuals with histories and sets of values which determine their pedagogies (hooks, 2003; Holt, 2005; Lingard and Mills, 2005). So whether or not a Statement is inclusive depends on the teacher's perception and willingness to adapt their pedagogy to enable conditions for inclusive education to thrive. However, there were some reservations about Statements and these are discussed below.

#### **5.4 Some reservations about Statements**

Despite support for Statements, staff still expressed some reservation about the use of Statements, one of which is the use of labels (section 2.5.a).

### 5.4.1 Statements are Labels

There was consensus amongst the staff that labelling children was unacceptable, as

Miss Shelley explained:

I don't think that they should be labelled. But some people might label them. That's the only thing I can say. You know, 'cos some people would say 'oh but that child's been statemented and that child's...', you know. Some times it doesn't really matter, but that's the only negative thing I would say about the way some people look towards a statemented child. (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley)

Staff perceived labels as problematic, because they positioned the child as someone who 'ordinarily' should not be in a mainstream setting (DES, 1978). As one teacher explained, "it's easier to say they are 'special needs' and they need to be somewhere else" (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Dunstans). The issue for me is how easy the statutory guidance has made it for schools to use the 'get out clause' (see section 2.3.6) due to the alternate provisions being provided by special schools. However, even when a child stays in a mainstream classroom, does a Statement guarantee inclusion?

### 5.4.2 Isolation and exclusion

The second concern about Statements was the danger of isolation and exclusion within their mainstream classroom. Kanpol talks of this as "realities that alienate ...students" (Kanpol, 1997:80). For:

There is a very great danger that they might become isolated within the class and the teacher may feel that it's the LSA's job to educate them totally, and they may be a bit isolated from the classroom if it is allowed to happen. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Dunstans)

This was the situation observed in Year One and it bore an uncanny resemblance with Foucault's class of shame: if a child is 'deviant' (Oliver, 1998:52), their difference is made obvious. Alex's difference in Year One was made obvious

through his level of participation, attitude towards him and the type of work he did (Chapters Six and Seven). Like a child in the 'class of shame', who sat on the 'bench of the ignorant' (Foucault, 1977), Frosties School's version of the 'bench of shame' seemed to be isolation within the class to 'the chair' where Alex:

is left alone, especially when the LSA is not there during an absence for a course or something like that. There is the danger that the child has no adult contact all because they just go to their chair or are deemed not to be part of the class (Interview: Deputy Head).

The 'chair' or their "corner" (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley) was Frosties' bench of the ignorant. Within the pecking order of the classroom, the child who has a Statement was relegated to being taught by an unqualified member of staff (the LSA). Being isolated made Alex's difference even more obvious. The permanence of the term 'Statemented' is parallel to the idea that, once a child was placed in this class, they will "always be separated from the others" (Foucault, 1977:182). This means the child can never aspire to attain the standard set for other children (2.5.a), and is in direct collision with the child's human rights, the Salamanca declaration of education for all (UNESCO, 1994) and the 'Every Child Matters' principles. It is also contrary to the concept of 'classroom community', which hooks (1994 and 2003) advocates. This made the unresolved conflict between the apparent equal rights of the majority and Alex's apparent equal rights (the minority) clear. By making resources available, the Statement was intended to promote Alex's rights, however, in today's education climate, this seems to be dependent on who the child's teacher is and how the teacher chooses to implement the Statement. When staff defined Statements, it is ironic that some perceived causality to be 'within the child', abdicating responsibility, yet there seemed to be a culture of the 'bench of the ignorant' or the 'chair' within classrooms. A typical 'bench of the ignorant' was described by an LSA who

complained that, when she was not in class, the child she supported was marginalised:

she sits by herself, she doesn't understand, she just looks around books... The teacher should be actually sitting down with that child, you know, all the children are getting on with the work, he should be sitting down with the child and help her. He doesn't. And I've seen this on many occasions. If I don't sit down with this child and help her, she doesn't get any help. (Interview; LSA: Miss Danii).

The above is an example where "that reality does not always match..." (DFES, 2004:25) the rhetoric. One reason for this could be lack of knowledge and an issue of training, as one teacher confessed, "when he is Statemented, I haven't got much idea of how to include him." (Interview; Class teacher: Miss Grange). As well as fear of isolation and exclusion, staff have other reservations about Statements, such as differential treatment.

### **5.4.3 Differential treatment**

In Miss Danii's view, differential treatment occurred because of the label of the Statement and she explained that children who were on the profiling system but did not have a Statement stood a better chance of being taught by the teacher. For example:

a child like Asha [not her real name], she needs help, you know, and she's being included in classroom activities. (Interview LSA: Danii).

Asha did not have a Statement, but was on the SEN profiling system on School Action Plus. Danii's allegation was vindicated when Miss Sugar explained that she:

hasn't got that amount of time to spend with one person, especially when the child has got complex needs (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

Using 'value-giving' measures based on the 'standards agenda', the child's difference in relation to the standards was established. Alex (the child Miss Sugar was referring to) was considered to have less value than the other children. Was

Miss Sugar's perception of Alex a human rights issue (Barton, 1997)? How such a perception impacted on his inclusion and learning was identified as an area of contention by participants and is discussed below.

#### **5.4.4 How the Teacher's perception might influence the social construction of a child**

Another area of contention about Statements for some members of staff was that the value the school society gave to the child, to a large extent, was determined by the value the teacher gave to the child. This made the teacher's 'gaze' as Foucault (1977) described it, very significant (see section 2.3.3.2). What impact did the gaze have on the type of 'inclusion' children like Alex experienced as a result? As explained earlier (see section 2.3.3.2), the child who has a Statement operates within a 'discourse of specialness' (section 2.5.1.b) with established preconceptions. What implication did the 'gaze' have within the school context, and how did this impact on the power relations within school? At worst, as Miss Shelley protested:

they will read the Statement and just think that's the child, that's the way they should be and keep them that way, but they don't realise that, just because that child has been statemented, they can learn, they can be moved on and they can be helped. (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley).

There was the fear that such prejudgement about children, just because they have Statements:

encourages too strong a focus on the present 'failures' or 'problems' experienced by students, rather than on their future possibilities and achievements (Florian et al, 2004).

In some cases when the child was 'Statemented', some teacher's preconceived idea was that they should have differentiated treatment—"the class of the 'bad' received the most punishment, they were the 'shameful' class" (Foucault, 1977: 182) and this was because "special regulations were drawn up so that those who belonged to it

would always be separated from the other (Foucault, 1977: 182). One of the LSAs explained how this manifested at Frosties:

I would say a lot of adults would sort of be 'oh, there is something wrong with him', because he's got a Statement. You know, just, you know, I had heard 'oh so and so should have this, because they are statemented and so and so should have, because they've got a Statement' (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley).

Some teachers expected 'SEN' specific pedagogy to be appropriate. As one teacher said "I know of a scheme of work from my previous school that I used for some children..." (Interview: Class Teacher: Mr. Broom). As Farrell (2001) warned, children's special needs are too complex for there to be a simple solution like one intervention. Two other teachers expected outside experts to offer them a 'programme of work' to follow with pupils who have Statements. However, research has shown that SEN specific pedagogy is not the answer (Norwich, 2000). The above shows that sometimes interventions were not even carefully thought through. Staff meted out 'interventions' or 'punishment', which is decided by culturally normative means (Oliver, 1994 and 1998). Such punishment (interventions) must be essentially corrective, favouring exercises that are intensified, multiplied forms of training, which were repeated several times (Foucault, 1977). In theory, such intervention seeks to 'normalise', and are supposed to be essentially corrective, but, as Miss Danii protests:

teachers do things to keep the children occupied. They would just give them the work for doing sake. (LSA interview: Miss Danii)

This is rote and meaningless learning, so, working within this discourse, how can the child ever attain the 'standards'? Gillborn and Youdell (2000) have commented on the two-tier system that operates in school when the standards agenda forces schools to 'ration' education. Like Lunt and Norwich (1999) they argue that due to the pressures of the standards agenda, schools prioritise the needs of those who



can positively impact on the school's performance on the league table. Whilst the need of the majority is being prioritised in some classes in Frosties the minority, as Danii protests, are given purposeless tasks to keep them occupied.

One member of staff points out that Statements create unrealistic expectations because the parent:

thinks that every single item on the Statement is going to be addressed in a very short time, and they feel that the time should be progressing, because they've got a Statement, much quicker than the actual developmental progress of the child. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Dunstans)

Such unrealistic expectations some argue is due to an assessment system, which, as Miss Dunstans criticises:

sometimes that's not the complete picture, because it's taken a child as individual not what the child within the classroom setting could be. So you might get some things from the Statement that are quite hard to fulfill within the classroom setting (Interview; Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

Others agree that, if assessment is inaccurate, it affects not only parental expectations, but the extra resources that are put in place. Mr. Broom shares a situation he had to deal with when:

the system didn't really know, and it was more about behavioural issues, and we had to have meetings and meetings, and it was about the third meeting that we had an idea that it was really the turning point and said 'but listen they need something.' Probably what they needed was more evidence on the child that was behaviour-wise, and that was previously not written down and was missed out of the system... and then when we had our third meeting we...put those things into place. (Interview: Teacher: Mr Broom).

So, whose diagnosis was it anyway, and what was it based upon? As Oliver (1998) argues, such diagnoses are dependent on professionals whose task it is to identify abnormality and difference in relation to the standards. Besides, if these teachers were ready to accept any diagnosis that was meted out to them, did they assume that the diagnosis was correct? There is caution from Ball (1994) that, after the battle

in the arena where various discourses contest for prominence (Armstrong, 2003; Larsen, 2001), meaning of text often becomes blurred. The argument here is not against putting things in writing, but that instead of just accepting what is given, teachers need to interrogate text and interpret it in the context of their own culture, ideology, history and resources (Trowler, 1998). The view expressed by Trevor Phillips that social inclusion is sleepwalking into segregation (BBC 1.00 o'clock news, 22/09/2005), is not upheld in Frosties even though practice in some of the classes suggest otherwise. For some teachers there were some other reservations about Statements and a discussion of this follows.

#### **5.4.5 Lack of consistency**

This is an area of contention for some teachers due to the lack of consistency in the way Statements are being awarded to children (2.5.1.b). The Deputy Head explains why:

I think there's another aspect to it... It's quite difficult for some teachers to work out ... why that child is getting that much support when there are other children in the classroom exhibiting problems who need support. So it's ... another way of using an LSA ... supporting other pupils alongside the child that has got a Statement. I think ... the government needs to wake up to the fact that there are a lot of children within schools that don't conform and need extra help, and, if it's through Statements, fine. (Interview: Deputy Head).

The problem here, as the deputy head perceives it is the lack of consistency in the support of children who have 'SEN' generally and the sheer number of children who have SEN in mainstream classrooms, forcing teachers to use the extra resources in a way that does not necessarily (in her view) always benefit the child with a Statement as the LSA has to also work with other children. Others (Clark *et al*, 1995; Balshaw, 2002) have argued that having inclusive LSAs is a good thing. The above

quote shows that sometimes resources are inappropriately used because of lack of funding in general.

One teacher is against the use of a Statement, not because of the fact that it can be used to exclude the child, but rather that the child can use it in a less than positive way. She explains that “the children come in and they are labelled and they play on it” (Interview, Class Teacher: Miss Titch), which implies that the child manipulates situations, because s/he had ‘a label’. For example:

She knows that there are certain things she can do and get away with it; for instance, she would hit you, and would say you can't hit me back, you can do this, you can't do that... because she thinks, because she is statemented, she might be treated a little differently and I would be a little bit more tolerant than if she did not have a statement as they sort of come under special needs and they needed something extra: more tolerance. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Miss Titch's view is similar to the Headteacher's and Miss Shelley's, as they all argue that a Statement stops schools from hastily excluding pupils. However, the consensus is that Statements are unhelpful if they position children as ‘different’ in a negative way. Staff are not against the idea of giving children Statements; the contention is- what happens when a child is labelled as ‘Statemented’ and the potential discourse within which their education is operated?

## **5.5 Summary**

Although in favour of Statements, the overwhelming view can be summarised as such: when staff speak about Statements, they perceive the problem as being ‘within child’, hence, they take no responsibility for the child's situation. In addition, they feel they are not qualified to address the child's needs. There is some agreement with the argument which present Statements as public certification that the child would

not progress (What an indictment!) (see 2.5.a). All the staff in this study viewed Statements as a way of securing resources, and everyone was in favour of getting the extra resources. However, lack of consensus appears in their views of Statements when they looked at the way the Statement is implemented. Three perspectives on Statements emerge from this study:

- there is the view of a very resolved Head who is very 'pro-Statements'
- there is the view of those who perceive Statements as an entitlement
- and the third view is that of those who perceive Statements as a means of securing extra resources so the pupils who have Statements can be excluded under the banner of inclusion.

In all these perspectives, what emerges is the idea of the deficit view (see 2.5.b) putting members of staff at odds with Statements. Only two classes were observed, and evidence from observation could only be used to verify the interviews of four members of staff. Although Miss Sugar and Miss Titch were meant to be implementing the same inclusion policy, one practice was grounded on a 'deficit' discourse (see 2.5.b) and the other was grounded on the 'discourse of commonality' (2.3). Hence, Alex's experiences in both these classes, as will be seen in the next chapter, are very different. There are various reasons for the differences, since different members of staff are influenced by different value systems and experiences. My argument is that despite policy, teachers are still the only ones who can deconstruct Statements, but they have to choose to do so. Evidence (section 2.3.3.2) has shown that the Statement is a label, and often, when a child is labelled, their education gets into the cycle of 'assessment', 'diagnosis', and 'normalisation' (2.5 a & b). This is not often positive as it positions the child as 'negatively different',

closing down discursive fields available to them and limiting expectation (Benjamin, 2002A).

Amongst the deficit views expressed are the voices of the staff who perceive Statements as an entitlement- teachers like Miss Titch. Those voices are not as loud as the others, yet I am going to focus in the next section on those quiet voices- what are they doing to make Statements an entitlement in their practices and why are their voices quieter? The 'chair' effect in Year One was minimised and made obsolete in Year Two without compromising attainment and standards. This was done through an inclusive pedagogy (see Chapters Two and Three) hence the next chapter looks at staff beliefs about inclusion.

# Chapter Six

## Beliefs about inclusion

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines staff beliefs about inclusion and explores the factors that impact upon the inclusion of pupils who have Statements. It begins with an overview about inclusion followed by a discussion about whether staff believe that children who have Statements should be in a mainstream school. A combination of data sources (observations notes, semi-structured interviews, diary notes, confidential talk, conversations and the school's inclusion and special educational needs policies) was used to interrogate staff interpretation of inclusion in this chapter. Does inclusion mean mere placement in a mainstream school or does it mean staff getting to know children well, modifying their pedagogy and pitching their teaching so that children can make progress in their learning (Vygotsky, 1976; Bruner, 1986) by using appropriate language and facilitate participation? (Barton, 2003; hooks, 2003). It then moves on to examining staff beliefs on what form inclusion should take within a school. This is followed by a discussion on contrasting pedagogies within Frosties School and the implications of this. What did teachers think and say about inclusion and how did their thinking affect their pedagogies- did they believe they could operate in ways that celebrate inclusion? (Zambelli and Bonni, 2004:351). Did staff believe that they were the deciding factor on whether or not children who had Statements were included as some researchers argue? (e.g. Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Norwich, 1994; Freire and Cesar 2003).

This chapter consists of a reflection on staff perceptions about the inclusion of all pupils followed by a discussion of what impact staff believed they had on inclusion, which culminates in staff interpretation of their roles. Once a child was given a Statement, how did that impact on their inclusion, and did staff views about Statements affect their beliefs about inclusion? It has been argued that, “for schools the task of becoming inclusive is to swim against the tide of educational reforms” (Rouse and Florian, 1997: 324) and including children who have a Statement “would be unattractive to schools because they would depress the schools’ test results or cost more to educate than they brought into the school in resources.” (Rouse and Florian 1997: 328). The chapter concludes with the ‘state’ of inclusion within the Frosties context based on staff beliefs. Having introduced the chapter, a discussion of the sections follows, beginning with an overview of Frosties staff beliefs about inclusion.

## **6.2 Overview of beliefs about inclusion**

The Government argues that “most children with special educational needs can be included successfully at a mainstream school” (DFES, 2001:9) and recommends that schools:

should actively seek to remove barriers to learning and participation that can hinder or exclude pupils with special educational needs (DFES, 2001:2).

Frosties School’s own policy pledges:

to provide suitable learning challenges and respond to diverse learning needs, and overcome potential barriers to learning and assessment for individuals and groups of pupils (Frosties School Inclusion Policy).

Did staff share the same policy vision, what did they believe about inclusion and were they in favour of inclusive education?

### **Were staff in favour of inclusive education?**

As discussed in Chapter Two (2.3) staff were generally in favour of inclusive education, however, the level of support for inclusive education differed depending on the position of the member of staff (2.3) within the management structure. The LSAs believed “it should be done” (Interview: LSA: Miss Shelley), because that is the right thing. This view is in line with researchers like Barton (1997 & 2003), Booth and Ainscow (2002) and the Salamanca agreement (UNESCO, 1994). Another LSA agrees and she explains why:

children should be included, all children: Statemented children, able children, regardless, they should be included. I think it's brilliant, you know. That's actually giving them a chance, and it happens in this school to an extent. (Interview: LSA: Miss Danii)

However, critics can view such a perspective as ‘self-interest’ (Tomlinson, 1982 and 2005), since LSAs need children who have Statements to be included for them to have a job. Amongst the teachers, there was a ‘strong’ support for inclusion, as Mr. Broom explained:

Personally I feel that inclusion... is a good thing because obviously you are including everybody in the class, every need, every aspect of the child's needs. I feel this is a good thing, because I don't think a child should be excluded just because of their physical disability. Because children should see that there are other children like that and they need to, kind of [sic], get used to the fact that there are people like that as well. (Interview: Class teacher: Mr Broom).

The above quote by implication - ‘other children like that’ presents children who have Statements as ‘othered’- the sort of ‘other’ that Oliver (1998) is critical about.



However, this is where this teacher is on the road to inclusion-at the beginning.

Another teacher explains this view of valuing diversity in people further:

I strongly believe that there are a lot of positives about that, because people are people, they have feelings, and how we feel about ourselves has a lot to do with our achievements. If we have low self-value then, of course, our achievements will be low, but when we are included and we feel that we are part of the learning environment, then of course our aspirations will be just as good as or near what the other children have. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

Despite expressed support for inclusion, teachers' support for inclusion is sometimes dependent on the level of inclusion necessary/anticipated. For example:

I think they are brilliant if they are handled properly and if they are handled professionally. And, by professionally, I mean finding out what the child's issues are and progressing from there (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

This is an indication that the meaning of inclusion to the teachers at Frosties was not unconditional. The use of the word "they" (repeated in the same quote) in the above quote implies that inclusion was something some teachers like Miss Grange expected to be done by someone else. It also implies "they" as opposed to 'us'. So was the child part of the class and how did inclusion manifest in everyday life in Frosties School?

### **What does Inclusion look like in Frosties?**

Having established that staff were to a greater or lesser extent in favour of inclusion (which accords with the literature- Chapters Two and Three), I set out to investigate what inclusion looked like within the school community and in Alex's classes in particular. Certain key ingredients of inclusion that came up in the discussions (see sections 2.2.1 & 2.3) were used during observation as a measure of Alex's inclusion

for example, participation, attitude (both adults and children) towards Alex and who took responsibility for his learning. By examining these specific measures, the intention is to show that although some of the findings sometimes make for uncomfortable reading, this study also highlights the issue that even when teachers seem as though they are struggling with implementing the ideals of inclusion, it is not because they do not want to do it. As seen in their support for inclusion, it could be that they are being asked to do something which they either do not understand, are unsure of, or they may not have enough time and/or resources to be able to do it well, due to an overwhelming workload. It also identifies practices where some teachers are able to interpret policy even with the constraints of the educational environment in ways that do not negatively reinforce differences between pupils. These discussions take on board the wider school perspectives (views from other staff who do not work with Alex) before looking specifically at Alex's two classroom experiences. The next section follows with a discussion on participation.

### **Alex's participation**

The staff were in agreement with researchers like Barton (1997 & 2003) and Ainscow (1999) that participation is crucial to inclusion. A teacher stated "a child should be included in every aspect of school life" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Dunstans). Staff perceived participation to be key, hence:

It is not just about **them** being there in bodies. It is actually catering for each individual child's needs (Interview: Deputy Head).

So how did participation translate on a day-to-day basis in Alex's experience? As the geographical environment of the classroom went, Alex was judged to be 100% included in both classes because he was physically present in the same classroom with his peers all the time. He was never withdrawn and was always in school.

However, looking at his participation within the two classrooms, the differences became obvious. There were visual markers that led to this conclusion.

In Year One, although Alex was in the classroom, he had his own area in the far right hand corner of the class. Three boards making a boxed area by the wall with a display board on the wall facing Alex's seat surrounded this area. There was a table and two chairs (one child's and one adult's) facing the wall. Both Alex and his LSA sat with their backs to the rest of the class. As well as being seated apart from everyone else, Alex's equipment was kept separately from everyone's. The other children had their books in a common tray area and although there was a tray with Alex's name on it, it was empty as all his things and resources were in his area. He even had a hook for his coat in his area. So whilst the rest of the class shared common areas within the classroom, Alex was excluded from those areas.

Other methods of organisation further resulted in Alex being excluded, for example the rest of the class sat in ability groups. The names of the children belonging to the various groups were displayed on the wall with the names of their groups but Alex's name was not in any group - he did not belong to these academic/social settings. So whilst the children worked at their tables with their peers and sometimes with an adult, Alex always worked alone (except once when the LSA was late and the teacher called him over to a table she was sitting at). Also Alex's work was always different (not differentiated) to what everyone else was doing. He had a visual timetable, which stayed the same for all ten observations in Year One. It was always, PECS symbols for registration, literacy, numeracy, assembly and break. During literacy, Alex had a magnetic board and letters, the LSA had a list of high frequency

words, said a word at a time and he made the word with the letters. She then gave him a spelling test of the words he had learned for the day and he wrote them in his book. The LSA then dictated sentences to him and he wrote the sentences down. He sometimes used flashcards to make up sentences. For numeracy it was magnetic numbers and signs on magnetic board again. He also had brightly coloured elephants in three sizes (small, medium and large). Alex was often asked to make a chain of elephants. For example the LSA said to him:

Use 2 large blue elephants and 3 small red elephants (Field note: Year One)

This activity was different to what the rest of the class was doing on the day, which was using 2-d shapes to make different objects. Watching Alex's level of engagement in Year One was very difficult for me as he was at the margins and as a professional responsible for inclusion, I felt like I was failing. I felt that strongly because I felt sad for him and I would not have wished that for my own child. His participation was minimal and he was not even challenged.

In Year Two the visual difference that was so obvious in Year One was significantly reduced. Alex sat at a table with a group of children although an area was provided for him where he could choose to go to if he felt he needed to. Of the ten observations done in Year Two, I never saw Alex using this corner. He had a tray in the same area as his peers, he shared the same common areas and resources and his work was in essence similar to that of his peers. As in Year One, Alex had a visual timetable to help him know what was happening next or what his morning/afternoon was going to be like. So far, to an observer, Alex blended within the Year Two class.

## **Attitudes towards Alex**

When Barton wrote about inclusion, he described it as “empowering all members and celebrating ‘difference’ in dignified ways” (Barton, 1997:233). This perception of classroom experience is also shared by hooks (2003) who celebrates achievements and motivates children by valuing what they have, knowing them well and ensuring they are equal members of the class. This section examines two pedagogies in the same school where Alex’s two teachers both claimed that they were implementing the same Inclusion Policy. By physically segregating Alex from his peers in Year One, it meant Alex was not able to interact or share social chats with his classmates. He was so heavily ‘regulated’ to help him ‘cope’, for example where he went to in the classroom, what he did, what equipment he used, who he spoke to, where he kept his things. This limited his social relationships with his peers. The reason for all this extra support was because his Statement stated very clearly that things had to be orderly, clear and consistent so that Alex would know what to expect. However, by following this Statement so closely, Alex’s experiences, social interaction and his learning were limited. As Miss Grange said:

I would hope that it would be within the classroom, that he is not removed all the time. You know, that if he requires extra assistance that it is still in the framework of the classroom, because his needs are largely social. So while he’s given support from an adult to redirect and things like that, he still needs to be largely exposed to his peers. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Alex did not have a friend in the class. He walked around with his LSA to the playground, assembly hall and she chaperoned him to the carpet area if invited by the class teacher. The other children did not seem to dislike him, but they did not really interact with him either. In Year One, there was a perception that Alex was significantly different from his peers and as a result he was treated as ‘equal but different’ (Benjamin, 2002A), as the field notes below indicate:

Teacher: There are 4 grapes on the plate Zac takes  $\frac{1}{2}$ , how many left?  
Class: 2  
Teacher: Alex what is your number?  
Alex: 3  
Teacher: There are 3 toys on the table Mum doubled it, how many?  
Class: 6  
Teacher (to LSA): Miss, are you ready for Alex?  
LSA: yes  
Alex (ushered by LSA) gets up and leaves the carpet. Goes to his table by the window. (Year One Field note: 20.06.05).

Contrary to Barton's (2003) recommendation, Alex's participation was minimal, and the staff and children seemed to expect him to be doing something else. So the teacher taught the rest of the class, while the LSA took Alex to do spellings (an unrelated activity) using magnetic board and letters (Alex enjoyed making up words and sentences). Observing this session posed a dilemma for me - as a researcher, I had to remain detached but as the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Inclusion I felt very uneasy about the situation as my diary notes indicate:

Couldn't understand Miss Sugar's rationale for asking LSA to remove Alex from this activity. Surely he was able to engage, when asked questions about numbers his response was appropriate. Doing a different activity made him different- he stood out in the class in his remote corner (sorry sight), excluded from 'shared' experience- and he didn't complain - no protest, just conformed-wow! Was that necessary? Again today I had to keep my mouth shut because I was a researcher not an Assistant Headteacher- my research will benefit but what about Alex? I am not too sure how I should follow this up and how Miss Sugar would respond if I discussed this with her. But I must not get mixed up- I am a researcher not an Assistant Headteacher! (Diary: 20.06.05).

Besides, when there was interaction with the class teacher it was often different to the kind of interaction the teacher had with the other children, as the field notes below show:

Alex opens a page with football in it and starts to look at it.  
LSA: (asking Alex) What is that?  
Alex: (mutters something, and points at LSA's foot).  
Teacher: What is that?  
Alex: Foot

Teacher: Excellent, come and show everyone. (He did).  
Teacher: (to the class) Clap for Alex (All the children clapped for Alex).  
Where is the ball?  
Alex: (no response).  
Teacher: Where is the football?  
Alex: points at foot.  
Teacher: Oh I shouldn't have said foot.  
LSA: That is because I showed him foot first.  
Teacher: where is the light?  
Alex: (no response)  
Teacher: Show me.  
Alex: Show me  
Class: (everyone laughed)  
LSA: L L L Light, show the light  
Alex: (pointed at it).  
Teacher: (To the class) Clap for him (everyone did, then the teacher asked him to go and sit down in his corner. LSA went with him, while the rest of the class carried on with story writing (Year One Field notes: 17.06.05).

The activity was child initiated and child led. While exploration of what he can do was useful, he was left doing what he was familiar with. What the extract above shows is that the culture of the class has positioned Alex as different. His work was different (not differentiated) and the teacher's expectation was different for him. By asking the children to clap for him in a way that was not done for anyone else (there were two Polish girls in the class who spoke very little English and nobody was made to clap when they spoke in English), the teacher reinforced the culture of difference. Despite his language needs, he was put in a situation where the teacher and others could laugh at him and this was acceptable in this class. The Deputy Head noted about Alex - "that child is not part of that class and that is not inclusive" (Interview: Deputy Head). hooks criticises this type of "sorting-out process" (hooks, 2003:99) as "rituals of shaming" (ibid). By sitting him apart, and by allowing him to have a different agenda (doing different activities), Miss Sugar created a 'gaze' about Alex, which embodies a deficit perspective (Tomlinson, 1982; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Corbett, 1996). Alex's experience in Miss Sugar's class can be perceived as parallel

to that of the children in Foucault's class of the bad. For example both were always "separated from the others" (Foucault, 1979:182) - Shelley the LSA complained that he was isolated within the class and like the children in the class of the bad, Alex "received the most punishment" (ibid). Punishment, in Alex's case being the interventions (the endless rote spelling and sentence making) which school staff (through the statementing process) had judged was necessary to correct what society felt was 'defective' about him. Unfortunately, the doses of punishment that Alex was given were literally punishment, and he was not receiving his entitlement of quality first teaching from the class teacher because of his teacher's interpretation of the Statement. By taking this deficit perspective (consciously or unconsciously), Miss Sugar positioned Alex as the one with the problem, hence, abdicating responsibility for any barriers to learning Alex was experiencing (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Benjamin, 2002A). Clapping for his self-initiated/random work did not mean that his difference was valued- on the contrary he was positioned as the odd one out and in so doing, the teacher perpetuated social categorisation of weaker groups (Tomlinson, 1982). Besides, there was no guarantee that the type of inclusion Miss Grange was talking about (6.2.2), when she advocated for 'within classroom' inclusion, would be any different from Miss Sugar's practice.

Observing Alex in Miss Sugar's class raised issues for me as Assistant Headteacher responsible for inclusion. For clearly this was a teacher who (talking about inclusion) stated (and there is no reason to disbelieve her) that:

I strongly believe that there are a lot of positives about that, because people are people, they have feelings, and how we feel about ourselves has a lot to do with our achievements. If we have low self-value then, of course, our achievements will be low, but when we are included and we feel that we are part of the learning environment, then of course our



aspirations will be just as good as or near what the other children have.  
(Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

That she acknowledged the child's feelings raised hope that with the right support Miss Sugar could begin to treat Alex as a 'person', not just the object of the Statement text. For example, Alex was able to read, write and spell better than the children on two of the tables in the class. The children on these tables were still working on their letter names, sounds and blending while Alex had a huge repertoire of vocabulary yet because the IEP targets recommended being able to read and write Year One/Two high frequency words independently, that was what he did daily. He was not given the opportunity of generalising this knowledge to his other areas of learning, yet the other children were writing stories, recipes, instructions and cards. If Miss Sugar could do it so well with the other children what was it that was stopping her from doing this with Alex?

However, as previously described in Year Two, the culture was observed to be different from that in Year One and the children reacted to Alex's presence in the class differently, in spite of several of them having been in the same class as him last year. Alex had two good friends, one who sat on his table (boy) and a girl who said Alex was her boy friend. "They play together during break times and ate on the same table at lunch time" (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelly). In one of the Maths lessons in Year Two, the children were asked to work in groups and were given addition and subtraction problems to solve, using a plastic red bus made by the teacher. Each table had a red bus, counters and question strips and the children had to work in groups to find the answers to the questions. The questions were all about people getting on and off the bus. Alex's group worked very well as a team. I observed Alex

reading the question, counting 15 counters, placing them on the bus, looking at the strip again, then counting 10 more and placing them on the bus. He then smiled and looked at the boy sitting next to him who counted the counters altogether and wrote 25 on the strip and they all cheered. In Year Two, Alex belonged to a group (purple group), and he sat and worked at a table with his group and participated in lessons like everyone else as the extract below shows:

Teacher: 6-2?

Child: 4,

Teacher: Well done! 7-4?

Child: 3.

Teacher: Well done!

(Teacher chose different children to demonstrate for the class. She physically held children's fingers, and showed them how to fold the fingers down and how to do the jumps on the number line. Throughout, LSA was doing the same with Alex.)

Teacher: Alex can you do 5-2? (Teacher held her 5 fingers up)

Alex: (copied her).

Teacher: (folds down two fingers) fold down 2

Alex: (copied her)

Teacher: how many fingers are left standing?

Alex: 3

CT: Well done!

Teacher explained to the class that this was going to be a short Maths lesson, because they had dance today, so each group was going to be given 6 sums only to solve at their table. Alex sat with the middle (purple) group to do his work. Coped well with the task. LSA worked with the group but was supporting everyone on that table not just Alex (Year Two Field notes: 17.10.05).

This was the first evidence of Alex being part of a group effectively. He was included in the group as an equal member- valued and treated with the type of dignity that Barton (1997) advocates. There was a change in material practice between the two classes. Miss Titch explained to me later that the reason she was physically 'folding down' the children's fingers was so that when she did it with children like Alex they would not seem different, because everyone else had it. My notes show my reaction:

Today I have seen inclusion just as I imagined it should be. I am glad that Miss Titch acknowledges Alex's additional needs but addressed it before the lesson and it was not an issue for Alex to worry about during lesson. Miss Titch's explanation ties in very strongly with my definition of inclusion- where the classroom presents an even playing field and children's differences and individual needs had been taken into consideration during planning so that difference is not an issue during teaching and learning time. Good practice and well done! But was this as a result of the school's inclusion policy or is this something someone like Miss Titch (taking her own experience into consideration) would have done naturally anyway? (Diary notes 17.10.05)

Miss Titch understood what it felt like to be in Alex's position- she described it as "terrible" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch), because she had been there- this validates Kanpol's (1997) advocacy for the need for teachers to understand their own oppressive experiences in order to be able to teach an engaging curriculum. Miss Titch's interpretation of inclusion (6.5 a) was not to erase differences, but to enable all the children to belong within educational community that validate and values their individuality (hooks, 1994 and 2003; Stainback *et al*, 1994:489). In her practice, children were not 'pushed' aside because they had a Statement. Instead, she engaged with them in an effective way that enabled them to participate in lessons like 'everyone' else. This is something that as a professional I have taken from this study and use in my practice on a daily basis. I had the privilege of see how it is done in practise so when I talk to my colleagues now, I have a very clear picture in my head of what I am talking about.

The above discussion presents a picture of very polarised practices, yet both teachers purported to support the inclusion of pupils who have Statements in mainstream schools (Chapter Five). It was obvious that beliefs (and practice) about inclusion were not always consistent across the school, as the Deputy Head

confirms, "I think the ideal is there. I think in practice it doesn't always happen" (Interview: Deputy Head). Furthermore, the Headteacher explained that when she arrived six months earlier:

the school was anything but inclusive. It was not inclusive for the children or the adults who worked here or the parents. I think it was like social exclusion, I think people were kept out, I don't think there was even inclusion amongst staff... (Interview: Head Teacher).

In Year One Alex was literally at the margins of his class and socially he was not effectively a member of the class. The Year Two experience for Alex was different as he had become part of the class community. He had formed meaningful friendships with two of his peers and was generally friendly with the other children on his table. What I looked for as well during my observations was who took responsibility for including Alex in the class and how they did it.

### **Responsibility for including Alex**

Apart from the Head and the Deputy Head, two out of the three LSAs interviewed were very concerned about the level of inclusion of some of the pupils they supported. For example, talking about Alex's Year One experience, Miss Shelley explained how she saw it:

He was sectioned at the back. He had his own work...his work books and everything else was kept just in his section, everything else was just his, and while the others had theirs in their trays, and whatever, but his tray was just practically empty. He had his in his corner. (Interview: LSA: Miss Shelley).

This is a classic 'the chair' model of inclusion, where Alex had to sit on the 'bench of the ignorant' (Foucault, 1977). During every observation, I looked at the teacher's lesson plan. In all the plans I checked to see if the teacher had planned any activities

for Alex. In Year One, Alex was never mentioned in the plans (the other children were not mentioned in names, but their ability group names were mentioned in the differentiated tasks). When I asked the teacher why Alex was not mentioned on the planning, She told me “oh the LSA with the help of the specialist teacher decides what Alex has to do and that is all very clearly stated in the Statement” (Discussion with class teacher during observation). On the same day I asked the LSA (seeing her doing spelling test with Alex) how she decided what Alex had to learn and her response was “sometimes I guess, sometimes I just see what books I have and sometimes it is what Louise (the specialist teacher) tells me to do” (Discussion with LSA during observation).

In Year One Alex did repetitive activities- usually ones that he was comfortable with, and which kept him engaged but which did not challenge him and so his learning did not progress. This is in line with Miss Grange’s perception (5.2.1) that a Statement means inability to make progress. In Year One the LSA marked Alex’s work and gave him feedback. In Year Two, he was part of the class, he belonged to purple group (the middle ability group), he had shared experiences with the other children and, like the other children all the adults in the classroom supported him. Likewise, his designated LSA (Miss Shelley) supported all the children in the class as and when they needed support. He needed extra resources like the Picture Exchange Communication Systems (PECS) resources to help him understand concepts being taught or to help him communicate precisely what he wanted to say. Sometimes when concepts were abstract or needed sequencing, he previewed activities (either with the teacher, the LSA or with Mum at home) before the whole class did it, so that he could follow the lesson as part of the class (more of this in Chapter Seven).

What experience did Alex have as a result of having a Statement? As Miss Shelley explained, above, in Year One he was 'sectioned at the back', and was separated from the other children. Separation manifested physically as well as in the methods used to teach him. He was 'spaced out' (Armstrong, 2003), and this was down to the teacher's implementation of the Statement text. She interpreted the Statement recommendation "Alex to have a specific area in the class to reduce distraction and keep him focused...to work one-to-one with an LSA..." in a literal and inflexible manner. This could be due partly to her lack of confidence in challenging the concept of the 'expert opinion' so highly regarded (Chapter Five) by some of the teachers. Or it could be that although she had attended INSETs on inclusion, she was not quite sure what this should 'look like' in practice. Or it could simply be that it was easier? Nevertheless, the pressures of the standards agenda had a significant part to play as Mr. Broom explained (section 6.5.f) – teachers only get into trouble if the special needs children and a majority of the children do not make progress (stating that 'everyone knows this'). In Year Two the teacher was able to include Alex effectively despite being a less experienced teacher than Miss Sugar. The sort of respect which teachers like Miss Sugar and Miss Grange have for 'expert opinion' was something which Miss Titch treated with suspicion. As she mentioned in Chapter Five, "they thought I was dumb" and she was ready to question expert opinion by finding out for herself and giving the child the benefit of the doubt by treating him like any other child and providing support where it was needed. She looked on the child as a person, not just as the personality projected in the Statement text. Her effective inclusion of Alex is further explored in the next chapters, but it is important at this point to examine what impact teachers have on inclusion and why, so this is the focus of the next section.

### **6.3 Teacher impact on inclusion**

Alex's experiences in Year One (where he was either consciously or unintentionally often marginalised) and Year Two (where he was effectively included) were significantly different, despite the level of resources remaining the same.

The child did not change and the level of resources did not change, so why was there such a difference between Alex's experience in each class and between two teachers who were, after all, implementing the same inclusion policy? Differences, like the above, have led some researchers (Fullan, 1999; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Cole, 2005) to argue that teacher characteristics affect the way educational changes (e.g. inclusion) are implemented. For, although attitudes were generally good and everyone was in support of inclusive education at Frosties School, there was still that element of 'not in my backyard' (Forlin, 1995). The question is how and why do the teachers influence how the policy of inclusion was implemented at Frosties School? Salvia and Munson (1986) argued that there are various reasons and ways that this happens and the next section examines these relating it to Frosties School in general and Alex's experience in particular, beginning with the teachers' views.

#### **Teachers' views**

Salvia and Munson (1986) argue that the views teachers have about their practice and their particular style can influence the way they implement a policy. Miss Sugar's practice (in Year One) was observed to be orderly and very organised. The Deputy Head commented that, "one of the positives about Miss Sugar's class is the orderliness and the clear boundaries and that is good for autistic children" (Interview:

Deputy Head). Miss Sugar commented about her practice “I don’t have behaviour problems in my class and children do exactly as they are told. I find this works for me and the children” (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Sugar). I observed the children reciting what they had been taught, there was a lot of dictionary work, times table recitation, spellings and very structured writing activities. The Deputy Head said “these skills are essential for the children to do well in the SATs because we have to compete with other schools and Miss Sugar does a good job” (Interview: Deputy Head). All the activities that were observed (apart from carpet sessions) were formal pencil and paper activities. Presentation was very important. For example in her plenaries, she usually showed examples of children’s work, drawing attention to neat margins, clearly written learning intention and date, as well as neat handwriting before making her teaching point.

Miss Titch, on the other hand, was very creative and relaxed with her class. She laughed and joked with the children. This is how she described her practice:

We tend to play with each other...one day when it is Shelley and the children against me, or it might be another day when it is me against Shelley and the children (laughs). Basically, we just love playing games, and the children love it. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Although her planning was thorough and well resourced, she was spontaneous – in fact, she was observed, during her end-of-year party, rolling on the floor with her class (party game), spraying water at children and vice versa and joining in all the fun and games. She told me during a conversation after an observation that she believed “learning should be fun, because, if it is fun, then the children would remember the lesson better” (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch). Even though she was creative and relaxed with her class, she was firm and consistent and set very



clear boundaries (class rules) for all. This is the sort of 'excitement' that hooks (1994) wrote about. The children loved and respected her. She was observed carrying a key-ring, which was laden with handmade, 'Scooby Doo' (friendship bracelets), which the children had given her. Asked why she carried them about, she replied "the children had spent their own time to make them I believe I should show appreciation and value for their work" (Discussion with class teacher during observation). The argument I am making is that teachers' views can impact positively or negatively on inclusion (Thomas, 1985; Norwich, 1994; Feldman and Altman, 1985). However, teachers' views are also heavily influenced by the pressures placed on them by the educational system and which are mostly determined by the standards agenda (Lunt and Norwich, 1999; DFE, 2012). Teachers who try to meet the needs of all the pupils through careful planning, knowing their pupils well, providing appropriate resources, including all pupils and making the classroom a conducive environment for learning are demonstrating good practice. It is good practice because such an environment brings out the best in children (hooks, 2003) and eventually raises attainment. Some have claimed that:

All good teacher training will tell the student never to blame the child for his or her own failure. Yet this is exactly what the SEN system has institutionalised. It distracts teachers from what their common sense would normally tell them. (Gyngell, 2012)

However, the risk teachers face if they do not meet the standards and the fear of accountability via OFSTED (DFE, 2012) is real. Inclusion is not an easy option (Barton, 1997) and some teachers may choose to make their 'lives' easy by sticking to what the standards demands. The intention to:

'impose a highly prescriptive programme of study on teachers' would 'shackle their professional discretion'.  
They are part of moves from Mr Gove to return to the traditional principles of the three Rs while reducing the time spent on other school subjects.

(Chapman, 2012)

In the wider school context, there was the group of teachers (trained overseas) who the Headteacher described as having practices that were not inclusive. Mr Broom, Miss Grange and Miss Sugar were in this group, as Miss Grange admitted:

I taught in an Aboriginal school. The children had very challenging behaviour, so I am used to dealing with difficult children. But that was different, because their parents were very violent. It is their culture and the way they discipline their children. It was different. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

The emphasis on 'difference' is something which came up regularly at Frosties when some staff spoke about children who had Statements and although introduced here, is discussed in-depth in the next chapter. However, some teachers found it:

difficult to move away from that and not view a child who is different from the norm, 'that' being in inverted commas, because they are different from the norm (Interview: Deputy Head).

Staff were generally positive about inclusion, however, in line with the findings of some research (Farrell 2001; Benjamin, 2002), the majority believed that it does not work for some children. For example, even though it worked "especially for Alex, not, I say, with every child" (Interview: LSA: Miss Shelley). So why was this the case? Members of staff interviewed, argued that when behaviour is challenging and disruptive inclusion is difficult (Croll and Moses, 2000; Ross, 2000; Angelides *et al*, 2004). For example as Miss Grange protested:

He's reluctant to stay in the classroom and will take-off and will refuse to come back in. With things like that I would have to seek support from outside even [if it is] for no reason, [other than] the health and safety reason (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

This teacher perceived this child's behaviour as a health and safety concern as well as making extra demands on her time. Her perception of the difficulty presented from

trying to include children like the one described above is typical of the perception of many professionals at Frosties (Clough and Lindsay, 1991; Benjamin, 2002). These were the types of practicalities that the Headteacher at the beginning of the chapter referred to as making inclusion 'challenging'. It is important that dialogue develops to openly discuss perceptions like the Head's and Miss Grange's in order for Frosties to develop inclusive practices. Moreover, the effectiveness of inclusive education on academic achievement was perceived by some staff to be dependent on the child's type of special educational needs (Cunningham *et al*, 1998; Shepherd, 2009), as Mr Broom explained:

I don't think...Downs Syndrome child[ren] could benefit from being in my class, because they'd be, kind of like, too big a gap (Interview: Class teacher- Mr Broom).

There seemed to be an implication here that children, diagnosed as having learning difficulties, even without behavioural problems, maybe difficult to include because of the intellectual and ability gap between them and the rest of the class. Mr. Broom seems to be agreeing with Hornby, (1999) that 'one size does not fit all'. Also, by saying that "they could not benefit from being in my class" (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom), Mr. Broom seemed to be implying that his teaching did not address all children's learning needs. So why was that? The answer came from Miss Sugar, who argued that:

...[A] class teacher hasn't got that amount of time to spend with one person, especially when the child has got complex needs (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

The question is whether she would have spent 'that amount of time' with another child without complex needs, and what does that say about equal opportunities at Frosties (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000)? The teacher focused on the children who could achieve the age appropriate standard, hence, the 'standards agenda'

(Benjamin, 2002A; Lunt and Norwich, 1999) takes priority in her class, causing issues of cultural marginalisation (Angelides *et al*, 2004). The “banking system” (hooks, 1994:14) takes precedence over an “engaged pedagogy” (ibid). This is in line with claims that including “high profile” (Croll, 2001:144) cases like Alex, even with substantial levels of support, can be problematic for some school staff. Such high profile children could include those the Headteacher described as ‘hard-to-include’ and these are:

...children who are so severely disabled...it would be difficult to have severely disabled children in mainstream schools. (Interview: Headteacher).

The Headteacher was the only one who cited this group of children as ‘hard to include’. The government is placing conditions on inclusion, agreeing with views, like Wilson’s (2000) and Hornby’s (1999), that inclusion is not necessarily for everyone, and encourages school staff to use similar lines of argument when it suits them. This was made transparent, for example, by the sarcasm with which Miss Grange described inclusion, “inclusion simply means ‘hello just open the umbrella and just put everybody underneath!’” preferring instead inclusion on a case-by-case basis. However, the problem with this is that children’s ‘SEN’ were being ‘prioritised’ (Lunt and Norwich, 1999) at Frosties, value judgements were made about their lives and some children were positioned as ‘negatively’ different.

There were issues around ‘difference’ in Frosties School (4.5.1 Frosties Site). As well as socio-political views, there were other teacher characteristics that may have affected their beliefs about inclusion, for example, teaching experience.

## Teaching experience

While research (e.g. Berryman, 1989; Center and Ward, 1987; Clough and Lindsay, 1991) shows that younger teachers and those with fewer years of teaching experience tend to be a lot more positive toward inclusive practices, some participants in this study believed the opposite to be the case. The Deputy Head argued that newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are less likely to be inclusive, because:

they are coping with too many new things, such as learning the curriculum, learning classroom management and things like that...they just want to do whole-class teaching and see that putting the teaching assistant or an LSA with a group of underachieving children with an LSA is differentiation (Interview: Deputy Head).

Observation, however, produced a very different view. Miss Sugar, who was a very experienced teacher, delegated Alex's teaching to the LSA. Miss Harriet said:

I do all his planning and teaching really. The teacher does not support me, she leaves it to me. Sometimes I am not very sure if I am doing the right thing, but I have a lot of words that he likes to do and he enjoys sorting out the elephants according to size (Interview, TA: Miss Harriet).

Yet Miss Titch, who had been teaching for less than five years, worked at first hand with Alex and took responsibility for his teaching and planning herself. As Miss Shelley said, "Alex is part of this class" (Interview, TA: Miss Shelley). This is in line with research findings (Harvey, 1985; Leyser *et al*, 1994) which suggest that (at least at Frosties School) teachers with fewer years of experience maybe more likely to be inclusive.

In this study, of all the teachers who were interviewed, Miss Titch had the fewest number of years of teaching experience—the others ranged from ten to thirty five—however, from the two teachers observed and the interviews and discussions with all the staff, Miss Titch proved to be the most inclusive of all the teachers. What does

this highlight for the school? Could it be that the more experience (number of years of teaching) teachers have, the less tolerant they are towards those who are not considered to be the 'norm'?

There is another argument that experience does not only relate to the number of years in teaching, but it could relate to whether or not a teacher has experience of working with younger children and/or less able children. Some teachers cited their experience of working with younger children as a skill that became useful when working with children who have Statements (Yuker, 1988; Leyser *et al*, 1994; Janney *et al*, 1995, Shimman, 1990). For example:

...to find out where the child is and then you know the next step, which is the basis for early learning anywhere, but I think it's beneficial to have that. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

She knew what to expect, she understood the concept of teaching and learning in small steps and building on that, as Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1986) advocate. She criticised the practice today, which she perceived as achievement led and argued, that "assessment should lead, rather than learning objectives" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

Miss Dunstans also believed that the framework of working in an inclusive setting with inclusive values, such as teamwork, was already being explored by members of staff who, like herself, worked in an early years setting and that experience made them more inclusive than other phase teachers. She described how this worked:

In Reception there was another person as well as the LSA, and working as a team...so everybody understood the needs of that child. And it wasn't something that was kept secret to the LSA alone or to myself, but it was, basically, the child had to know that they are part of the full class. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Dunstans)

Compare this to Mr. Broom's class, where his attention was towards curricula achievement and measuring every child against the attainment target standards. This view is in line with research which claims that as children's age increases teachers' attitude became less positive to the philosophies of inclusion (Clough and Lindsay, 1991; Salvia and Munson, 1986).

As well as experience of working with younger children, there was another type of experience that came out during the study: that of school staff who had personal experience of Statements or SEN, often relating to very close members of their families. I did not take this variable into consideration when I started the study (even though I had my own personal experience of being disempowered, I considered that to be private) so I did not ask for this information. It was volunteered not during interview or observation, but when I had retired to work in my office and members of staff had walked in for a discussion. It was unclear whether such information would have been disclosed if I had been a total stranger. Two members of staff did this- Miss Titch (herself) and Miss Shelley (her nephew), and Miss Grange also spoke to me about her work in Australia. Miss Titch was happy for me to write about it provided the information could not be traced back to her, but the others offered the information, freely and were happy for me to use it in my research. The Headteacher also disclosed similar information during her interview and was happy for me to include this in my research. The members of staff (mentioned above, except Miss Grange) did not see an alternative to inclusive education. These members of staff were not putting the onus on the child. They were committing themselves to the challenge and taking the 'risk', as Cole (2005) and hooks (1994) describe it. In their

view, inclusion is non-negotiable and a must, and their collective view can best be summarised by the following quote:

As a society shouldn't we be the ones willing to take more positive risks? By doing this I do not mean placing vulnerable children in inappropriate educational contexts, but to be willing to commit ourselves to the challenge of inclusion; to commit ourselves to 'good faith and effort' in the cause of equity and social justice (Cole, 2005:342).

The pursuit of equity and social justice was evident in Miss Titch's class, where 'the chair' was 'banished' and the classroom was a level playing field, where inclusion meant not being different but taking 'every' child's needs on board as a teacher during planning, preparation and teaching. When Miss Titch was asked about inclusion, her response bounded on the emotional:

I don't know about other teachers, but it makes me a bit more tolerant... I hated the way we had the classroom set out when Alex came in, because he was taken away, he was tucked in a corner with his back towards us, and I just didn't feel he belonged to the class... I had to change it! (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Titch)

Miss Shelley (shadowed for a month in Year One), who came up to Year Two with Alex, set it up like that thinking that it was the way the teacher would like it, because that was how Miss Sugar had it. This surely was transgression and as my diary notes showed, I worried about how this would impact on her:

Here again, Miss Titch is transgressing- not following the advice of the LA and the recommendation of the Statement which stated that "the advisory teacher in the area of autism and language development will advise the teacher of strategies to use to support Alex" (Alex's Statement: section three). This is overt transgression because the advisory teacher may see this as her advice not being followed. Does she not worry about the consequence of this or does she really believe in what she is doing? The Statement document is meant to be a legal document and staff are meant to implement its recommendation but Miss Titch isn't! Good for her because it seems to be working, as the Assistant Head responsible for inclusion, I am turning a blind eye to this one, I can't spoil a good thing, but will the advisory teacher feel the same way or would she feel



undermined? I will have to support the class teacher in the meetings to argue that this works. Oops! Cross over of roles again- hard to draw the line sometimes but a useful and insightful position to be in! (Diary notes: 25.10.05).

Miss Shelley's view on inclusion is "I believe it should be done" (Interview: LSA: Miss Shelley). The Headteacher describes herself as "passionate about inclusion" (Interview: Headteacher). Their (Miss Titch, Miss Shelley and the Headteacher) situation in this policy implementation process is a unique one, because they understand what it is like on both sides of this policy. In Miss Titch's case, she hopes "it never happens to any child" (interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch), as she describes how she was put in an institution for the educationally subnormal until the age of fourteen:

They thought I was dumb (her eyes watered as she said this)... all I wanted was to be a teacher (she smiles) and I have done it. I don't want promotion or to be anything else. I just want to teach! (Miss Titch: confidential talk).

Campbell (2002) argues that the relationship between the dominant and the subordinated has to be troubled for inclusion to become more effective. The question is, does everyone involved have to experience a form of disempowerment for inclusion to become effective? At Frosties Primary school, it took a new Headteacher, (whose son had emotional and behavioural difficulties at school) to get staff to take notice as she described it:

When I came here, 90% of the teachers were not inclusive. It might be it balances a wee bit better now, but it's still not perfect...because they weren't expected to be inclusive (Interview: Headteacher).

This Headteacher was very resolved to transform the school to be inclusive, yet staff like Miss Sugar still thrived. In her defence though, Miss Sugar followed Alex's Statement text recommendation, so she was (in a way) doing as she was told, but this did not work for Alex in Year One as Miss Shelley noted "he was sectioned and

wasn't included" (Interview, TA: Miss Shelley). What did the school need to do to address the situation, especially in a class like Miss Sugar's? Some interviewees argue that training was an issue but could that be the answer?

## Training

All staff interviewed saw the need for training as essential. Their stance was that:

without a coherent plan for teacher training in the educational needs of children with SEN, attempts to include these children in the mainstream would be difficult (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002: 139).

Whilst inclusion was seen as positive (section 2.3), there were concerns from some teachers that they lacked the skills, knowledge and confidence to meet children's needs in an inclusive classroom, even with the extra support of an LSA, as one teacher explained:

I don't know, I don't have the skills to be able to move this child forward. For one thing I don't know what is wrong with him, so...I would just go on teaching experiences with the average child and try the best through that. So I don't ...think I've got the skills to be able to move him forward... Willing to be his classroom teacher, but I really don't know from that process what needs to happen next...we're just supporting him the best we can, which might not be the right kind of support. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

However, training was problematic because of the very broad scope of inclusion.

Miss Grange spoke about another child Abel, when she argued that:

the definition of inclusion is so great, because if I look at the training I might need to better educate him, it might not necessarily be appropriate for the boy or girl in the next classroom (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Miss Grange articulated the teacher's case for specific training needs in addition to the general training that would involve:

something in the line of how to be able to communicate with a child who is demonstrating inappropriate behaviours within the classroom, so it's all about language. And I'm talking about the very basic: this is the first thing

we're going to do; Ok, we've got a child that's doing this, this, and this, how are we going to communicate with that child? How are we going to keep our voice at their level? How are we going to be able to respond without getting physically abused by that child? How do we keep things under control as calm as we can so that we can function for the best of ourselves and for the child? (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

The answer to questions like the above as hooks (1994) pointed out is for the teacher to know the child well and as Miss Grange acknowledges, it is all about language and communication as Vygotsky (1978) also pointed out. These are the things that Miss Titch did which were noted in the last chapter- she got to know the child well (the whole child) by getting to know him in his home context as well as the school context (see 6.5.d and in Chapter Seven). She invested her own time to make resources that would help include Alex. She transgressed the school's Child Protection staff code of practice by 'befriending' the family and gaining their trust which, the school could have perceived as "grooming" (Frosties Primary School Child Protection Policy, 2005). She used language- verbal and non-verbal to communicate with Alex, she was dedicated and invested her own time (next chapter). So, as well as general training to effectively engage children who had Statements, teachers believed that training should be tailored to the needs of the child. But as Miss Titch showed, it takes more than training. SMT did not think training was the only answer to inclusion and they seemed to agree with Fullan (1999) that staff sometimes resist training and new initiatives. The problem at Frosties according to the Deputy was:

ensuring training is not dismissed, as 'oh, it's just a new fangled idea. Oh, we've heard it all before' or 'I've been doing the job for...years' (Interview: Deputy Head).

Besides, not everyone subscribed to the training idea as the Head complained, "there are people here who don't want to be trained, they don't want to be inclusive

and, really, there's no room for people like that". (Interview: Head Teacher). For example:

when we are talking about training and how people learn to be inclusive you need to put the training in and lead by being inclusive yourself. Because we've got a lot of overseas-trained teachers who obviously know nothing about inclusion,... (Interview: Head teacher).

The Headteacher seemed to place the responsibility of ensuring that inclusion happened on herself. Whilst this seems to be theoretically 'sound', the last chapter showed how Alex was isolated in Year One with no interference from management (it is fair to point out that that was under the previous Headteacher). The Deputy Head did not perceive training as a solution when she argued that "I don't believe there's any point of training anybody, myself included, if they have no intention of putting it into practice" (Interview: Deputy Head). However, despite all the training and pressure, willingness to change things from an individual perspective is what is necessary to make people inclusive as the Headteacher pointed out:

There's a saying in England that you can take a horse to water, but you can't make it drink? So, I would say I actively try and empower and educate my staff, but some people are so entrenched in their own personal values and judgments that you can't change their way of thinking. That's when I think you have to make hard decisions and you don't keep those people in your school. I think anyone who is so blinkered and not open... well, I certainly don't want those people in my school. (Interview: Head Teacher).

Staff argued that, with the right type of training, they felt empowered to include children better. However, both the Deputy Head and the Headteacher argued that it was not that simple, because staff had been trained, but some members of staff were very 'resistant to change' (Fullan, 1999), and often do not take training on board in their practices. The Headteacher believed that it was only when she ensured that training was implemented and insisted that staff were expected to be inclusive that training started having some impact on practice (I did two observations

with the Deputy Head and measures of inclusion were discussed during grading but none of the teachers reported this to be the case during interview). In her determination to include, the Headteacher ended up excluding staff. Critics may see this as contradictory and harsh, but this Headteacher was driven by her experience and beliefs and as she said she “has a passion for inclusion” (Interview: Headteacher). To Miss Titch, her drive to include did not come from training, as she explained:

There is no other way of doing it. If I follow the National Curriculum as it is and teach in the times allocated, Alex will never make it. I have to be creative and make allowances to enable him to take part effectively and sometimes that mean doing things differently which the school may or may not approve of. And to be honest, I don't always make that clear in my plans to keep me out of trouble. (Interview: class teacher: Miss Titch).

Like hooks (1994), Miss Titch longed to teach children like Alex ‘differently’ from the way she was taught, and this came from the heart, because she understood and she could empathise. She believed the only hope for Alex was for her to teach differently which sometimes meant she had to transgress. What were her beliefs and what did the other teachers believe about inclusion?

### **Teachers’ beliefs**

Teachers like Miss Titch who are pro-inclusion go beyond the rhetoric- they both ‘talked the talk’ and ‘walked the walk’. They value the children for who they are. Like the Headteacher, Miss Shelley, Miss Titch and Miss Danii allowed their actions to do the talking for them. This is in line with research, which claims that, where beliefs about inclusion have been based on the social model (Jordan *et al*, 1997; Stanovich and Jordan, 1998), teachers do not only have positive attitudes, but their practice is also inclusive.

The reverse is also claimed to be the case (ibid) that when staff hold a more 'medical' perception of inclusion, their practice is often not inclusive. From the interviews, all the staff agreed that inclusion should be practiced. Yet, when they spoke about inclusion in any detail, their 'real' attitudes towards it emerged, starting with their clinical language, right up to their practice. For some of these teachers their language was not even sugar-coated in the way Corbett (1996) portrayed in her book. For example Miss Grange spoke of 'diagnosis' and 'discovery', because there is 'something wrong with his brain'. In Miss Sugar's class, Alex is observed to be taught by the LSA most of the times, and Danni (LSA) reported that 'the teacher just left a child' who had a Statement to get on with it, if she (the LSA) was not there to support the child.

Even though research argues that the belief of the Headteacher can be a good indicator of staff beliefs and attitude towards inclusion (Cole, 2005; Avramidis and Norwich, 2002; Stanovich and Jordan, 1998), it is obvious that the Head's resolve towards inclusion is not reflected in most of the practices in the school. The Headteacher explained that:

sometimes head[s] can actually actively stop their teachers from being inclusive...I know of heads who would not tolerate any excluded children, will not take in, will not re-integrate (Interview: Headteacher).

She was so serious about inclusion that she made it very clear that members of staff would lose their jobs if they were not inclusive. Some might argue that she had not given staff the time and support for beliefs and attitudes to change (Fullan, 1999). However, this is the reality of the educational environment and the power relations that exist within her context and as she argued, "these children only have one

chance” (Interview: Headteacher). As a result of this new inclusive ethos and zero tolerance to non-inclusive practices, some members of staff left, others changed their practice, yet, there were still some very strong voices in the school who were singing out of tune with inclusion (like Mr. Broom and Miss Sugar). Some researchers (e.g. Salvia and Munson, 1986) argue that sometimes reluctance to include could be as a result of the education environment. It is possible as well that some might believe that special schools offer the best education for some children. What is the ethos of the education environment and what roles do stakeholders play within such an environment?

### **Educational environment**

Staff failing to endorse inclusion in their daily practice could be because of the educational environment in which schools operate – one that is competitive, and values academic success (Benjamin, 2002A; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). “Given the competitive market, within which schools operate, many schools would apparently rather the ‘risk’ was one of being seen as not inclusive” (Cole, 2005:342) than to be perceived as a failing school. Schools do not want to attract large numbers of children who do not contribute to League Tables. The Headteacher echoed this view when she said:

I know of heads who... only want those children who are going on to get those levels. That’s not being inclusive, if you’re only looking at your SATs results, (Interview: Headteacher).

The pressures of SATs, and the ability to achieve age appropriate standards seems to be driving policies in school, resulting in some researchers (e.g. Benjamin, 2002) criticising the whole concept of inclusion through the lens of ‘value diversity’ as being a weak critique of the standards agenda. Some teachers weigh the needs of other

children on one hand (majority need) against the demands of teaching a child who has a Statement (minority need) and put the majority need first as the following quote shows:

If you've got 29 other children in the class and you are stressed with running the day of the classroom and you've got a child doing cartwheels off the fan...I'm talking about the fact that he'd be outside the classroom or outside the building" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange)

The worry here is when having a Statement or being 'deviant' from the 'norm' may lead to injustices (Zambelli and Bonni, 2004:351) or unequal treatment. Already, this study has shown this to be the situation in Alex's case in Year One. Although staff at Frosties supported inclusion, most perceived the process as requiring someone else to empower them to do - through training or as in the last chapter 'experts' giving them the knowledge. The issue for this study is if they perceived the process as such, did they think they had any power at all?

### **Interpretation of individual roles in the inclusion process**

Staff were asked how they viewed their roles in this inclusion process that they all claimed to support. What did they do to ensure that children who had Statements were included in their classrooms? All the staff saw themselves as enablers (facilitating and making it happen), but their views of this were different depending on the position they held. Roles were related to the beliefs and attitudes held about inclusion. So how did the different groups see their roles as enablers?

#### **SMT**

The Headteacher saw her role as one that empowered staff to be more nurturing. Empowering meant providing/making training available and raising the status of inclusion in the school. For example the timing of inclusion INSET was strategically



planned to raise the profile of this policy- hence “that’s one of the reasons why I asked you and Danny to do the first INSET in January and especially on inclusion” (Interview: Head Teacher).

Another very important role she believed that she played was ensuring that she had staff who were “sympathetic to my philosophy...[which is based on]...love, the four letter word” (interview: Head teacher), hence:

the next key thing is to have key leadership people: yourself as the Inclusion Manager and an Assistant Head who are putting across that philosophy day in day out. And that’s empowering the staff as well, we’re not just being inclusive with the children. (Interview: Head teacher).

Within the first six months this Head Teacher was in this school, she hired an Assistant Head Teacher, with creativity and differentiation of curriculum being the main part of his brief. She hired a Music Teacher and a Dance Teacher to cover planning preparation and administration (PPA) time. As well as the above, there was an outdoor curriculum teacher, a drama teacher and she was in the process of hiring another drama teacher who “has a track record of using drama to teach conflict resolution skills” (Interview: Headteacher). She also opened a Nurture Group and terminated the contract of two Deputy Heads (including the one in this study) whom, she claimed excluded themselves and she gave example of this below:

During the inclusion INSET, there were people who really came on board and started to feel empowered, and there was a little core who sat there with their arms folded, you know,...they socially excluded themselves actually. And what’s now happening, because they have excluded themselves more and more during the six months, now they’re having to go. In a way, it’s quite ironic isn’t it? (Interview: Head Teacher).

Even the Headteacher acknowledged that in her effort to be inclusive she ended up excluding when she comments - “ironic isn’t it?” (ibid). The leadership structure of

the school changed – the position of Deputy Head no longer existed and in their place were three Assistant Heads (of which I was one). The Headteacher's passion and drive for inclusion cannot be dismissed, yet:

I wonder how she will feel and react if she knows that Miss Titch in her effort to include all children has ignored the 'prescribed' curriculum for Year Two in the Autumn term and was teaching activities that enabled social competencies and confidence in her children rather than Literacy hour and Numeracy hour? Would she be happy that Miss Titch visits Alex's home? And is Miss Titch not letting her know what she does because she does not really believe in her 'rhetoric' about inclusion? If there could be transparency between the two of them, it might make one of two extremes- danger or complement! How am I going to bridge this gap or is this something for another study? It has to be a subject for another study as it is a big issue and I don't feel like I can do it the justice it deserves within this work. (Diary notes, 15.03.06)

The fact that Miss Titch could not let the Heateacher (the Headteacher did not know exactly what was happening in Miss Titch's class) know what she was actually doing in her class (also explored in the next chapter) to include Alex shows that communication, trust and confidence were significant issues, especially as they claimed to be on the same side of the inclusion issue at Frosties.

The Deputy Head (who no longer works there) saw her role as one that ensured that children were placed with teachers who were able and willing to meet their needs. Unlike the Headteacher's, her approach to ensuring inclusion was a more 'softly-softly' one. This Deputy Head saw her role as a monitoring one saying:

I think for some people they need to be kept tabs on: whether they are actually putting new training into practice, if it is appropriate. And if it's not appropriate, finding out why it's not appropriate. And if people find difficulty in applying the training, then they need some strategy, some support in doing it...we, as managers, would be looking at observing lessons, keeping [a] close eye on progress and just monitoring what the special needs and inclusion manager is doing, and EAL manager, to make sure that they are supporting teachers where necessary, and, if

their support is not getting results, then what sort of interventions we need to put into classes to make the teacher is more secure in what they are teaching, and ultimately the child is progressing. (Interview: Deputy Head).

This view sees the role of Senior Management as one that keeps tabs on people with no consequence but more intervention, and one that secures the teacher's teaching and the child's progress. She did not address the problem of what happens if members of staff do not want to take training on board. Having seen how the managers viewed their roles, attention now turns to teachers. How does this management view of their role (management) impact on inclusion and how teachers interpret their roles within this context?

### **Teachers**

Although there was agreement that their main role was teaching children and making the curriculum accessible to children, interpretations of what 'accessible' meant were very subjective according to the views they had generally about inclusion—social or medical model? So what did they understand 'making the curriculum accessible' entailed?

In Miss Titch's class, it meant coming in early and staying late to ensure that lessons were well resourced and Alex's learning was 'scaffolded' just enough - without being spoon fed or made to feel 'special' or different. She explained that this required dedication, for example, "I would spend my lunch time making resources" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

She said during the interview that she started work at 7.30am and finished at 5.30/6.00pm and she prepared resources and planned during the weekend. She was not asked to, but she felt she needed to do it, she was happy to do it, so it took a bit more extra to be this dedicated. Like hooks (1994) Miss Titch said she needed to know the child well in order to know how to teach him and what to include in her lessons for him to make connections. She explained how she did this:

I work very closely with his Mum and step dad. The school does not know this and I know it might be frowned upon, but I had to know what his home situation is, what makes him tick, how he relates to his sister and brother, how they communicate with him and what impact the new baby has on him because he is not the youngest any more (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

When asked why she found it necessary to make such a link with home when others in the school did not, she replied with a question:

How else do I teach the child if I cannot make connections between home and school? There needs to be a link for his learning to make sense to him and I see my role (whether or not the school agrees with me) as making that link. (ibid)

Although Miss Titch was quite proactive in making the connection between home and school, she was worried about what the school would do if they found out that she was visiting a pupil's home without running it past what she describes as "the authorities" (ibid). However, she felt she had to be covert about it because it could have been discouraged and her hard work would be in vain. When asked what came out of these visits and working with the family in such a way, her response was "trust" (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch). She explained that the family trusted her and Alex trusted her as a result, he relaxed during lessons and wanted to do his best. On her part she also learned how to cope with his ways of doing things:

for example how to know when he is just tired and fed up and wants to stop and what strategies to use and that is because I saw how they related to him at home (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Also Miss Titch reported that through her visits, she taught Alex's mum how to use the PECS, and how to support him with his homework so that they used similar strategies at home and school. Corbett's (2001) connective pedagogy was alive in Miss Titch's practice. It was very obvious from this discussion that this teacher's role was not just limited to teaching in the classroom. She went beyond the call of duty to get to know Alex well in his context both at home and at school and she believed this was the key to enabling him to become a member of her classroom community as hooks (2003) advocates.

Miss Titch also explained that it was important to give all the children in her class good quality time for 'social talk'. She explained social talk as meaning:

Just chatting about anything and nothing in such a way that they get to know each other well. This means they know when to let another person speak and when to listen and be able to read each other's body language and facial expression as well as the words they say. And that is what makes them look after each other inside and outside the classroom. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

I noticed that she did not say they 'looked after' Alex, but said they "looked after each other", implying Alex was an equal member of her classroom community. She also stated that, "we, (not I) make the class rules and agree to all follow them and these form the basis of our social talk" (ibid). The operative word in her explanation was 'social'. In a school that was pursuing a good league table position this is a risky thing to spend a lot of time doing especially as she explained that she organises:

Activities like dance, art and drama where they had to work with partners and ignored the official timetable during the first term. I didn't let

management know, as I submitted plans and timetables that they wanted to see every week but did my own thing. Fortunately for me, by the time book scrutiny became serious my class had settled and the children were producing some good quality work so I guess all that hard work paid off. (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

I did observe one Maths lesson which was cut short because the children had to go and do dance. I observed two literacy lessons where the children had talk partners and the teacher's talk partner was the teaching assistant (TA). They modelled the topic of discussion and talking turns, and the children then had to do the same. Another lesson involved a group of children acting out the story *Rosie's walk* using directional language (e.g. around, over, across etc). Neither of these activities involved formal recording and Alex was involved in both and coped very well. In Miss Sugar's class the story was different. The level of awareness of Alex's needs was limited simply to what his Statement said. In the last chapter (5.3.3) we saw Miss Sugar acknowledging that she delegated Alex's teaching to the LSA. There was actually no system in place at Frosties to check exactly how teachers interpreted their roles. The difference in role interpretation was immense here, yet judging by what teachers said when asked about inclusion, they all seem to perceive their role as enabling inclusion. As Mr. Broom stated:

Obviously, I have got all my children and I am including them in all the lessons that I am doing. (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom),

and Miss Sugar emphasised, in a matter of fact way, that her "role is to make sure that every child accesses the curriculum" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar). So how did they make the curriculum accessible? Everyone said they planned their lessons carefully, making sure that everything was differentiated. However, two LSAs– Daniil and Harriet–complained that the teachers left the teaching to them, and

protested, very strongly, about the lack of interest the teachers (in whose classes they worked) showed towards the children who had Statements. Miss Grange stated:

My role at the beginning of this child starting in school was that of a normal classroom teacher (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Such an interpretation begs the question 'what is a normal teacher?' And was she implying that teachers like Miss Titch were abnormal? Did the school need abnormal teachers to teach children who had Statements? This brings the "moral purpose of the individual teacher" (Fullan, 1999:10) into question. For, as Fullan argues, "scratch a good teacher and you will find a moral purpose" (ibid). That moral purpose cannot just be taken at face value (Fullan, 1999), and, although:

many teachers enter the profession because they want to make a contribution, they want to make a difference... [There are some] with non-existent or limited sense of moral purpose (Fullan, 1999:11)

like Miss Sugar, who found it difficult to embrace the challenges of inclusion. Frosties' Special Needs Policy stated that "every teacher is a teacher of special needs" (Frosties Primary school, SEN Policy, 2005). While the moral purpose of education is "to make a difference in the lives of students regardless of background" (Fullan, 1999:4), and others, like Cole, call it "good faith and effort" (Cole, 2005:341), did the teachers see themselves as making a positive difference in the children's lives? Miss Dunstans believed that:

a teacher who is a true teacher really wants all their pupils to progress from where they are unto the next step and is willing to change their teaching style and perhaps their room even and makes resources available for children (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

Moving Alex onto the next step, scaffolding his learning was what Miss Titch was doing as Vygotsky (1978) and Brunner (1986) advocate. When each and every

teacher decides to strive to make a difference in children's lives they become effective agents of change (Fullan, 1999) and this is the role that the school policy carved out for the teachers when it stated:

at Frosties we are aware that children may have different needs and maybe at different stages of their learning in the same class, but pledge to make the curriculum accessible to all through a differentiated curriculum (Frosties Primary School, Inclusion Policy, 2005).

For very complicated reasons, Miss Sugar was not on the same level of inclusive practice as Miss Titch. Miss Sugar was very worried about the attainment of the majority but she was also conforming with what the statement text asked her to do. The connection she hadn't made yet was that of evaluating her practice to gauge its effectiveness for *all* the children she taught because every child mattered.

Teachers further defined their responsibility regarding inclusion as ensuring that all children felt they were part of the class. Effective participation is something that Barton (2003), hooks (1994 and 2003) and Freire (1974) advocate as being crucial in creating a classroom that values all children. As Farrell and Ainscow argue:

The extent to which school...welcomes pupils as full members of the group and values them for the contributions they make (Farrell and Ainscow, 2002:3)

is what inclusion is about. Miss Titch shared similar views with Oliver (1998) when she described inclusive practice as where:

the child feels worthy and part of the class, the child does not want to be looked at as someone special, he wants to belong and be part of the class not separate... terrible! (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

There was no room for 'negative difference' in Miss Titch's class and Miss Sugar agreed that:



when we are included and we feel that we are part of the learning environment, then, of course, our aspirations will be just as good as or near what the other children have (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

Despite such agreement, evidence from teaching (as seen in Chapter Seven) could not be more different between these two teachers' practices. So how could they interpret their roles as meaning the same thing? Subjectivity in interpretation, possibly due to perception, is an issue, as the Ghost of Christmas Present cautions Scrooge in Dicken's *'Christmas Carol'*:

There are some upon this earth of yours ... who claim to know us, and who do their deed of passion, pride...selfishness in our name, who are stranger to us and all our kith and kin, as if they had never lived. Remember that and charge their doings onto themselves, not us (Dickens, 1843: 60-61).

In other words, what some teachers say they do, does not actually match what actually happens in their practice. The question that needs to be asked here is, did these teachers actually believe that their practices were inclusive and if so, was that actually how (e.g. sending a child to their corner in Miss Sugar's class) they perceived inclusion? Like Miss Titch, these teachers went into their classrooms and became the 'bosses' of that physical environment, did what they wanted - chose their pedagogy, pursued and interpreted it as they perceived it. Asked if they were not worried that their practices might be perceived as working against the school's inclusion policy, Mr. Broom replied:

Nobody will bother with you if you make sure that the majority of children are making progress. They leave you alone. You only get into trouble if the special needs are not doing well and the rest of the class are not doing well also. Everyone knows that. (Interview, Class teacher: Mr. Broom)

Did school management know this was happening? As Miss Titch made evident earlier, teachers' activities could be difficult to monitor if they decided to be covert. They could give the timetable and plans that met the demands of the school policy,

but they did not have to implement them. They made the policy on how they taught their classes based on what they considered to matter to them and teachers clearly had different values (Chapters Two and Three). In Mr. Broom's and Miss Sugar's cases, it was the academic needs of the majority that mattered whilst in Miss Titch's class it was the wellbeing of the whole child and every child (Freire, 1974) not just the academic needs of the majority. As has already been made evident in the previous chapter, Miss Titch was driven by her own personal experience of exclusion and her ability to empathise. Can there be a middle ground where practices like Miss Titch's at one extreme and Miss Sugar's and Mr. Broom's at the other could work without putting their position at risk? As all teachers are aware today, OFSTED frowns on schools that do not meet the needs of children who 'have' special educational needs contrary to what Mr. Broom believed (OFSTED, 2004). All the work Miss Titch was doing in her classroom to get the class to have shared experience and 'gel' with each other to create an inclusive classroom culture would probably put her equally at risk if management had found her out. By her own admission:

Going to Alex's house is risky, because the school's child protection policy discourages that as it can be perceived as grooming. But I have a clear conscience and I am only doing my work. The good thing is the parents trust me and I trust them too. We know that we are all working for one good- to help Alex. (Interview, class teacher: Miss Titch).

After my interview with Miss Titch, I left with one thing on my mind as my diary notes show:

That was a difficult interview - was a bit unsure what I had to ask next or whether I had the right to ask anything. The danger she is putting her career and livelihood at risk for the sake of this child's education shows conviction in what she is doing, conviction which must be coming from within. I know what she feels, but I will be frightened to go that extra mile- that of crossing school policy guideline with obvious consequences. Not

many people will ignore child protection policy. She is well driven! Alex is lucky. (Diary notes).

The risk was enormous and I felt policy transformation would be the ideal answer to reconcile teacher's beliefs, values and their jobs, but this would need a good deal of consultation and teachers' input would need to be significant. Within this context, there is also the significant contribution of the LSAs, which impacts on children's classroom experiences and the next section examines what they believe their role to be.

### **Interpretation of roles: the LSAs**

Amongst the LSAs interviewed there was unanimous agreement that their main role was to ensure that the child had a good education, and they saw their role as very important. They did not believe that there could be effective classroom inclusion without their input, as Miss Shelley explained:

I would say I've got a main role in the inclusion, because...it's down to me to make sure he is involved in everything. And make sure he gets this...  
(Interview: LSA: Shelley).

To a certain extent, the LSA's input can be extremely valuable, however, as seen in Alex's Year One class, the LSA was not able to decide whether or not Alex was included. There were other things the LSAs could do, for example, if they felt that their 'designated' child was encountering barriers to learning, both Danii and Shelley believed it was their duty to ensure that these were overcome. Miss Shelley explained how she did this:

I'm a person who would say it and I would try at best, but if I don't see right, I will go to my line manager and say I think this would be a good thing to do. I see my role as looking out for him to be included all the way

until he leaves the school. I am hoping I will stay with him until he leaves the school. (Interview, LSA: Miss Shelley)

Being outspoken yet diplomatic was something Miss Danii agreed with:

If I see that the child is sitting there and if I'm not working with the child and I come up and see the child doing nothing I will say to the teacher you know the child needs to be doing something, the child's sitting there and does not understand, you know (Interview: LSA- Miss Danii).

The LSAs firmly believed that their contribution in the inclusion process affected the level of inclusion and quality of education the child received. However, the personality of the LSA also played an important role in this process. Two of the LSAs (Miss Shelley and Miss Danii) were very assertive and reported that they would take it up with the teacher if they felt the child was not getting their entitlement. Shelley said she would go to her line manager if discussion with the teacher was unsatisfactory. Miss Harriet (LSA) on the other hand worked independently (because Miss Sugar left her to teach Alex) of the class teacher, partly because she found "such a situation very difficult to handle and just retreat to doing what I think is right and avoid confrontation" (Interview: LSA: Miss Harriet).

Miss Shelley believed that the LSAs had other roles as well. They saw themselves as playing an important part in ensuring that the child knew the classroom and school routines, as well as being responsible for providing the resources to enable the child's inclusion. This was the case with all three LSAs. But in addition to this, Miss Shelley and Miss Danii believed they had to work in partnership with the class teacher. They saw themselves as the 'go-between' the teacher and the child. Miss Danii had not quite achieved this yet, but Miss Shelley consulted with the teacher

about the child's progress and then further work was planned for the child. For example:

Yeah I do, you know me and Miss Titch. You know, because if we...just followed the road down the way it has always been, he would have still been not being included as he is now. But because we talk and we get ideas and we think 'yes, let's try this' so you know we did put inclusion into practise (Interview: LSA: Shelley).

In fact, during observation, Miss Shelley was the one who communicated the most with the class teacher, and they had a very 'effective team' practice, as the class teacher said:

We plan together, discuss what resources we are going to have, she is asked of any suggestions that she might have for any activity, we look at it... and she makes all the resources, if I can't do them: all his PECS. But it is a partnership between Shelley and myself. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

## **6.4 Summary**

Staff interpreted the concept of inclusion to mean different things, and still argued that it benefited children who had Statements. At Frosties, the spirit of inclusion as stipulated in the Salamanca Agreement that is, advocating inclusion for all children in their local schools (UNESCO, 1994) was present in little pockets like Miss Titch's classroom. However, it was still very dependent on the moral purpose (Fullan, 1999) or good faith (Cole, 2005) of the practitioners involved. By the teachers' own admission, children who had Statements were expected to fit into the mainstream school with minimum fuss and no disruption. This attitude was defended by some staff (e.g. Mr. Broom and Miss Sugar) who protested that children who had Statements were a drain on the teacher.

As seen in the last chapter, all staff were in favour of Statements, because they believed the resources that came with a Statement enabled inclusion. Yet staff talked of inclusion, it did not necessarily imply full participation as Barton (2003) advocates.

However, there was some hope as the new Headteacher and some members of staff were firmly committed to inclusion. Their commitment and drive was apparently due to personal experiences of being disempowered rather than policy. As the winds of change continued to blow over Frosties Primary School, it would be interesting to return a few years' time to see the impact of new management on inclusion. For already, some were reporting that "things are changing, because the Headteacher is making sure that teachers include everyone" (Interview: LSA: Danii). Merely placing children who had Statements in a mainstream class, as evident in Alex's Year One placement, did not guarantee inclusion. The ideal would be for the school's ethos to support inclusive pedagogy, and for staff to get to know the child well and pitch their teaching so that the child could make progress (Vygotsky, 1978). All children need to be valued members of the classroom community (hooks, 2003) and to grow in self-esteem and dignity (Barton, 1997). The question is whether such a state of affairs was achievable at Frosties without putting the careers of those who enabled it at risk? Furthermore, what would it take to achieve that? One teacher argued that:

this comes from the heart, you have to have been there, to understand what it means to be left out, and you do it because it is the right thing to do (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Titch).

How does such empathy influence the teaching of pupils who have Statements? More importantly, what kind of teacher includes everyone effectively, because it is the right thing to do regardless of the risks and challenges involved?

## Chapter Seven

### Teaching styles and expectations

#### 7.1 Introduction

Research has often blamed schools' unwillingness to be inclusive on the demands of the 'standards agenda' (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Benjamin 2002, 2002A; Farrell, 2005). In the last chapter, although class teachers were generally sympathetic to the demands of inclusion, they felt that the difficulties in implementing the policy were largely as a result of their huge workload and the need to meet government set targets. As a result I decided that it was necessary to investigate how teachers felt about including children who had Statements in their class and what impact their presence had on teacher's expectations and teaching styles. Three groups emerged from the data representing three different perceptions which were determined by their views about Statements and their beliefs about inclusion.

The chapter begins with the views of teachers who had high expectations and later a discussion with teachers who had low expectations. It concludes with a summary which is a discussion raising issues such as how teacher expectation and teaching style impact on power relations within the class with particular reference to Alex in both Years One and Two.

Did the teachers have high expectations for everyone, or was education 'rationed' (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000) according to the discourse within which a child was

being educated? What expectations did teachers have for children who had Statements? When asked whether staff had high expectations for the children they taught, all the teachers and LSAs (except one) said that expectation was high for everyone. However, when asked specifically whether that was the same for the children who had Statements teachers' responses were divided in one of two groups. There were those who had high expectations and those who had low expectations of children who had Statements.

## **7.2 Teachers who had high expectation**

Two teachers (Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans) maintained that there was no compromise on expectation just because a child had a Statement. In fact, talking about Alex, Miss Titch explained her stance:

I expect him to achieve to the best of his ability and if I can, I make sure he's got the resources that he needs, and if not I make them or Shelley [the LSA] makes them. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Alex was observed during a numeracy lesson using a home-made number pouch with pockets which Miss Titch had prepared for him for that week. There was also a red bus game Miss Titch had made for everyone on Alex's table so they could all play a problem solving game using addition and subtraction. The whole table enjoyed playing the game and Miss Titch informed me during observation that she made the red buses the previous day at lunchtime. Achieving to the best of his ability, Miss Dunstans explained, meant "basically the child had to know that they are part of the full class" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans). This is in line with hooks's argument for the need for total conviction in "the sacred vocation of teachers" (hooks, 1994:13). However, according to these teachers, there has to be



good groundwork for this to happen, and it was not just left to chance. For example, in Alex's Year Two class:

He knows the rules, and he knows what time to come and line up. I just say get in the line Alex and that is how I would say to everybody else (Interview: class teacher: Miss Titch).

Miss Titch explained to me that this is a strategy she learned from Alex's Mum because it works at home she reports that his mum advises for him to be treated like everyone else. Refusal to lower expectation for Alex and being consistent with him was evident in all the observations I did. In one particular lesson where the children were making quarters by cutting a whole into four equal parts, colour each part in one of four colours and stuck them back together again, this was what I observed:

Alex started to colour indiscriminately. Teacher had 2 big squares, 16cm by 16cm. She cuts one up into 4 equal parts and (gave the children one section each) leaves one big square intact. She then gets the children to compare their share of the cut up square. Prompted them on shape size and how many parts altogether. Then the children took a different colour each (one of the four placed on the table by the teacher) coloured in their share then they all stick it together on top of the uncut square.

They are all given 2 equal square now and told to stick one in their books, cut one in four parts, colour each part a different colour and stick them on the square in their books. Alex did everything correctly until it was time to stick it. He ignored the square in his book and was going to just stick them randomly. Teacher placed her hands around the squares and says "no on the square!". Alex shows distress, puts his hands in his ears, stood up looks at LSA (who looks away), tried to stick the squares again long-ways when teacher removes her hands. Teacher takes the book from the table, looks at him and placed the book back on the table. He sits and then sticks the squares on the bigger uncut square. (Field notes: Year Two).

Teacher later informed me that this strategy worked at home as well. Alex did not seem distressed after that. He just got on with his work. There was a positive classroom ethos in both these teachers' practices, and there was positive correlation between their views about Statements, beliefs about inclusion and expectations and teaching styles. They began by making policy in their classroom transparent in

various ways. For example, they educated their classroom community about children with different learning needs.

### **7.2.1 Educating the class about special needs**

Both teachers felt it was important to get everyone who worked with the child to understand what the child's barriers to learning were. Their reason for doing this was basically to make the child part of the class, or, as Miss Titch put it, to show that "the child belonged to the class" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch). Miss Dunstans below powerfully explained why this was important:

When I had my first autistic child I read them a story about my sister who has autism, which was given to me by the Ed Psych. We read that a couple of times and then I read it again and replaced the child's name with the child who is in our class so nobody thought 'oh he's just being naughty'. They would say he's doing that because he's got something wrong with his brain and that also then filtered out to the parents who then didn't come in complaining continuously about this child's behaviour. They understood that it was something different without labelling him as he shouldn't be there, he should be in a special school or whatever. I think It's working as a team and it's working with the children as well to help you. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

Miss Dunstans acknowledged the need to handle this carefully so that the child's experience in the class was a positive one. In Miss Titch's class, the tack was slightly different, but the underlying message was the same. Here, instead of focusing on what the child could not do, she argued that:

You've got to respect the child and... the child needs to feel that they are worthy, not being put down because they can't do something. This is what I said to my class last week, because we're doing observational drawing, you've seen us doing that. And they were moaning that they can't draw, and I said I can't draw, and I said look at Gerald (another boy in the class- not his real name) he can draw but I'm sure there is something else he can't do, and I said Gerald what can't you do? And he told me story writing, he doesn't like it. I said we talk about things that we can't do, but we all have a go at it." (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Difference in these teachers' classrooms was understood and valued, and both these teachers had worked at creating such an ethos. This resonates with Freire's argument that "education incarnates the permanent search of people together with others" (Freire, 1974:96). This led to a situation where, as Alex's teacher (Year Two) explained:

having a Statement makes no difference to Alex. I think the children are a bit protective over him and they see him as a class member. And I think, as class members, children do tend to protect each other. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Whilst, in Miss Dunstans class, "everybody understood the needs of that child and it wasn't something that was kept secret to the LSA alone or to myself" (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Dunstans). The impact of this socially was that, because Alex's inclusion was managed effectively, he had become an equal member of the class. A good example of this was observed during a lesson when the children were making paper chains decorations for their Christmas party. They had to use paper strips cut out of ordinary red and green and shiny red and shiny green paper. The teacher had instructed them to make the chain by creating a pattern alternating the colours. Alex was working on a big table with 13 other children, but they were working in pairs. Alex worked with another child Patsy (not her real name). Patsy was known to be quite confident and bossy so I was curious to see how the partnership would work out. Patsy explained to Alex what had to be done – "make a circle and put the glue on it". She assumed the role of a teacher initially telling him what to do. Teacher noticed this, she came back to the table, had a word with Patsy (spoke quietly I could not hear). As teacher walked away, Patsy took the glue and handed it to Alex. Patsy rolled the rectangles into circles and Alex put the glue. They held each side of the chain. As they made some more circles, Patsy reminded Alex what the pattern

should be – “red, green, red, green, good boy!” Then suddenly, there was role reversal and their working relationship changed as if she had taken heed of the teacher’s earlier intervention. Patsy realised that she had to share decision making with Alex and asked Alex “do you want a shiny Alex?” They continued to work collaboratively, Patsy encouraging Alex with praise encouraging him to take turns Patsy chatting away, Alex working but smiling. This was a communal environment socially constructed by the teacher.

As the children worked, there was a lot of rich interaction, for example “Alex don’t stick it on, put it through. Alex you hold it with your hand (touching his hand) put it through (pointing to then end of the chain). Which colour are we doing next? Pick a colour. Do you want shiny or normal?” When Patsy thought Alex did not understand, she used action/gesture. I spoke to the teacher and LSA later on about the level of concentration, cooperation and communication between the children as they worked and teacher said she encourages such pair work because it often brings out the best in both children. She stressed that group work benefited Alex so much because the other children realised just how capable he was and that made him happy, thus creating a communal environment that encouraged intellectual openness and pleasure in learning, as hooks (1994 and 2003) advocates. This environment:

seems to suit him better, because he is more outgoing, he’s made a lot more friends, you know, and he is actually working with other children, is learning to take turns. (Miss Titch).

Making the child part of the classroom did not just stop with informing everyone in the class about the child’s needs. It also involved keeping the children motivated as a means of supporting the child to achieve their best - reflecting the high expectation the teacher had for them. In the classes that had high expectations there was

flexibility, taking the needs of the child on board, and this was not perceived as a negative thing. For lessons to be responsive to pupils' needs, the level of flexibility was determined by the needs of the child- "it depends on the child to me" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstons) as opposed to the 'standards agenda' (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). So how did this manifest within the classroom?

### **7.2.2 Flexibility within the classroom**

The first thing Miss Titch did when she had her class was to abandon the formal pursuit of the standards for the first six weeks. For a Year Two class, they had a role play area, and a water tray with various measuring/cooking equipments. There were a lot of familiar things that children would find in their homes with labels on them, including a dog's basket. It was very child-friendly and inviting. Miss Titch has a beautiful writing corner with various writing materials. Several animal puppets and a story sack hung around the reading area. I commented on my first observation visit about how enticing I found the resources in her class and she smiled and said, "if I respond to that I could get into trouble". When I asked her why her response was:

I am being a bit naughty, but its good naughty. You see, having Alex in my class and Shelley telling me how he was in Year One, I want to change things for him so he does not feel left out. In fact I don't want any one to feel left out (Discussion with Miss Titch during observation).

I couldn't imagine why she thought she could get in trouble, then she said "you promised me you are here as a researcher yes?" "Without doubt" I reassured her. She relaxed and then explained that a lot of the work she would be doing during these first six weeks had nothing to do with Literacy or Numeracy hours. She said they are making up class rules and learn to play and talk and get on with each other

using the rules. I asked about her planning, which she had been submitting weekly but she said they were to “satisfy you people” (meaning SMT).

The child’s needs were taken on board in the general day-to-day management of the classroom. So whilst, for example in Year Two, Alex was part of the class and belonged to a group in the class, the teacher also ensured that he had somewhere to go to if he needed to have a quiet time and re-focus. Although she disagreed with the way Alex was perceived to be included in Year One, she saw the need for a quiet corner for him, because:

Sometimes when he has finished his work and he wants to be quiet and he wants to do his spelling, because, you know, he likes making words, he would go and sit in his corner, I don’t even call it a corner, his desk! (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Titch).

In this class, Alex was not made to go to his desk. He chose to use that space if he wanted to and the other children, because they understood his needs, respected that. She also took on board Alex’s need for longer processing time, the teacher explained how she did it:

He has his book with his number cards in it during Maths. When I asked him a question, I will not expect him to give me an answer straight a way. I always give him processing time, during that time I always go on to asking other children questions, and then I go back to him afterward for his answer (ibid).

Alex’s reaction to the desk and the freedom he had in how to use it was made evident to me on my second day of observation. The children had been sent to their tables after a carpet session counting in tens (adding and taking away). His regular LSA Shelly was absent so he had a supply LSA. The LSA wanted to take him to his corner, Alex pulled his hand away from her and pointed to the table he shared with

other children and walked to it. The LSA followed him. It was the table the class teacher was working with that morning so she directed her to support another table. Besides, this teacher knew Alex well for example, as she explained, although he was in:

the middle group in literacy, in numeracy Alex is a bit higher than them, but because of multiplication and things like that he's got to be with them so that he's got time to get to know the multiplication division and things like that (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

In Miss Dunstan's class she explained how she ensured that expectations were high for the child who had a Statement but at the same time catered for everyone's academic needs:

I wouldn't teach totally different, but I would then go to the child. It would happen within the whole class as I would for young children anyway. Make sure that they knew what the activities were, what they were doing and why they were going to do it. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

So, in order for the child to achieve and to attain in line with the teachers' declaration of high expectation for the child regardless of the Statement, some teachers ensured that they communicated effectively with the child, they scaffolded the child's learning through the use of relevant resources and, at the same time, they gave the child thinking space and time. The question is how did they manage to achieve all this when other teachers (e.g. Mr. Broom, Miss Grange, Miss Sugar- see Chapter Five) complained of workload demands and meeting the needs of the diverse abilities in their classrooms. There appeared to be several ways- one of which was planning and preparation.

### 7.2.3 Planning and preparation

It was very important to Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans that learning intentions and expectations were made very transparent to the child. They were aware of their responsibility to ensure that the child had the right resources to enable them to attain the learning objective. Miss Titch explained:

I will differentiate. Like when we do number bonds, we make buses and the children have to put how many people on the bus, how many people got on, and that way, Alex was able to see how many people got on then add the number of how many people on the bus. Another activity we do is onset and rime with the dice: two dices, one with onset, and one with rimes and they put it together to make a word, he enjoys doing that, because he loves spelling. The whole of his group does that, because they are weak in phonic work so it is a lot of hands-on activities. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

What was significant in the last quote was the fact that “the whole of his group does that” (ibid) as this took away ‘the gaze’ that Alex had in Year One as a result of being the odd one out in his corner rote learning high frequency words. In Year Two negative difference was not a feature of the class. Instead the focus was on learning, challenge, progress and dignity through the teacher’s carefully planned pedagogy as evidenced in the last quote. All the activities Alex was observed doing in Year Two were hands-on, multi-sensory and pitched at a level that the children found challenging enough, yet not too difficult to make them lose interest. They always started with a game, discussion, making, adults modelling for children and children doing the same, before recording. I had seen a cross curricula literacy/physical education (PE) lesson and observed Alex (who had very limited speech) going around the blue hoop that was the pond saying “around the pond” with a smile on his face. Enjoyment was an important part of the activities. As well as planning for different learning needs, Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans communicated with the



support staff in their classroom. Even when the teacher was working with other groups, she kept an eye on the learning of all the children in her class including Alex.

This is an example of one such lesson I observed:

Class teacher working with one group, LSA working with Alex's group, the children had to follow on from an activity they started the previous day where they had to play games with buses- counting people on the bus, adding some more people who went on, and then recording the answer. Alex was not recording just watching despite prompting from LSA. Class teacher looked over, then walked across, whispered something to LSA and took over and this is what happened:

CT (speaking to Alex): There are 4 people on the bus, lets count 4 cubes (Alex counted 4 cubes and put them on the bus. Starting from this first (pointing at the first one) all the way to this one (pointing at the 4<sup>th</sup>). Alex touched all four in the right sequence. What do you write? (Alex recorded 4). And, what is the sign for 'and'? (Alex recorded + after 4). 2 more people come on the bus, how many more cubes? (Alex counted 2 more and placed them after the 4<sup>th</sup> cube and without being asked wrote 2 after the + sign. What do we need to write now to show that we are ready to write the answer? (Alex wrote = sign, he counted them altogether and wrote 6). Class teacher nodded at LSA and walked back to her table. Alex continued working with the LSA and the rest of the group. He did not need any one-to-one support anymore. (Field note Year Two)

Here, unlike research criticising some ineffective teacher/TA teamwork (Webster *et al*, 2010:1) this shows not only clear communication between teacher and LSA, but also between teacher and Alex. It was obvious to the teacher that segmenting the activity into achievable steps to make it clear for Alex was necessary, but to the LSA the problem was a basic subtraction when a teacher could clearly see how to someone like Alex it was a complex process. Miss Titch understood the LSA's limitation and supported her effectively for Alex's benefit.

Both teachers were the only ones who admitted (during interview) to planning with their LSAs and ensuring that their LSAs had their plans in advance and knew exactly what was happening during the lesson. Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans could not

understand how an inclusive practice could run effectively without partnership with support staff. Miss Titch explained:

I make sure, the week before we start a lesson, Shelley's got my lesson plan for the week. We go through, look at what resources he might need and make sure that it is made over that weekend or the week before, so that it's all ready for him with his book (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Planning is done in advance so that the requirements of the lesson can be carefully considered and acted upon by both the LSA and the teacher. During observations in Year Two, Miss Shelley and the TA both had an evaluation sheet for each lesson to assess the children's learning. Both teacher and support staff seemed to know what the other was going to say or do next and they supported each other well. This came across very strongly during a story telling session with the teacher and LSA taking on different characters and retelling the story/dialogue of *Brown Bear Brown Bear*. The LSA and teacher in Year Two worked together (Balshaw, 1999), so that if the LSA was expected to clarify instructions for the child, or act as an 'accessor' (Tennant, 2001), the LSA would be 'singing from the same hymn book' as the teacher. It did not just stop with the planning, because, where teachers planned with the LSAs and shared ideas, there was also a great degree of dedication. In Year Two both teacher and LSA spent time to prepare the resources required so that everything was ready for Alex before the lesson. For example, whilst:



the whole class groups animals by characteristics, I would spend my lunch time in clip art, looking for different animals, printing animals, reducing them so that they are big enough for Alex to handle, so that he can cut them out and stick them into the correct groups. The whole class was doing this, but they had to draw them, but Alex cannot draw so he cuts them up. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

The above is an example of how hook's idea of teaching as a "vocation" (hooks, 1994:13) manifests within the school and classroom. So, although Alex could not draw, he was not made to feel the disappointment of not being able to draw, as the objective of the activity was grouping by characteristics not drawing. In another lesson where the children were looking at bigger and smaller numbers, I observed how good preparation of resources before the lesson helped Alex to join in the lesson without being 'different':

CT (to class): Today we are looking at the words 'bigger' and 'smaller'. (She puts 7 and 3 on the board). Which is bigger/smaller. She has a number line and magnetic fruits on board. She compared various couple of numbers.

(LSA was explaining the same instructions to Alex using his customised number line and fruits and numbers. They were sitting on the carpet with the other children with Alex comparing the numbers using the resources. What is interesting is the conversation between Alex and Shelly).

LSA: why is it the bigger number? How do we know that 11 is bigger than 9?

Alex: (Used the PECS signs for bigger  and smaller  to indicate answer. Then teacher shows him 7 and 6 and asks him to give the bigger number to Miss Shelly (LSA) which she did by placing the bigger sign on 7.

His teacher understood him well, anticipated and removed possible barriers to his learning and made reasonable adjustments well before Alex engaged with this activity. So, after having planned properly and prepared the resources, how was the lesson taught in a manner that included Alex? Was it always as positive as the teacher said?

#### **7.2.4 Teaching and learning**

Here, as well, various positive strategies were employed to ensure that expectation for the child who had a Statement was not only kept high but realistic as well. Lessons were made accessible, as explained above, through the use of resources and differentiation, and the importance of "dialogues with pupils" (Freire, 1974: 124-

125) was emphasised, as in both these practices, clear instructions and checking for understanding was key. Miss Dunstans explained how this worked - after having made expectations clear to the group, she went to the child to check that he understood. She got him:

to verbalise to me what they were going to do after I've explained it. But then I would have either myself or the LSA with that child on a one-to-one basis just making sure the child knows what they are doing, or them going off and modeling it with that person or with another child together so they won't, because there's always somebody else needing their help as well. (Interview: class teacher: Miss Dunstans).

The use of modelling, as advocated by hooks (1994) and Thich Nhat Hanh (cited in hooks 1994), helped the child to know what was expected, and empowered them to take risks within a supportive communal classroom for example, seeing Alex dancing during PE with a partner, following instructions, sometimes allowing his partner to lead and he copied, smiling and enjoying it. Modelling was common in both classes and was used flexibly. Often the adults modelled for the children but as shown above, the teacher also modelled for the LSA. Where this occurred, it was often spontaneous and was used to support language development, and Miss Titch explained how this worked:

We don't plan it, it just happens. Like we are reading the story of *Where is the Bear...* so I open the book and there's just a picture, two pages. It's a big book, two pages of trees, very tall trees, and nothing else. So I was asking the children how would they feel if they went into the wood? And they would give me their ideas and I would just turn around to Miss Shelley or Miss Shapna and whoever is in the room with me and say 'what do you think, how would you feel?' And we sort of went into discussion how they would feel and then we went back to the children and then it sort of went in between us, because, as we read the story, everyone has different feelings about it. They get different views as well and they develop their language skills. (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Titch).

The above was a good example of adults modelling talk, communication and feelings for the children in a very natural way. It also showed adult collaboration. The adults in Alex's Year Two class were very comfortable with their practice and they assessed and modified as they taught. Besides, involving the children in the talk, giving the children different views and welcoming their contribution gave a relaxed feel to learning and teaching in this class. This was the sort of excitement and fun that hooks (1994) describes in her book. At other times, the children engaged in partner work. They modelled for each other and it was not always the child without Statement modelling for the child who had a Statement. The teacher carefully planned it, so that the learning relationship was perceived as equal, reciprocal and participants were treated with the kind of dignity that Barton (1997) advocates. For example:

partner work has been done when there has been bouncing and catch, he works with another child, it's usually Georgia who loves him to bits, so they tend to work together... I tend to pair him up with Georgia, because she is more sensitive to his needs (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Again, this is a good example of active participation by all classroom participants and "conscientization" (Freire, 1974:148), creating an engaging pedagogy where pupils interacted with each other (hooks, 1994). Depending on the purpose of the lesson and the needs of the child, partnering groups could also be formed, with the child who had the Statement taking the lead role. For example, talking about the effect Alex has on Abraham (another child in the class), the teacher explained that:

Alex works with Abraham as well. At first, Abraham used to pick on Alex, but pairing them up, because they work together most days, I find Abraham is more supportive of Alex. He looks after him and he has become more settled in his work. And I think as well, because he sees Alex doing his work, it makes him want to work (ibid).

So here, pairing Alex with Abraham produced a positive effect on the class in general, Abraham in particular and maybe, if he could verbalise it, Alex as well. Having Alex in the class had proven to be good for classroom management. There was meaningful dialogue with Alex as his contribution was valued and respected and his teacher had a positive view about inclusive education. Her perception of what teaching was about, is one which involves active participation of all learners, as advocated by hooks (1994) and Freire (1974). It was possible that Miss Titch's own experience of disempowerment resulted in her determination to enable meaningful dialogue with pupils, stressing the importance of what Freire described as "praxis" (Freire, 1974:102) where she reflected on her actions, which, in turn, informed her practice (her planning, teaching and her entire pedagogy). By ensuring that all the children in her class were included, Miss Titch 'walked the walk' and she personified the change she wished to inspire in Alex. Like hooks (1994), she did not want any child to go through the same educational experiences that she had endured. Both Miss Titch and Miss Dunstons saw the Statement as a tool that helped to remove barriers to a child's learning.

Their pedagogy (especially Miss Titch's, which was observed) encouraged an atmosphere of pleasure in the classroom, which, in educational environment, might be interpreted as "potentially disruptive" (hooks, 1994:7). Miss Titch deliberately subverted policy through her distortion (appearing to 'toe the line' regarding planning and in secretively working with Alex's Mum out of school). These were risks which she did not hesitate to take since she was guided by moral purpose and good faith and she believed "it just had to be done" (Interview: class teacher: Miss Titch) as it is the right thing to do. However, this was not always the case as the practices and

perceptions of the other teachers indicated that expectation is sometimes different for children who have Statements.

### **7.3 Teachers who had low expectation of children who have Statements**

Whilst some teachers (e.g. Mr. Broom) argued that “expectations of my class stay the same without anybody being there” (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom), the second group of teachers did not necessarily share the optimistic perception of Miss Dunstons and Miss Titch. They did not always believe that it was possible to have high expectation for all the children in the class.

Their view about expectation and the impact of having children who had Statements in their classes was summarised by Mr Broom. When asked whether he had high expectation for all the children in his class:

No. Obviously it can't be all. It depends on which area that you look at, but I expect my expectation of behaviour and all those things will be the same for the whole class. But work wise, curriculum wise I can't expect the same thing from a child that's on special needs as my top ability class, so, obviously, my expectations will be lowered for a child like that. (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom).

This contradicts his earlier argument (above) that expectation was not lowered for a child just because they had a Statement (Chapter Five). Benjamin's argument that labels closed down discursive spaces available to some children (see section 2.3.1) was confirmed by Mr. Broom when he stated above that “work wise, curriculum wise I can't expect the same thing” (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom). There was no reported attempt at trying to find out if the child was capable if given the chance, rather this teacher assumed that the child could only attain in non-academic areas- a

perception which Oliver criticises as determined by the “culturally valuable mechanism” (Oliver, 1998:52) known as the standards agenda (Benjamin, 2002A; Lunt and Norwich, 1999). For example, asked about how having children with Statements in his class has affected his expectation of his class generally and the children in particular, Mr Broom replied:

I don't think that would hinder my expectations because I will still have the expectations of my children that I know their ability. And I know the ability of what level they are at so, I know that I need to push my children that need some pushing on - my higher ability children I know. Obviously, I have expectations of all the levels in my class and I think it makes it quite difficult because you've got all these levels of abilities in your class and then not even talking about the special needs children in your class or Statements children...that's totally different (Interview: Class teacher: Mr Broom).

Mr. Broom had no measure for children who had Statements and that became problematic and “totally different” (ibid), as he did not know what expectation to have for them. Was it because they had been ‘valued’ as being at the bottom of the power hierarchy within the classroom? As seen earlier, (Chapter Five) being categorised as ‘statemented’ can place children within the ‘consolation’ discourse (2.5.1.a). So here, assessment did not seem to encourage the achievement of all pupils (Foucault, 1977; Oliver, 1998), and it perpetuated the notion of difference in a negative way (Corbett, 1996) and devalues some pupils as ‘negatively’ different. Such negative perception of difference was evident in Miss Grange’s description of her expectations for Abel (a child in her class diagnosed with autism):

My expectations that, Abel should be achieving? This is the real dilemma for me. Because, it's almost impossible to have academic expectations for him. What we focus on is his social progression (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

In her view, achieving socially did not count as progression, yet hooks argues (section 3.5) that human beings should not just strive for knowledge in books, but



knowledge about how to live in the world. Miss Titch reported that this (social talk) was exactly what she did during the first term of having her class and reported that academic attainment benefitted as a result. So why was she able to engage children in such a way and her colleagues could not? Could it be because she was able to understand her own “oppressive experiences” (Kanpol, 1997:35) as Kanpol argues? What was observed in Miss Sugar’s classroom (Alex being excluded- see Chapters Five and Six), and what Miss Grange and Mr. Broom reported about their teaching and expectations of children who had Statements described what Freire expressed as the assumption of “the magic posture” (Freire, 1974:102). This is where teachers perceive a ‘concrete fact’ of the learning of a category of children without entering critically into their world to understand it. As a result they find it difficult to understand how to effectively challenge and engage children. That level of dialogue and reflection- “praxis” (Freire, 1974:102) that existed between Miss Titch and Alex in Year Two (as shown in Chapter Six) was missing in the other classes (although it seemed to be developing from what Miss Dunstons reported in her class). This could be partly because some did not understand what to do, as Miss Grange admitted in Chapter Five that specialists know more than teachers when it concerns children who have Statements. These teachers did not have high expectations for children who had Statements when it came to curricular attainment. This was contrary to the guidance of the SENDA, which advocates for schools to “plan strategically to increase the extent to which disabled ([in this study means experiencing a barrier to learning]) students... can participate in the curriculum” (DFES, 2004:28).

The teachers who held low expectations were the ones (in Chapter Five) who held very strong ‘medical’ views about Statements and expected the children to be

diagnosed by experts and hoped that the right intervention would be put in place to make the children better. As one teacher explained, once the Statement is issued it:

will provide the teacher with glimpses of him being engaged, being involved in the class and being happy, and we want to work towards that on a regular on a normal basis. (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Grange).

Or, as Miss Sugar explained:

you have come up with a programme of study for that child so that the child can access the curriculum and make progress. (Interview: Class Teacher: Miss Sugar).

In Year One (as the last two chapters have shown) there was a programme of study for Alex, but that programme was a repeated menu of reading, writing and making high frequency words in his corner. His learning in this class was observed to be repetitive which was meaningless without developing his ability to think and problem solve. It was a system of teaching and studying which hooks described as the “banking system” (hooks, 1994:14) where the child was rote learning, and the only thing the LSA had to do was to encourage Alex to recount what he had memorised. The programme was delivered entirely by the LSA with the teacher not having an input. Alex’s engagement in his Year One class did not encourage dialogue between him and his peers or him and Miss Sugar. Miss Sugar and Miss Harriet (LSA) did not plan together or even discuss Alex’s learning - that was an issue for the LSA alone not the teacher. Occasionally Alex was invited to the carpet for ten minutes only, then he was expected to return to his corner, yet Miss Sugar described this as enabling the child to “access the curriculum and make progress” (ibid). My diary notes after my interview with Miss Sugar clearly expressed how I felt:

How bizarre! How can Miss Sugar interpret such a practice as enabling access to the curriculum and leading to progress? Is that how she perceives progress- being able to read high frequency words? What is he doing with the high frequency words after learning to read and spell them?

I can now see why Harriet finds it difficult to communicate with her and she has resigned to doing things by herself- there is a huge problem here because obviously the teacher may a) not know what to do, or b) is unwilling to include this child. Either of these situations are not good for Alex and I feel that as someone in the school responsible for inclusion I am failing him. But what do I do with this information? I have to use it discretely – I need to think carefully about who he is placed with next year (Diary notes).

The idea of having high expectations for children who had Statements was not something that some teachers (for example Miss Grange) believed was possible, especially in academic areas. However, in non-academic areas like behaviour or play, the ‘consolation’ discourse (2.5.1.a) was applied. For example, talking about one of the children in her class, Miss Grange said:

He can play in the sand, concentrate, he enjoys books all that sort of stuff, but when we’re talking about what he’s doing on a daily basis, we’re talking about he spoke to one of the other children today, or he joined in a group or he sang a song with us today. He had a smile on his face, things like that, so my expectation on a daily basis is that he becomes integrated within the classroom. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Miss Grange is still talking about integration and such a view vindicates researchers like Oliver (1994 and 1996) who criticise schools for saying they are inclusive when really what they practice is integration. Miss Grange had not yet arrived at inclusion yet and this was disheartening to listen to because the world had moved on in its understanding of inclusion (see Chapter Two). However, compare this to the expectation Miss Grange had for the rest of the class:

Obviously, I still have a high emphasis on the social interaction... language things like that ... but because we can do more work, because they ([the rest of the class]) engage more often, the expectations are obviously higher than they are for Abel...[and] different. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

Academic expectations for children who had Statements was lowered “work wise” in most of the classes across the school (Interview: Class teacher: Mr. Broom). The

teachers complained that it was “impossible” to have expectations for children who they perceived as ‘different’ (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange). Having such a perception, I wanted to investigate how this might affect the teachers’ teaching style and this discussion follows next.

#### **7.4 Lowered expectation and teaching styles**

Here, the difference between the Headteacher, the first group of teachers (Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans) who had high expectation for all children and the second group of teachers (Mr. Broom, Miss Grange, Miss Sugar) who had lower expectation was very obvious. Their planning for children who had Statements seemed to lack the attention that was necessary to support the children to make progress. As I observed in Year One, I have used the observation data (backed by interview data) to explain my findings beginning with meeting the children’s curricular needs.

Here in Year One, the teacher planned for the whole class (mentioning all the groups in the differentiated tasks) but it was difficult to ascertain if the plan included Alex because first he was not part of any group. Secondly, often when the teacher taught the class he was working in his corner with his LSA doing totally unrelated activities. On the second day of my observation Alex was actually part of the class. The teacher asked children to choose an information book. Alex was sitting at the edge of the carpet with his LSA sitting next to him and a dictionary in front of him, humming. The class discussed the difference between information and fiction books. Alex sat humming. The teacher asked all the children who had dictionaries to hold them up. Alex was not responding so LSA said to him “Alex pick up your dictionary” there was no reaction, she said it again, this time with gesture then he responded. I was

observing, questioning (in my mind) how relevant this activity was to Alex when he was still at the level of using PECS to communicate.

The next activity I observed was a Maths lesson where the children were learning doubling and halving. Again Alex had his ten minutes on the carpet. The pace was fast the teacher was directing questions at various children but the pitch of the lesson was too high for Alex's understanding. Although he recognised numbers and was able to say how many a number was worth, he did not understand the concepts of halving and doubling. Alex started to make distressing noises, the noises getting louder. Teacher asked him to stop, then said "show me one finger" (holding up her one finger). Alex copied her action, then she added "show me two fingers (holding up her two fingers) again Alex copied her but there was no evidence of understanding as he often copied or echoed what was said or done. The teacher asked the class to clap for him and they all did. He still looked distressed and the teacher asked the LSA to take him to his corner.

The richness of Alex's experience in Year Two was due to a certain extent on the planning and preparation that took place before the lesson, but which was absent in Year One. For example doubling for someone like Alex who needed a lot of visual clues could have been better prepared- using photographs, pairs of clothing with hands-on resources to aid counting. Where teachers plan lessons without differentiating taking on board the needs of all the children, children who have Statements cannot make progress. There was no evidence of carefully teaching to the diverse needs of the class, as highlighted by the teacher when describing one of the few strategies she used, which was to:

make sure that the lesson starts off really low so that the child has the chance to build on what he or she already knows, so I pitch it at a level where I know the child will be able to answer certain questions and won't be left out, because it's all about inclusion and everybody's contribution is vital. And because I know that self-concept has a lot to do with if you are included or excluded (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar).

In Year One, there was no talk of ensuring that the resources were appropriate and ready to hand for Alex to use. Learning was incidental not carefully planned. Mr Broom also used this strategy when he reports that:

I am thinking of my teaching style...how to incorporate them into my lesson. Saying and asking a very easy question at the beginning **just** to get them involved as well. (Interview: Class teacher: Mr Broom).

The focus here was not effective participation, as Barton (2003) advocates, rather it was to keep the children occupied. The level of dedicated preparation, thought and planning that was done by Alex's Year Two teacher was lacking in his Year One class. Unlike the 'high ability' groups, who might be engaged effectively by the teacher, for children like Alex, the teacher just wanted to keep him occupied. Another teacher explained how she did this in the following passage:

I speak to him and ask him what he might like to do to start the day and direct him towards...puzzles or activities on the table, and he's quite happy to come in and sit down and start like that. So he's not doing what the rest of the group is doing. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

So sometimes children were allowed to follow their own agenda and the teacher went along with it. The teacher directed the attention on to how the child felt instead of what the child was able to do, with careful thought and support on the part of the adults who works with him. Scaffolding, as advocated by Vygotsky (1978), was absent here. As a result, the child did not get to be challenged for fear of negatively affecting his self-concept, so the teacher gave the child:

work that I know the child can cope with in a small group, and some of them are at the same ability. And sometimes it is a mixed ability group so that the child can be extended in their knowledge based on what a more

able pupil has to offer. And it has worked beautifully, and I know it will continue to work beautifully. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar)

Although Miss Sugar reported this during interview, Alex was never observed working with another child in her class. The question is, who does it work beautifully for? Although paired work and group work were reported to be used, the only partnership observed was partnership between Alex and the LSA. He was never observed working with other children. As a result, in Year One Alex was not exposed to the sort of rich dialogue like the one between himself and Patsy in Year Two. Opportunities were not created for him to practise his language and social skills, both of which he needed to develop. As such, the benefits of whole class planning to Alex, was dependent on “what a more able pupil has to offer”. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Sugar). In Mr Broom’s class, he accepted that having children who had Statements affected his teaching style:

in the way that when I think of the lesson, and when I think of what level I should pitch my lessons at, that reflects how I would present my lesson as well and how I would ask my questions...Yes, I think, definitely, my teaching style differs a lot than I would when I have a class with all the same ability, like for set Maths, for set English that would be totally different, because then I am working at, mostly, maybe, at the most, two different levels. (Interview: Class teacher: Mr Broom)

This group of teachers saw having to differentiate and pitch their lessons to meet children’s diverse abilities as problematic and not as something to explore and value. This negative perception was powerfully expressed by one of the teachers when she complained that having a child with significant needs was:

affecting my teaching, because, if I’m being (laughs)—I mean, it’s very frustrating and very upsetting and all the rest of it, but it’s also... takes up so much of my time. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

That ‘praxis’, which Friere (1974) advocated and the passion of the teaching vocation, which hooks (1997) longs for, seemed to be absent amongst these

teachers. They seemed to perceive children who had Statements as lacking the ability to learn, perhaps because of the assessment they have had and the label they are 'tagged' with. The children's perceived inability to learn could be because "there must be people who think of them in that way" (Freire, 1974:118) perpetuating difference in a negative way. It could be that this is just a case of alienation of ignorance where by "affirming the absolute ignorance of others, they reveal their own ignorance." (ibid).

This negative attitude worsened when the child did not only have learning difficulties but also displayed behavioural and emotional needs, which some teachers found difficult to manage. For example whenever Alex showed distress (which often was due to his inability to understand what was going on) and made humming or distressed noises, the teacher asked the LSA to take him to his corner. However, in Year Two when this happened, the teacher was consistent in her support for him and helped him to understand what was going on. Asking the LSA to take him to his corner delegated responsibility to the LSA who was "left to teach" the pupil (Lacey, 2001:164). One teacher describes the LSA as the "guardian supervisor or patrol officer (laughs) whatever you want to call [it]..." (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange). However, having expressed such strong views, where even the language is negative, she went on to say that having a child with considerable needs did not impact on her teaching style, "at the moment not greatly, because he's got adult support in the room all the time" (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange), in other words, he was someone else's responsibility—evidence of Freire's (1974) "alienation of ignorance" (Freire, 1974:118) again. As discussed in Chapter Six already, Alex was taught by the LSA who also happened to decide (with the help of the specialist



support teacher from the local authority) what to teach him. The majority of Alex's teaching was the same diet of high frequency words, flash cards maths activities with multicoloured elephants, some reading and all this on the margins of the class and in parallel to the other children.

I had one hopeful observation where I saw Miss Sugar working with Alex. His LSA was absent and he was sitting on the same table with his teacher busy writing. On close observation I noticed that he was writing names of pop stars: Missey Elliot, Kanya West, 50 Cents then the phrase '3 of a kind' in neat handwriting. Teacher looked at me, got up and gave him a worksheet saying, "Do you know what this is?" It was dot-to-dot sheet from 1-100. He completed it quickly took it across the table to her. Everyone else on the table was writing a story. Teacher looked at Alex's sheet and said "no!" Alex looked distress and started shutting his ears. Teacher pointed at a piece of paper and said to him, "bring it to me" the other children stopped and stared. "You missed 31" the teacher said. He sat down to do it again at this point the LSA walked in, he grinned but did not get up. All I could think of was 'what a wasted opportunity, especially as the children were working quietly and the teacher was not exactly busy.

All these teachers were in agreement that if they did not have an extra adult in the class to support the child, their teaching would be negatively affected. For instance:

But today, for example, he will act out as soon as that adult support is out of the room. We were just going through a normal transition and he just refused to move from where he was so we had to, I had to physically take him out of the room and lock the door. And he screamed and kicked and squealed and cried and sat on the floor for about fifteen minutes. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

In these teachers' views the child's difficulty and the category of their 'SEN' is the reason for the barrier to learning the child experiences, thereby abdicating any

responsibility on their part (Benjamin, 2002). This view is in line with the concerns of categorisation, raised earlier (2.5.1.b), as the educational needs that the child exhibited affected the way the teacher taught the child, making teaching and managing the class challenging for the teachers. They all believed that they were doing all the right things as the child's teacher to include the child during lessons, but their efforts did not get the required response they expected. This finding is similar to that of Cunningham *et al's* (1998), where the effectiveness of inclusive education on academic achievement is seen to be dependent on the child's 'SEN', as Miss Grange argued:

I make a conscious effort to try and engage Abel as often as possible so when he comes into the classroom in the morning he is not reluctant to join in the group. He refuses to join in the group; he would rather go and stand with his head stuck in the corner of the classroom than sit down with the rest of the class around the carpet. (Interview: Class teacher: Miss Grange).

The question is why? This is a question for every teacher, as hooks (1997 & 2003) argues that if the teacher knows his/her pupils well, then they are able to reach their pupils better. How much had these teachers tried to learn about their pupils and about the nature of their learning needs?

## **7.5 Summary**

The teachers who featured in this study were working within an educational environment where academic success is highly valued (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999) and anything less was treated as 'negatively' different (Benjamin, 2002; Foucault, 1977). Within that context, what counted as success was a socially acceptable standard of Level 4 or above at KS2 SATs and Level 2 or above at KS1 SATs. Schools that did not attain these were deemed to be unsuccessful (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). Thus, teachers faced the dilemma of

whether to try to include all pupils effectively and face the risk of achieving level that result in an inferior league table position, or focus on teaching the majority of pupils who could attain 'good grades' and so achieve a good league table position (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). This situation had arisen because Government policy itself is contradictory, because it advocates inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2002) at the same time as it promotes the 'standards agenda' (Benjamin, 2002A). As previously discussed, these two positions are difficult to reconcile. Hence, it can be argued that Government policy has created an educational environment that makes it impossible for 'effective' inclusion to thrive. The debate here is that of majority versus minority needs (Wilson, 2000; Hornby, 1999), and, as Benjamin (2002A) argues, within this climate, the 'standards agenda' takes precedence over the 'inclusion agenda'.

Contradictory Government policy was reflected within the school and classroom situation, as teachers made policy decision in the way they taught their children. Mr Broom and Miss Sugar, for example, opted to teach for the benefit of the majority. Here, the teachers seemed to prefer to focus on the 'societal' standard, which was clear and measurable and had strict boundaries, and:

the examination is the site at which students and teacher 'performance' is monitored, quantified and made tangible in the form of a grade. (Benjamin, 2002A: 97).

Different expectations, for SEN and children who had Statements was rife in some classes (e.g. Mr. Broom's, Miss Grange's and Miss Sugar's). However, one of the reasons why this was possible could have been because Statements made available resources (Pinney, 2003) that enabled these teachers to abdicate responsibility of pupils who had Statements to untrained staff. Furthermore, assumptions were made

about pupils who had Statements. For example that they were incapable of aspiring to the 'standards agenda' (Benjamin, 2002A), leading to their exclusion from the dominant discourse of success, as stated by Gillborn and Youdell (2000). In spite the reality of their practice, these teachers believed that their teaching was 'inclusive', just because the child who had a Statement was in the same physical space as the rest of the class.

Another group of teachers (e.g. Miss Titch and Miss Dunstans) took a different approach. By enabling the child to participate through the way they planned and by encouraging communication and interaction with children and adults in the classroom. These teachers viewed effective participation as vital, resulted in positive contributions and more harmonious relationship with peers. Relationships, here, especially in Miss Titch's class, were reciprocal and on 'equal' basis. Teaching groups and partner work were carefully planned, and allowance was made for the child's individual needs within the setting.

At Frosties, the issue of inclusive teaching was down to the debate of what mattered to the teacher regardless of the statutory framework. There were two systems in place: one, where teachers found the challenge of meeting the needs of children with Statements very daunting within the framework of the standards agenda. The second was a system where practitioners were guided by a 'good faith' (Cole, 2005) and 'moral purpose' (Fullan, 1999). In this study, some of these teachers, like Miss Titch, had experienced exclusion themselves and were able to empathise. The challenges were various - for example who had the power to ensure children

received their entitlement? The power to drive policy apparently seemed to rest with the Senior Management Team, but judging by the practice within the school as evident in this chapter and the two before it, the class teacher really held the power. This situation revealed how contextualised power was within the setting. The other dilemma was around the two sets of teachers' perceptions towards expectations and teaching styles within the school. Could these two systems co-exist, and should they even be allowed to?

Whether or not having a Statement of Special educational Needs actually offered equality of opportunity and secured a child's entitlement depended as much on a teacher's perception, willingness and 'moral purpose' (or lack of) as the policy framework within which they were obliged to operate. Rather, the observations in this study would be seen to support the hypothesis that Statements can in reality perpetuate inequality of experience, regardless of legislation or the position of a school's management. It is the individual teacher who holds the power to make inclusion work (or not).

So What next for children at Frosties Primary School who have Statements? What can Frosties do to impact positively on the situation? The next chapter looks at conclusion of the study and makes some recommendations.

## Chapter Eight

### Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

#### 8.1. Introduction

I have no doubt that the successes of policies, which purport to promote inclusion depend a great deal on the beliefs and values of individual teachers. I also have no doubt that in the current educational climate Statements per se can be exclusionary (section 2.2.1.a) but, through the practices of inclusive teachers, Statements can be used to successfully support inclusion. This study agrees with the work of others (e.g. Angelides *et al*, 2004; Gee, 1992; Gillborn and Youdell, 2000, Ginnott, 1974) who argue that teachers who believe in inclusion can make a difference. This study also draws on and finds evidence to support the work of those who argue that teachers have considerable power to include if they so choose (e.g. hooks, 2003 & 1994; Waters, 2009; Corbett, 2001). This study's contribution to knowledge (see 1.1) highlights effective engagement of marginalised groups through teacher transgression. It also shows the ethical dilemma of an insider researcher when encountered by difficult situation for example when Alex was not being included in Year One. Also as a teacher, I feel guilty criticising one of my colleagues- discussing Miss Sugar's practice as I have done feels like 'whistleblowing'. However, this study shows that for things to actually change for those children who have a Statement of special educational needs in mainstream school, those of us who are teachers need to grapple with the difficult issues like inclusion.

What this study maintains is that while there are disputes about policies, there is a crying need for teachers to be supported in their daily practices to be inclusive

practitioners. Perhaps a more radical change in policy is needed deeper than the proposed one of simply renaming Statements as an “Education, Health and Care Plan” (DFE, 2011:3) and giving parents more involvement through the option of a “personal budget” (ibid). I am arguing that the core of making education truly inclusive depends immensely on teachers (not that parents and finance are less important) and that any policy reform should seriously address this issue. As the work of Miss Titch shows, the kinds of change necessary do not always involve huge changes in practices - simply a different way of doing things, a different way of seeing things. This is really important NOW if today's ‘Alexes’ are to be successfully included in mainstream schools (see 6.2). This chapter begins with a summary of the findings and analysis presented in Chapters Five to Seven. This is followed by a discussion of recommendations. The limitations of the research are highlighted, followed by the identification for possible further research and development. The chapter closes with a conclusion of this study.

## **8.2. Summary of the findings**

The effectiveness of a Statement within Frosties School was a matter of perception. It was either perceived as an entitlement, or as a measure of difference. Those who perceived it as an entitlement like Miss Titch were able to do so because they had experienced disempowerment in their own lives and wanted to make a positive difference in any way they could. As a result, where the Statement was used successfully to include the child, it was because the teacher transgressed (see Chapter Three) and the teacher transgressed because she cared. This study is not advocating that experiencing disempowerment is a prerequisite for inclusion to work. It advocates for teachers to have moral purpose (Fullan, 1999) and for the

educational environment to support that moral purpose instead of teacher resorting to transgression. In Miss Titch's view effective inclusion (and good teaching) was a direct consequence of her transgression. Without transgressing, she believed she would not have been able to understand the whole child as hooks (1994 & 2003) advocates. Her pedagogy was shaped by what she considered to be important and this shaped her views about Statements, her beliefs about inclusion, the expectations she had for Alex and the way she taught him.

Where Alex was included effectively, the ethos was that of a classroom community where everyone was valued for who they were and Alex participated as an equal member of the class. However, Alex had not always been included. In Year One, he existed at the margins of the class. What factors determined whether or not Alex was included? A discussion of these follows under the three research questions.

### **8.2.1 What do Teachers understand Statements to be?**

The Statement meant different things to different members of staff depending on their professional viewpoint, their personal experiences, histories and values. Nevertheless, there was agreement amongst staff that the Statement was 'a good thing' because it made resources available.

One group of staff perceived Statements as an entitlement and used it to ensure that the child participated effectively as a member of the class and the school community. This group consisted of the LSAs, the Headteacher, the Deputy Head and Miss Titch. They felt very strongly that children who had Statements should be educated amongst their peers without being made to feel different. Factors influencing such positive attitudes towards the children who had Statements were:



- Where the teacher had personal experience of special educational needs either in her own education or relating to someone close to her so she was able to empathise.
- The teacher's determination to create a classroom community where everyone was valued.
- The teacher's confidence as a practitioner in making her own policies in her class instead of just following professional advice.
- The teacher's ability to go that one step further despite possibly putting her job at risk by contravening school policy or crossing the boundaries generally recognised as the 'norm'.
- The teacher being able to communicate well and develop a positive working partnership with her support staff to enable all the children in the class to achieve.

On the other hand the perception of a Statement as a measure of difference in the way it was spoken about (see Chapter Five) and implemented (see Chapters Six and Seven) showed lack of confidence and/or an unwillingness to use the resources to include the child, and thus presented the Statement as problematic. Where this happened, the consequence was that:

- Alex was physically in the classroom but did not interact with the peer group.
- His provision was different to his peers.
- His teacher did not really get to understand his needs well and therefore found him difficult to accommodate during her lessons.

- Alex was allowed to be the initiator of his lessons – he often chose which activity he did, and this often did not move his learning on.
- Alex was in fact being taught by the LSA whilst the teacher taught the rest of the class. The teacher did not plan his lessons. Alex received much less teacher contact time than other children in the class.

Despite the above perceptions staff expressed a view that the concept of inclusion is a good thing.

### **8.2.2 What do teachers believe about inclusion?**

There was consensus amongst staff that all children should be included in a mainstream school as far as possible. There was a positive correlation between their views of Statements and their beliefs about inclusion. For example staff who perceived the Statement as an entitlement did not only feel strongly that inclusion was a good thing, but went beyond the rhetoric to ensure that their practice was inclusive. Members of staff who had experienced disempowerment either directly or indirectly were also those who felt very strongly about implementing inclusion effectively. Miss Titch interrogated and interpreted the Statement text to match her beliefs, for example the recommendation in the Statement that Alex should have a quiet corner in the class where he could study to reduce distraction was not followed to the letter. He had a quiet desk he could choose to go to when he needed to. The difference was, in Year One he was made to go to his 'corner', but in Year Two he chose when used his corner himself. Miss Titch's actions were sometimes risky (see Chapters Six and Seven) but she took them to make her practice more inclusive and because she cared. She cared because she was able to empathise with Alex and did

not want him to go through what she had experienced at school, which she described simply as “terrible” (Interview, class teacher: Miss Titch).

Miss Titch’s attitude to working with children who had a Statement was:

the child needs to feel that they are worthy (Interview; Class teacher: Miss Titch).

Miss Titch felt strongly that making the child feel worthy was her responsibility and she was able to make him feel worthy by doing what was over and above what was asked of her. What came out really powerfully was that her policies favoured enjoyment, classroom community and inclusion as advocated by hooks (2003 & 1994), elements which have been neglected in the other classes due to the pressures of the standards (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000). Miss Titch represents all those hardworking teachers who sacrifice their own time and do whatever it takes to ensure all children receive good quality education and make the implementation of Statements achievable. The voices of teachers like Miss Titch need to be represented and listened to in the policy arena, especially the Government consultation – ‘a new approach to special educational needs and disability’ (DFEa 2011).

Befriending Alex’s family according to the Frosties School Child Protection Policy-staff code of conduct could have been interpreted as ‘grooming’. However, the intention was solely to benefit Alex’s education. Miss Titch reported that the outcome of this was not just gaining a better understanding of the child, but also enabling the child to trust her and be relaxed enough to want to take risks as a learner. There was also trust on the parents’ part as they never reported or mentioned to the school’s authorities that such links were taking place. As someone who worked within the

remits of the same policies as Miss Titch, I believe her meetings with parents could have been overt because both the SEN Code of Practice (DFES, 2001) and the School's own SEN Policy advocated parental involvement. Nevertheless, the complexity of her interpretation was based on trust. She explained why she visited Alex's home:

His mum was able to relate to me I think in a way that she would not have done in a school atmosphere. I think the whole idea of authority presents some sort of boundary which she sometimes cannot relate to. But I think she relates to me because as a person she thinks I understand- coming from the same background. (Interview: Teacher, Miss Titch).

Another way Miss Titch transgressed was by submitting 'fake' plans (i.e. what SMT expected to see) and by abandoning the 'prescribed' curriculum for a curriculum which encouraged social communication and created a classroom community (see Chapter Six). The prescribed diet of Literacy hour and Numeracy hour was abandoned for circle times, games/role play, sewing, dance and board games. The children had brought in a lot of things from home, which they used to create a variety of things, for example in one lesson Alex was observed making a teddy bear which was a cross-curricular Science/Literacy lesson on labeling and identifying parts of the body. There was a visual timetable used for everyone in the class, as well as individualised task sheets with inbuilt rewards and modelling. Miss Titch put the child's needs over her own and some teachers might use all the extra time and effort she put in as evidence for why Alex should not be in a mainstream school. Miss Titch worked long hours, during her break and in her own time. She also made extra resources to ensure that Alex's difficulties with learning were no more conspicuous than the next child's. Her actions as a teacher transformed Alex's status as a learner from 'negatively different' in Year One to one of dignity and being valued in Year Two. Miss Titch had a moral purpose (Fullan, 1999) and her values as a teacher

were not just to get children to achieve the desired grade, but to teach children to respect and support each other.

Of course achieving high standards is important (DFEa, 2012), but the constant measuring and competition (Gillborn and Youdell, 2000; Lunt and Norwich, 1999) this brings with it puts enormous pressure on teachers. This causes them to sometimes disregard those elements that can in fact actually sustain standards for example the creation of a strong classroom community. Instead they focus often solely on the outcome, at the expense of children like Alex. Miss Titch believed children could achieve more if they had a classroom community. I am not recommending that teachers take risks and work all hours, rather I am advocating a change of material practice which is strongly supported by a change in policy especially the relationship between inclusion and the standards agenda.

The dominance of the standards agenda is still prominent as “improving outcomes through session by session outcome monitoring” (DFE, 2012:45). Also where there is underperformance, “schools will be converted into...Academies and partnered with a strong sponsor” (DFE, 2012:48). This level of scrutiny where “schools...will be more clearly accountable to...Ofsted” (DFE, 2012:38) weakened the framework within which Statements operated in Frosties as evident in Miss Sugar’s class. Miss Sugar, Mr. Broom and Miss Grange all perceived the Statement to be problematic, as in their view; children who had Statements demanded a lot of their time. They came up with reasons why they could not give their time: “there are 29 other children” (Interview, Class teacher: Miss Grange); “I cannot spend that amount of time with a child who has so much needs, but to be honest will not make the grade to count”

(Interview, Class teacher: Miss Sugar). Within Frosties, pupils like Alex were often isolated in their learning and marginalised. Being isolated made Alex's difference very obvious (in Year One). His participation was limited (carpet time for about ten minutes), and he was physically "separated from the others" in his 'chair' (Foucault, 1977:182).

Teachers acknowledged (see Chapter Five) that even though they had received training at university and during INSETs, they did not find this adequate to deal with the issues involved in teaching a child who had a Statement. In the current policy proposal the Government acknowledges that, "teachers...do not always feel equipped to recognise and meet the needs of disabled pupils and those with SEN" (DFE, 2012:38). As a result the Government is "committed to developing more training opportunities for teachers" (DFE, 2012:41). There was agreement that training had to be specific, however, both the Deputy Head and the Headteacher argued that training was not usually the issue as they had some members of staff who had received training but were not implementing it. The issue here seems to be teachers having the personal will to want to change their practice to be more inclusive. I have argued in Chapters Five to Seven that the quality of the school experience that children with a Statement receives can depend on the teacher's personal attitude, history and beliefs. Hence, the Government's "anti stigma and discrimination campaign" (DFE, 2012:46) could be considered a missed opportunity for schools. The Government has pledged "up to £16 million over the next 4 years" focussing on changing "attitudes on behaviour towards people with mental health problems" (ibid). This campaign should also have extended to special educational needs and schools for until attitudes change, no amount of policy or legislation will make a significant difference.

The evidence in Chapters Five to Seven shows that within the classrooms, policy to include was in reality down to the teachers. Alex faced isolation and exclusion in Year One because he was perceived as “deviant” (Oliver, 1998:52) in a negative way. Perceiving the child as negatively different had an impact on teaching style and expectations in most of the classes at Frosties, as findings of the third research question (Chapter Seven) showed.

### **8.2.3 How does inclusion affect teaching style and expectation?**

Sometimes having the Statement automatically gave teachers the go-ahead to reduce expectations for a child, as Mr. Broom explained in section 7.4:

statements children...that's totally different (Interview: Class teacher- Mr. Broom)

This attitude could have been a result of the pressures on teachers to meet targets, so they prioritised and focused their efforts where they perceived there would be the best chance of achieving them (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). There are “apparent conflicts in Government policy between the ‘standards’ and ‘league tables’ discourse and the ‘inclusive schools’ discourse” (Evans & Lunt, 2002:1). The conflicts reinforce the power of the league table, of OFSTED scrutiny and competition between schools via Academies and Free Schools agendas (DFE, 2012). “The extent to which school...welcomes pupils as full members of the group and values them for the contributions they make” (Farrell & Ainscow, 2002:3) was a strong feature in Miss Titch’s class, but this was not the case in other classes. This was in direct contradiction of the Frosties School Inclusion Policy, which stated that its aim was:

to give every pupil the opportunity to experience success in learning and to achieve as high a standard as possible. (Frosties School Inclusion Policy)

There were no systems in place to check that school policy was consistent. Within the pecking order of the classroom, the child who had a Statement was often relegated to being taught by an unqualified member of staff (Chapters Five to Seven). The focus on the 'standards agenda' forced some teachers to prioritise the needs of the majority and to perceive children with special educational needs as being of a lesser priority (Vlachou, 1997). The Government proposal pledges "sharper accountability for all pupils' progress" (DFE, 2012:49) where "an indicator will be included in performance tables" (DFE, 2012:38) showing the performance of "the lowest attaining pupils" (ibid). Whilst any positive attention this group of pupils may receive is a good thing, the existence of league tables does nothing to solve the problems of teacher confidence and attitude, which are fundamental to achieving effective inclusion.

Even with a resolved Headteacher who was very pro-inclusion, it was difficult to monitor effectively whether children were receiving their entitlement. This was partly because as Steedman (1997) argued, classrooms are like prison houses with the teacher having the ultimate say. As Miss Titch disclosed, she was able to mislead SMT about her planning and as the Deputy Head reported in Chapter Five, sometimes class teachers left children without support if the LSA was not there. As policy stood, teachers who could demonstrate that the majority of the children in their class were making good progress (i.e. attaining age appropriate standards) could avoid negative attention even if they ignored the needs of children who had Statements (see Chapters Five to seven). What made the difference for children who have Statements was the extra effort put in by teachers like Miss Titch and support from their parents (Fowler, 2004; Wilkins, 2008). Therefore, the inclusion of children who had Statements at Frosties depended mostly on teacher goodwill, commitment,



hard work/extra effort and generosity (e.g. giving up their own time). Having discussed the findings, what recommendations come out of this study?

### **8.3 Recommendations**

Chapters Five to Seven discussed the factors that enabled the inclusion of children like Alex who have Statements in a mainstream school. However, the findings indicate that even though teachers were generally in favour of Statements and Inclusion, when it came to actually teaching the child, in most classes the teachers found it a serious challenge. Where the child was included, it was not solely due to the resources made available by the Statement, but to the teacher who made an extraordinary effort to include him. The issue is whether such extraordinary (and usually economically unrewarded and unacknowledged) effort is sustainable. The current coalition Government has completed a consultation on reforming special educational needs funding. To a large extent, this involves changing the funding mechanism. My argument is that, simply changing the funding mechanism is unlikely to make a substantial difference in itself. While a carefully thought-through and positive outcome will be welcomed for children who have Statements now, something more needs to be done to ensure they are educated in an inclusive environment. However, having the understanding of how and why some children are effectively included is not enough if, recommendations on how the situation can be improved for children like Alex who are placed in mainstream school is not offered. It is therefore necessary to develop academic and practical policy recommendations based on this study. These recommendations will focus on three aspects- policy and legislation, school practice and pedagogy and further research.

### 8.3.1 Policy and Legislation

The policy agenda to include all children is a good start as it recognises the right of all children to a mainstream education. However, to make sure that all children who have Statements and other children in vulnerable groups are enabled to participate effectively in school, there is a need for policy review and transformation in education as a whole. To begin with, having two contrasting policies (standards agenda and inclusion) concurrently shaping education has made the situation extremely complex. Teachers had various motives and made choices about whether or not they included children who had Statements. Judging from the reactions of Miss Grange, Mr. Broom and Miss Sugar, teacher accountability judged against the standards was a deciding factor and they chose league table position over the inclusion of children who had Statements. Even when teachers like Miss Titch included, in order to do so they had to transgress and this involved risk. Therefore, having policies that clearly work in opposition of one another does not work.

Whilst the need for a standards agenda is important, it can impact on teacher's behaviour towards children who have Statements. Children who have Statements are not perceived to promote the teacher's interest (Angelides *et al*, 2004) hence, most of the teachers in Frosties prioritised the needs of the majority who did promote their interests. The question is, if inclusion and standards are allowed to continue to co-exist, is it impossible to see the two united? For example when talking about Statements a member of staff said, it is:

difficult to move away from that and not view a child who is different from the norm...because they are different from the norm (Interview: Deputy Head).

In Chapters Six and Seven, Miss Titch demonstrated that teachers can move away from that perception of viewing children with Statements as 'negatively different', that the resources provided for Statements can be used effectively to ensure the child is given the same opportunities as the other children in the class. She assumed a covert approach (e.g. fake plans, liaising very closely with parents). Yet her practice was a good model which is now being validated by the new policy proposal which advocates:

A strong focus on those areas of learning most essential for children's healthy development and future learning (communication and language, social and emotional development and physical development (DFE, 2012:14).

Sharing such good models is something that schools need to promote so that instead of being covert, teachers like Miss Titch can feel confident enough to share what they do. The new proposal supports this view when it expresses:

A need to support school leaders to showcase and share the best practice in their classrooms and schools (DFE, 2012:38).

This will help schools to "build capacity and share knowledge amongst school" (DFE, 2012:39). Even the one issue which caused Miss Titch the most disquiet (visiting Alex's family at home) if dealt with properly through policy and transparency could greatly benefit the child. The new policy proposal also supports "a genuine partnership with parents and carers" (DFE, 2012:10). I believe that every teacher needs time to get to know the children in their class well, not only via the data handed to them by the previous year's teacher, but by creating social/learning opportunities within their class which enable the children to access learning well, such as those provided by Miss Titch. This is something which I have taken with me to my new school, and teachers and children have embraced it.

To be able to do this, teachers need to possess a certain degree of confidence and self-belief otherwise the extra resources that come with Statements might further exclude the child and perpetuate exclusion as seen in Alex's experience in Year One. The gap between the rhetoric and practice was very visible in Year One. There is a need for the Government to find other ways of resourcing education for all children ensuring that no child is allowed to be marginalised (Angelides *et al*, 2004).

Thomas argues that a review of SEN should:

Start with expectations for a non-segregated system ... perhaps looking to impose national differentiated banding wherein certain kinds of difficulty are grouped. This would enable children with equivalent difficulties in special and mainstream schools to be funded equally and thereby enable real progress to education that is not only inclusive but fair - to children, their parents and their teachers. (Thomas, 2005: para.11).

In formulating such a policy, the voices of teachers like Miss Titch, Miss Grange and Miss Sugar should be represented so that the outcome would be realistic and workable. Achieving a workable education funding policy should also include the voices of pupils and parent representatives, as well as other stakeholders such as school professionals and other supporting professionals. The issues of market forces created by the quasi-market (Evans, 2002) educational environment in which schools like Frosties operate need to be addressed. The argument should not be whether inclusion or standards takes precedence over each other, but rather how they can be reconciled and become mutually supportive. In Miss Titch's class, inclusion was used as a basis for standards and that worked hence, my advocacy for listening to voices like Miss Titch's. Beyond the classroom, there should also be an engagement with the issue of whether or not special schools should co-exist with mainstream schools in an era where inclusion is the norm. Whilst this argument is not strictly within the scope of this research (and itself deserves the attention of an entire thesis), this is still worth mentioning since it impacts on the model of provision

that children with Statements may or may not receive. As the Headteacher argued in Chapters Five and Six, for a very small number of children there might still be a need for specific provision to meet their specialist needs. Norwich (2000) argued that a special curriculum is not the answer. However, sometimes parents demand specialist provision (Shepherd, 2009) and in a society where there is argument for choice, it would not be right to deny someone that choice. I believe that these specialist provisions would best be organised in the form of a resource base forming part of a mainstream school. New proposal (DFE, 2012) is in favour of "Alternative Provision (AP)" (DFE, 2012:45) which relies on the "effective assessment and identification of children's needs" (ibid). It proposes that children should attend a mainstream school but able to readily access specialist resources on site. Such resource centres should also provide outreach services for children with high need/low incidence needs, such as those requiring medical support. However, the existence of special schools should not give teachers the choice of opting out without trying to work inclusively, so there needs to be a rethink about the role of special schools in general. For example:

Newham LEA, which has actively pursued a policy of inclusion in education for 21 years, placed 0.06% of its 0-19 year olds with statements in special schools and other segregated settings, while South Tyneside placed 1.46% (Rustemier and Mark Vaughan, 2010: para.6)

As well as the role of special schools, the SEN Code of Practice is also being reviewed (DFE, 2012). What I have taken from this study and used in my current practice is the importance of quality first teaching. In particular I have worked with my current Inclusion Manager to develop our classrooms as communication friendly environments using the support and input of the speech and language therapist. So the school's speech and language therapist is not perceived as coming to work with children with SEN or Statements, but rather works with all the staff across the school

to positively support all children by raising the language awareness of adults used in all aspects of their practice.

As a result, delegated SEN funding is used in this way instead of buying in LSAs. We have trained teachers and TAs working in this way and the whole school is benefitting (Corbett, 2001). We have four children diagnosed with autism in our school, none has a Statement yet they are included in a similar manner as Alex was included in his Year Two class. It is impressed upon all staff that children with SEN are not the responsibility of the TA only, and that the teacher is responsible for *all* the children in his/her class. We have regular discussions and support systems for teachers such as pupil progress meetings, peer coaching, teachers working closely with speech and language therapist as well as SENCO and teachers feel supported. I believe that policy change needs to begin with schools. The Government acknowledges that:

With the right support and engagement from a school leadership, pupils with SEN can achieve good outcomes (DFE, 2012:40).

The policy of judging all children by the same standards regardless of their individual needs has to be reviewed. The concept of critical pedagogy, which some like hooks (1994 & 2003) advocates, should inform the curriculum so that classrooms become communities that support everyone to achieve instead of categorising children according to differing levels of academic ability. Consistency and clarity are important in this debate hence the need for a thorough and critical examination and review of the current education funding policy. The policy of Statementing (EHCP in the current proposal) as it stands is a bad policy because it positions some children as 'negatively different'.

The evidence (Chapters Six and Seven) shows that it was not the resource that was problematic (as Miss Titch was able to put it to effective use) but the perception and beliefs teachers had about Statements and the children who had them.

School policy could have encouraged staff to be less reliant on Statements and the use of LSA. This was something the SENCO could have influenced, as it was part of their responsibility to make the referrals from within the school. Already, Frosties had started discouraging the reliance on one-to-one support in the way LSAs worked. The model adopted at Frosties had started to change favouring the one advocated by Corbett (2001) where the LSA works with a whole class and not just one child or a specific group. In Year Two Miss Titch used teamwork effectively as one of the strategies to include Alex. Through the work of the SENCO/Inclusion Manager all teachers were being supported to work very closely with their LSAs, planning together and preparing resources together. Miss Shelley had been given the responsibility of inducting new LSAs and supporting existing LSAs so that good practice was shared within the school. However, until such a time when the Government funding for children's additional needs is not done through Statements (or its proposed equivalent- Education, Health and care Plan (DFE, 2011)), the school needs to have very clear expectations when making referrals of how the Statement will make the pupil's educational experience more inclusive. A Statement needs to be seen as an entitlement for the child, not simply as a means of schools accessing more resources as expressed in Chapter Five.

Cole argues that society should think carefully about “placing vulnerable children in inappropriate educational contexts” (Cole, 2005:342). Frosties Headteacher could argue that in her context, taking the actions she took (e.g. sacking members of staff for ‘not being inclusive’) was the same as facing the challenges of inclusion. What does placing “pupils in inappropriate educational contexts” (ibid) mean? These may be classroom practices that construct pupil identities as negatively different (Foucault,1976; Oliver, 1998; Benjamin, 2002 & 2002A; Barton,1997 & 2003; and Cole, 2005) and staff who do not commit themselves to “‘good faith and effort’ in the cause of equity and social justice” (Cole, 2005:342). The above is indicative of the barriers to learning that children like Alex may be experiencing in some mainstream classrooms. This study views inclusion as “rooted in ‘...dialogue, collaboration, support, the building of cultures, sharing of deeply held values and the attempt to put such values into practice” (Samson and Grime, 2006:49). Alex thrived in Year Two because Miss Titch’s pedagogy embraced the feelings of belonging, which “appears to be necessary both for successful learning and for more general well-being” (Warnock, 2005:14).

An assumption that if a child has a Statement, their learning situation would be ‘stagnant’ and progress should not be expected, a view criticised by Benjamin (2002 & 2002a) was criticised by Miss Shelley when she said they “just think that’s the child, that’s the way they should be and keep them that way”, (Interview; LSA: Shelley). The question is, if children were not ‘labelled’ as having ‘Statements’ would they have been treated differently? Miss Danii thought so when she protested that teachers:



just leave it to the LSAs and specialist teachers to take care of the child. Whereas, if these children were not statemented the teacher would have had to cater for their needs. (Interview, LSA: Danii).

Policy (both Government and school) should seriously address creative ways of funding and using funding to support teachers so that both the child and the teacher are not disadvantaged.

### **8.3.2 School Practice and Pedagogy**

What can be done to transform practices in Frosties and indeed any school to become consistently inclusive?

#### **The role of the SENCO/Inclusion Manager**

The core purpose of a SENCO as identified in TTA (1998) is to provide guidance in the area of SEN in order to secure high quality teaching and keep the head informed as well as taking a lead on developing inclusive practice in the school (DFEE, 1997).

How can the SENCO begin to deconstruct such a negative experience as the one Alex had in Year One so that he does not have a similar experience in Year Three?

Within the role of a SENCO, there are ways that this can be achieved. The DFEE (1997) and Davies *et al* (1998) advocate that through the range of inclusion programmes within schools:

SENCOs will also be expected to reduce the level of statementing and exclusion of pupils currently in mainstream settings (Davies *et al*, 1998:17).

Expecting SENCOs on the one hand to reduce the level of Statementing while at the same time making Statements the 'ultimate' step in the SEN profiling system which is available to pupils who are entitled to 'it' is contradictory, especially as teachers (as seen in Chapter Five) and many parents (Warnock, 2005) demand these resources. Reducing the number of Statements puts SENCOs at odds with both

parents, the Headteacher and teachers, but there are ways that a SENCO can reduce Statements and a discussion of this follows.

### **Pedagogical change**

Some researchers (e.g. Davies *et al*, 1998; Corbett, 2001; Cowne, 2003; Samson and Grimes, 2006) argue that the pedagogy needs to change. That by influencing the pedagogy, the SENCO/Inclusion Manager can make a difference in the removal of barriers to learning (Cowne, 2003); by providing support for teachers right from the planning phase, encouraging teachers to become critical of the barriers to learning and to anticipate and remove any such barriers before the lesson begins. The SENCO/Inclusion Manager should support teachers to think of what changes they can make that will make their lessons more accessible and increase pupil participation and in what ways their teaching might develop the children's confidence as learners. There were policies in place at Frosties to support teachers to interpret and implement policies without taking risks like Miss Titch did. There was the inclusion, SEN, Child Protection, to give teachers guidance that teachers operated within the school's policies. At Frosties, the SENCO/Inclusion Manager had already done a lot of work with Miss Titch and Miss Shelley (prior to Alex going to Year Two). Miss Titch had to think about Alex's needs at the planning phase, ensuring that during teaching and learning everyone was on an equal footing. She anticipated barriers to learning before the teaching started. For example, during a lesson on categorisation, Alex could not draw, so she prepared the pictures for him beforehand so that the task focused on his ability to categorise not his ability to draw whereas the other children who were able to, drew their own pictures. In fact pedagogical change has been linked to making curriculum more accessible and

effective (Clarke et al, 1997; Davies et al, 1998, Corbett, 2001; Cowne, 2003) and this is a key area in which SENCOs can and should support teachers. As well as pedagogical change, there are other ways that the SENCO/Inclusion Manager can facilitate inclusion of pupils who have different learning needs and helping to change attitudes is one of them.

### **Changing attitudes and perceptions**

The model of in-class support that was successful at Frosties was the one which the teacher and LSA planned together and sometimes swapping roles during a teaching session as seen in Miss Titch's class. The rationale behind this was firstly the teacher took responsibility for all the children in the class, and all of the children received quality first teaching as advocated by the IDP (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2009). This gave the teacher:

an opportunity to observe faulty strategies used by the pupils and to understand better how to intervene...[and it gives] teachers greater insight into how to use support staff effectively (Cowne, 2003:95).

In order for this to happen there needed to be liaison time between the class teacher and the LSA to ensure effective communication about what was to be taught. This is one of the ways the designated funds for SEN could be used across the school; employing LSAs to have time to communicate with the class teacher outside of the timetabled school day. Since this was not the case at Frosties, Miss Titch did a lot in her own time to enable effective communication (see section 7.3.3).

Communication and teamwork was also very important in Miss Dunstans' class:

...so everybody understood the needs of that child and it wasn't something that was kept secret to the LSA alone or to myself, but it was basically the child had to know that they are part of the full class. (Interview: Class teacher- Miss Dunstans).

Where communication and teamwork was effective, “having a Statement makes no difference” between the child with Statement and the experience of his classmates (Interview: Class teacher- Miss Titch). In both Miss Dunstans’s and Miss Titch’s classes, differences were positively embraced and the children were brought on board as well. Miss Dunstans read a story to her class about a girl who had autism and she explained how that helped:

They understood that it was something different without labelling him as he shouldn’t be there, he should be in a special school or whatever. I think it’s working as a team and it’s working with the children as well. (Interview: Class teacher- Miss Dunstans).

This way of working with children is something which was positive at Frosties and one which needed to be explored and shared as good practice. It was used well in some classes, even Miss Grange explained that as a result of involving the children, the other children:

Talk about him like he’s not naughty, it’s just - is he still safe? (Interview: Class teacher- Miss Grange).

The above shows that perhaps with some support and encouragement she might eventually gained confidence as a professional and this is where the SENCO’s role can be crucial in turning attitudes around, because not all staff believed that they could teach children who had Statements (Cole, 2004) as seen in Chapters Five to Seven. Where is the starting point in this effort to change attitudes and develop self efficacy in the staff who needed to change? The original Code of Practice (DFES, 1994) the revised Code of Practice (DFES, 2001) and the Frosties School Inclusion Policy all emphasise the role of *all* teachers as teachers of special educational needs. Already at Frosties practice had gone back to basics, linking planning to meeting the diverse needs of learners and setting suitable learning challenges as stated in the National Curriculum revised documents (QCA/DFEE, 1999) by. For:

Whether or not teachers personally and wholeheartedly embrace the philosophy of inclusion, recent legislation makes it clear they have no option but to engage in the development of inclusive practice. There are statutory duties placed on schools and they are accountable through inspections...schools will also be graded by ofsted on their inclusive practice and this information will be included in the school league table in England (Samson and Grimes, 2006:42)

Instead of perceiving inclusion as being exactly the same for everyone the SENCO/Inclusion Manager should work very closely with subject coordinators, transforming thinking from:

special educational needs teaching is just good teaching' (Soan, 2006:1)

to:

'good classroom /subject teaching enables all student to participate in and engage with the curriculum (ibid).

In order to create a truly inclusive environment, this calls for radical new ways of working some of which are already being used in schools and some which might be new to an educational setting.

### **New ways of working**

The following needed to be done at Frosties to ensure that both teachers and children are supported effectively to make the school inclusive.

Audits of strengths and needs of both staff and children identifies areas of strengths and weaknesses and assist with establishing the support needs of both children and staff. Matching available resources to areas of need can be done through provision mapping (Cheminais, 2010; Gross, 2008). Meetings can be arranged with individual teachers to 'audit' the level of additional learning needs in their classrooms, and to assess what the teachers' strengths are. Meetings with children through circle time/school council can identify areas where children can support or

need support. Through these discussions, resources can be allocated to groups or individuals to match their levels of 'needs' or offering support.

There had been a culture in Frosties where Statements were synonymous with the phrase 'one-to-one' ('Velcro effect') and that was literally what it was. Under new management, that practice was being abandoned. In Miss Titch's class the assigning of an LSA to the class was more effective than assigning one to an individual child, as seen in Miss Sugar's class. Several studies (Corbett, 2001; Lacey, 2001; Tennant, 2001; Balshaw, 1992 & 1999) have advocated the former model. The LSA should work with the class teacher to facilitate participation of all the children and reduce the 'Velcro effect'. This message needs to be clearly communicated to the parents as well, explaining the benefits of peer support, increased participation and confidence, sense of belonging, better relations with all adults and increased progress as seen in Alex's case. Every adult in a class can work with any child in the class. Some teachers and parents may find this hard to come to terms with but persistence and consistency in this approach will yield positive outcomes.

As effective communication between teachers and support staff was an issue at Frosties due to lack of time, one of my recommendations is for all the LSAs to work full-time (start at 8.30 am and finish at 4.00pm). This would give class teachers and LSAs time to communicate and plan together. The LSAs had particularly identified lack of joint planning as an issue. For example:

I will give him my opinion...but still he still goes according to his plan regardless of what I say. (Interview, LSA: Danii).

This lack of communication at grassroots level was not addressed by previous SMT and it was the children who suffered as the Deputy Head explained:

I have seen the child left alone especially when the LSA is not there during an absence for a course or something like that. There is the danger that the child has no adult contact all because they just go to their chair or they are deemed not to be part of the class (Interview: Deputy Head).

Being full-time meant that the LSAs would have time before and after school to plan with the class teachers, resulting in better communication and information sharing. Both the teacher and LSA would attend review meetings and contribute to IEP targets, which they would jointly implement. Additional time for class teachers and LSAs together would enable staff to attend workshops run by SENCO/Inclusion Manager on topics such as differentiation, running review meetings, writing IEPs, implementing IEP targets in the classroom, and liaising with parents.

The school needs to have policies and systems in place to support inclusion for all and someone to ensure that it happens. Such policies should take into account the views of all stakeholders from the school community including teachers, children and parents. Inclusion needs to be given high profile and the SENCO/Inclusion manager should be a member of the SMT and to play a significant role to drive inclusion. In the new policy proposal consultation (A New approach to SEN and Disability) 25% of respondents “believed that including SENCOs within each school’s senior leadership team would help to build specialist skills with school management” (DFE, 2012:40). For example, supporting teachers during planning, becoming very involved in monitoring teachers’ weekly plans to ensure that the needs of all children are catered for. Things changed because the current Headteacher who although had a different perception of the efficacy of Statements (management perspective) was able to

empathise and wanted the best for all children in the school. It is unclear what form support without Statement might take, but what is certain from this study is that teachers' perception of Statements can impact on a child's provision. Teachers' beliefs about inclusion did not often translate in the classroom situation to positive action, instead of Statements facilitating inclusion for a child, the resources that it made available sometimes in fact resulted in the exclusion of the child. Some teachers felt they lacked the competence and knowledge needed to be able to include all pupils. However, where teachers had themselves experienced being 'disempowered' they often had a strong sense of 'moral purpose' (Fullan, 1999), were able to empathise and often included effectively as a matter of 'good faith' (Cole, 2005).

With the newly elected coalition Government in power and a leader who has experienced special educational needs first hand (through his son who unfortunately died) (Cameron, 2010; Wilkins, 2008) it is interesting times for the future of Statements and SEN provision in general. The new proposal (DFE, 2012) promises "a better deal for children, young people and families" (DFE, 2012:5). At the same time, the proposal promotes policies that may prove to be problematic for the education of children who have Statements (or EHCP) for example Academies and Free Schools (DFE, 2012: Chapter 3) whose focus is clearly and unashamedly on standards and attainment. The jury is still out on this proposal especially as the "20 Local Authority Pathfinders" (DFES, 2012:20) trialling various proposals of the Green Paper are still yet to report on their progress.



## 8.4 Limitations of the research

This research is not exhaustive. Including children who have Statements effectively in a mainstream school is complex (Benjamin, 2002), presents challenges and requires all in the school community to subscribe to such a vision. There are still issues related to the inclusion/exclusion of children who have Statements that have not been addressed in this study. Without taking these issues into consideration, an understanding of the education of children who have Statements in mainstream schools will be limited. One of these issues is that of the opinions of parents and pupils who have statements. I believe the views of parents and the pupils are crucial as they need to give their perspective of how they feel. However, their voice is not explored in much detail in this study since the focus here is on teachers. Other researchers (e.g. Booth and Booth, 1996) have researched the silent voice of pupils who are not able to articulate.

With regards to the sample of the study, although many children in inner city multi-cultural state schools who have Statements may have experiences similar to those described in this study, there are also findings that are likely to be different from these (Alderson & Goodey, 1998; Norwich, B 1997). Schools located in rural areas or affluent areas with different socio-economic status and high parental aspirations or more homogeneous communities with different issues facing the school, may have a different experience. Furthermore, this research is very context related - this was a single case study research involving just one primary school and although the study was in-depth it involved only one focus child. Therefore the findings might be different from the way in which other settings (e.g. secondary schools) might implement Statements.

As this research was insider research, it raised some issues for me as a researcher and also for the research participants (see Chapter Four). As a researcher, I experienced serious ethical dilemmas about what to do in various situations. When I observed Alex being excluded in Chapter Six, I could not do anything for fear of adulterating my data, as well as keeping my promise of confidentiality to the research participants. I had a duty to the class teacher to keep my promise of confidentiality, yet I also felt very strongly that I owed it to Alex (as the Inclusion Manager) to ensure that he had a good educational experience. During observations, I sometimes felt powerless and voiceless, and furthermore some of the staff seemed to find it difficult to separate my roles as researcher and Inclusion Manager. This worried me as I showed in my diary notes in Chapters Four to Seven since I often doubted whether I was seeing the real picture or one made up for me. Experiencing voicelessness was important to my practice as it gave me a greater understanding coming from in-depth study of one case. However, the issue of observing what I regarded as a child being excluded from lessons in Year One (see Chapter Six) and not being able to do anything about it was ethically difficult for me. I questioned and still question my role as a researcher during school time.

One of the biggest difficulties I experienced during this study was that of changing my perspective during the research. My initial perspective was that Statements were necessary to enable inclusion but through my research into this area I changed that view and began to perceive Statements as in some situations actively causing exclusion rather than inclusion, and that Statements only work if a teacher transgresses. Transgression which leads to effective inclusion like Miss Titch's

creates a catch-22 situation as it presents Statementing as being effective. As I explained in Chapter One, this was a very difficult issue for me which means that some of the issues are still unresolved for example the use of language such as that used by Miss Sugar and Miss Grange in Chapter Five (e.g. “discovered what the child’s problem is” (Interview, Class Teacher: MissSugar) “diagnose really what’s going on with him neurologically” (Interview, Class Teacher: Miss Grange)). However, having the understanding of how and why this happens is not enough if, recommendations on how the situation can be improved for children like Alex is not offered. It is therefore necessary to develop academic and practical policy recommendations based on this study. However, as teachers we want to make a difference for children now. Ginnott captured this issue when he wrote “how can I survive until the system changes?...What can I do to improve life in the classroom?” (Ginnott, 1972:34). I do not believe teachers can sit back and wait for policy to change. Teachers need to be supported to make Statements work for children now, providing effective intervention especially in the early years which can impact on the rest of the child’s life.

## **8.5 Further Research**

For a more comprehensive understanding of issues of including (or not including) children who have Statements in mainstream school, a recommendation of further research needs to be carried out. The following are some suggestions, which are based on the findings and limitations of this study.

## **Perception of children who have statements and their parents**

To ensure that the provision for children who have Statements in mainstream school is in accordance with the children's needs, it is important to research how children who have Statements (especially those diagnosed to be autistic) perceive the way their education is provided within the current education system. This research reflects the voices of teachers because the onus was on teachers and whether or not they enable inclusion. Alex (the focus child in this study) had limited 'articulation' and his perception was reported generally through observation of his actions and reactions. I believe that research into how best to ascertain and represent the thoughts, wishes and perceptions of children who have Statements, and in particular those who have limited communication skills is necessary. The views of parents were absent from this study apart from when Miss Titch reported about how she worked in collaboration with Alex's mum. However, a complete picture of the inclusion of children who have Statements in mainstream schools cannot be complete without the views of parents and children. For example understanding why she decided to keep the way she worked with Miss Titch secret, how she came to trust (Wilkins, 2008) Miss Titch and how she might have felt about not having a similar relationship with Miss Sugar when Alex was in Year One. Therefore, further research into parental involvement in the education of children who have Statement in mainstream school is necessary.

## **Educational provision for children who have Statements in mainstream classrooms across the age ranges and sectors**

This research took place in one primary school in an inner city multicultural area. It does not describe or reflect the practices of secondary schools or nursery schools. Many of the issues discussed in this study may be relevant to other settings for example the curriculum, inclusion, and the pressures of the standards agenda but the way in which these setting respond to this may well be different. However, the literature review in Chapters Two and Three shows that the issues of Statements and inclusion relating to teaching does seem to be similar across England and Wales. However, the perceptions and views of staff in secondary schools and other settings may/may not be similar to those of staff in a primary school.

## **Teacher ‘transgression’, and sharing good practice without ‘getting into trouble’**

There are three aspects of teacher transgression that I believe need further research in order to improve knowledge and practices about including children who have Statements in mainstream schools. The first one is the level of teacher transgression. As discussed in Chapter Three, teachers who transgress are often aware of the risk transgression poses and as Miss Titch said in Chapters Six and Seven, her transgression actions were covert. As a result some further enquiry into the level of transgression amongst teachers from all education sectors (although difficult) and why they find the need to transgress will give further insight to who transgresses – and how and why they do it.

Secondly, I believe there should also be further research into how teachers who transgress effectively include and how they can share their good practice 'safely'. Is it possible to transgress (overtly) without getting into trouble? And if teachers are aware of this, does that mean they will be brave enough to do so?

Thirdly, I argued that when teachers transgress successfully, it creates a catch 22 situation where a 'bad' policy (i.e. Statementing) through teachers' hard work, initiative and sometimes 'rule breaking' is made to appear effective or 'good'. Further research is necessary into how a child can be given the best support while a 'dysfunctional' system is exposed for what it is. That is, how can transgression enable inclusion without giving Statements credibility?

### **Financing educational provision for all children including alternatives for Statements**

In Chapter Five the Headteacher and all the staff justified the existence of Statements because of the resources they made available. The Headteacher even argued that Statements were the only way of ensuring that children who had Statements were included. As evidence in this study (Chapters Five to Seven) the resources from Statements did not always guarantee inclusion yet most of the teachers argued that they needed Statements in order to successfully include. Getting the Statement was, therefore, seen as a way of securing resources for the school and by implication this was in the child's interest although as we have seen, this was not necessarily the case. The Statement meant that sometimes children like Alex were excluded (see Alex's experience in Miss Sugar's class). The cost of exclusion for children like Alex cannot be quantified. I am arguing here that the

Statement as it stands does not positively benefit the child or the teacher. I believe this to be the case for two reasons.

The first one is that teachers like Miss Titch who effectively included, did so because they had a moral purpose and felt it was the right thing to do, and not because the child had a Statement. Secondly where teachers perceived a Statement as an entitlement to include the child effectively, they were sometimes forced to transgress for a variety of reason including the pressures of the standards agenda. I am therefore recommending that since the motive for acquiring Statements at Frosties seemed to be the acquisition of additional resources, there needs to be further studies to establish whether this is representative of other sectors in education. Already studies (e.g. Pinney, 2003) argue this to be the case and the evidence in this study largely supports that view. The need for further studies into how Statements can be used to reduce this level of inequality for children who currently (or may in the future) have Statements is urgent. Research into Statements (or Education and Health Care Plans) with a view to a different way of financing education (and not just Statements) in a way that would benefit all children would be valuable. In this way teachers like Miss Titch would not be forced to transgress and children like Alex might not be excluded. The current coalition Government proposal of giving parents control of “personal budgets” (DFE, 2011:7; DFE, 2012:25) will not (in my opinion), address the issue of financing education in a way that is effective or fair. For although the Government pledges “securing a better deal for children” (DFE, 2012:5), “at the heart of the personal budget is a care plan” (DFE, 2012:33). It is still very unclear as to how this will work:

The PCT can hold the budget...and commission the things agreed in the plan or a third party can hold it...the individual or their carer is given the money to organize the things agreed in the plan (DFE, 2012:33).

Some pathfinders have found the personal budget problematic as it has been difficult to engage parents. Some parents feel they do not have the knowledge, skills or confidence to manage support for what can be a child's complex need. Other parents are very wary of going through an untried process and are therefore unwilling to volunteer to go through new procedures, which test "how to develop effective personal budgets for children across a wide range of services" (DFE, 2012:33). For children who have special educational needs but who do not have a Statement (or EHCP), the "new pupil premium enables schools to have additional resources to support the most disadvantaged pupils" (DFE, 2012:47). This seems promising as schools have been given "flexibility over their resources, removing ring-fences and specific grants so that schools can choose how to use their money" (ibid). At the same time the Government offers opportunities for schools to:

become Academies, starting with those rated as outstanding by Ofsted, and parents and members of local communities will be able to establish...Free Schools (DFE, 2012:38).

The focus of Academies is on attainment and they are often reluctant to include children who have Statements. For example Mossbourne Academy:

refused to admit an 11-year-old boy with cerebral palsy, arguing it would compromise other children's education (Harris and Vasagar, 2012).

Mossbourne Academy "claimed it was not governed by legislation for state schools but only by its funding agreement with the education secretary" (ibid). Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs have fewer legal rights to be admitted to an academy than they do to maintained schools. The problem with this is, whilst the Government spends on academies, there is less money available for other schools.



## 8.6. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the factors that enable the inclusion of children with Statements in mainstream schools. The factor I have found to be the most influential in their success or failure is the teacher. In the process of understanding why and how this manifested in a mainstream school, many issues emerged, especially at the stage of writing the literature review, fieldwork, analysing and writing up my findings from the fieldwork. The issues for me have been at times very complicated and contradictory. Unpicking the way a child who had a Statement in a mainstream school was being included/excluded has therefore not been easy for me as a researcher, especially having to carry out research in my place of work.

The conclusion of this study is that teachers do not often understand what a Statement means. As a result implementing a Statement effectively and endeavouring to include children who have Statements can be extremely difficult. Some teachers in the study for example Miss Grange (in Chapters Five and Six) saw their lack of training and understanding of SEN issues as a hindrance to inclusion. Lack of understanding was blamed on lack of familiarity with the English education system as some teachers were trained abroad. A teacher's level of understanding about Statements correlated with their beliefs about inclusion and with their pedagogical practice (Chapters Six and Seven).

Also, whether or not a Statement impacts positively or negatively on a child's provision was a matter of perception. The teacher who had an affective approach to including all pupils perceived Statements as an entitlement and treated it as such.

Where teachers had a cognitive approach they perceived a Statement as an indication that there was something wrong with the child, sometimes resulting in negatively differential treatment and lowered expectations for the child. The state of policy in the current educational environment where standards compete with inclusion (with standards generally taking precedence over inclusion) has created a difficult situation for children who have Statements. As teacher effectiveness is often judged by the academic attainment of the pupils they teach, most teachers feel the pressure of achieving a better league table position to be more pressing (Gilborn and Youdell, 2000) than that of including children with Statements (Lunt and Norwich, 1999). The standards agenda and inclusion do not align. Coupled with the continued existence of special schools and an ambiguous Special Educational Needs Code of Practice this gives teachers (who choose) the choice to opt out of including children who have Statements. Simply having a Statement (with all its legal status) does not guarantee inclusion in a mainstream school. Having a Statement can actually disadvantage a child since it can cause the child to be perceived as negatively different. When Statements do appear to work, it is often because the teacher cares and wants to make a difference in the child's education. From this study, teachers who care and want to make a difference do so because they are able to empathise with the child either because they had experience of disempowerment either personally or through the experience of a close member of their family. Where the teacher included effectively, it was partly because she transgressed various policies, for example the standards agenda by covertly teaching one thing and submitting plans for something else, ignoring guidelines on home visits and not implementing some of the recommendations in Alex's Statement. By transgressing, this teacher put herself (professional) in a difficult and vulnerable situation because although she

did all in their powers to ensure that Alex was included, by so doing she was perpetuating a 'bad' policy as well as put herself at risk. A system which depends on the goodwill of some people instead of structural change, is fragile and flawed and needs rethinking. The aim of this study was not to advocate for system or policy change, but the impact of changes proposed by the Conservative led coalition Government will remain to be seen.

The above conclusions strongly suggest that promoting inclusion in mainstream for children who have Statements needs a serious, thorough and urgent review. Changing teachers' perception is key to inclusion because at the end of the day, it is teachers who decide how policy is implemented in their classrooms. For this reason there needs to be a genuine dialogue with teachers if things are to change, taking on board voices like Miss Titch's and Miss Grange's. Bridging the gap between them in a way that works is important, as all stakeholders need to be heard. Most importantly, teacher's lack of confidence needs to be addressed for teachers support inclusion in theory but not in practice (see 6.2). Teacher training institutions can also play a part by ensuring that student teachers are equipped with a secure understanding of the issues and ideas about possible solutions. Teachers' mindsets need to change from one that sees barriers, to one that sees possibilities. However, for this to happen the educational system needs to support teachers by creating an environment which is favourable to inclusion. The need for policies on standards is self evident and I do not argue that these should be compromised, but these policies need to be considered within the context and realities of the wider issues in education today. A relaxed classroom like Miss Titch's makes learning more productive. The pressing need for achieving high standards above all else leaves

some teachers very reluctant (even fearful) to take their eye off the standards ball. Teachers like Miss Titch who would knowingly put their career at risk by transgressing because they care, are not so common. Policy transformation could be the way forward, with SENCOs/Inclusion Managers supporting individual teachers at the school level and making the case for inclusion within the strategic agenda of the school so that teachers do not feel that 'good' practice is transgressing.

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## Appendix One

### Semi-structure Interview Schedule

Respondent: Teacher school

1. Name:
2. Gender/ Race/ Nationality (optional):
3. School:
4. Class teacher of year group:
5. How long have you been a teacher?
6. Have you always taught in England?
7. Did you receive any training to teach children who have Statements?
8. Number of children in class:  
How many have Statements?  
How many are categorised as having SEN?

9. What do you understand Statements to be?
10. What are your views on Statements. What purpose do you think Statement serve?
11. How do you feel about having to teach children who have Statements?
12. What do you think about children who have Statements studying in mainstream schools?
13. What do you understand about inclusion? Do you think it is a good thing? Why/Why not? (prompts). How would you describe your role?
14. What would you say has been the impact on your teaching of having children who have Statements in your class. Tell me about expectations and the way you teach the children.
15. What are some specific difficulties involved in teaching children with different needs?
16. In what ways do you see government policies supporting teachers' work in this school?
17. Is there anything else that you want to add?

#### Semi-structure Interview Schedule

Respondent: Head teacher /Deputy Head

1. Name:
2. Gender:
3. School:
4. How long have you been a head teacher?
5. What are your views on Statements?
6. Who benefits from the Statement?
7. Would you refuse admission to a local child into your school?  
If yes, why?



8. Do you think the teachers in your school are qualified enough to teach children who have Statements? Please explain.
9. What are some specific difficulties involved in teaching children with different needs?
10. Do you think all children should attend their mainstream school?
11. What do you think about disabled children studying in mainstream schools?
12. What are your beliefs about inclusion?
13. In what ways do you see government policies supporting teachers' work in this school?
14. What do you think about the future of Statements within the current 'inclusive' ethos?
15. Is there anything else that you want to add that you haven't said?

#### Semi-structure Interview Schedule

Respondent : Learning Support Assistants (LSAs)

1. Name:
2. How long have you been in your position:
3. What is your educational background?
4. What are the main tasks of your organisation in relation to education for children with learning difficulties in general and disabled children in particular?
5. What is the support needed for these tasks?
6. To what extent is there adequate support for these tasks?
7. How do you view your role within the classroom?
8. How do you view the role of teachers in engaging children who have Statements?
9. Do you think children who have Statements are treated in the same way as children who do not have Statements?

9. What do you know about inclusion?
10. Can you think of any difficulties involved in implementing inclusion?
11. Is there anything else that you want to add that you haven't said?

## **Appendix Two**

### **Ground Rule for Observation**

- Class teacher is in charge at all times.
- Researcher can talk to children, support children, but only if it is alright with the teacher.
- If children/child approach researcher, teacher's approval could be a nod to indicate it is ok.
- Researcher does not give permission to children to leave the class.
- Researcher can make notes.
- Researcher can go around the class to observe.
- Researcher can speak to the class teacher or LSA/TA but should not disturb the flow of teaching/learning.
- Class teacher and TA will be shown the transcript of the observation to agree/ disagree/ clarify what is written.
- Whatever is observed within the classroom during the research is treated as confidential.

## Appendix Three

### Examples of SA1 Forms

#### Example 1

Request for Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs by a School

#### Pupil Details:

First name(s):	Surname:
Date of Birth:	National Curriculum Year:
School:	Unique Pupil Number:
Gender:	
Ethnicity:	Religion:
Pupil's Home Address:	
	Postcode:

#### Parent/Carer Details:

Title:	First Name:	Surname:	
Relationship to Child:			
Parent/Carer Address:			
Postcode:			
Parent/Carer Telephone:	Home	Work	Mobile
Home Language:	Translation Required		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Care Details:**

Looked After Child	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	If yes, Authority Holding Care Order:
Type of Care Order:		Care Order Start Date:	
Does the pupil live with parents	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the pupil live with foster carers	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does the pupil live in a children's home?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of Social Worker:		Contact Telephone:	
Social Worker Address:		Postcode:	
Any other care details which may be helpful:			

**Request Details:**

Name of person requesting Statutory Assessment:
Date request sent:
<b>Section 1: Pen Picture</b>
Please write a pen picture of the child. This will be a paragraph giving a general overview of how the child's needs present at school.
Please tick areas of SEN identified:
<input type="checkbox"/> Cognition and Learning
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication and Interaction
<input type="checkbox"/> Behavioural, Emotional and Social Development
<input type="checkbox"/> Sensory and/or Physical Needs
<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Condition (please specify)

**Section 2: Attainment levels**

**If the child is in Year One or above you must provide their current National Curriculum attainment**

levels or P levels in the core areas. You must also provide a history of their attainment levels for each year they have been at the school, for example if the child is in Year 4 you must provide their attainment levels for Year 1, 2 and 3.

Subject	Current Level	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year	Year
Reading								
Writing								
Mathematics								

**Section 3: Pupil's Views**

- Views attached       Pupil is unable or unwilling to give their views

**Section 4: Please specify below how the child meets the requirements of the SCAN (Significance of the Child's Achievements Now) criteria as set out in the Joint Criteria for Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs:**

**Section 5: Please specify below how you have met the requirements of AUDIT (Assessments Undertaken and Direct Intervention over Time) as set out in the Joint Criteria for Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs:**

**Section 6: Please specify the Provision Likely to be needed Additional to that Normally Available (PLAN) as set out in the Joint Criteria for Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs:**

**Please return this form together with evidence of appropriate interventions over time as specified in the guidance in order that the request may be considered by +++++**

**Summary of evidence you have included for the Preassessment Panel to consider**

- Current Education Plan
- Reviewed Education Plans demonstrating appropriate interventions over time

**Professional reports:**

Agency	Name	Role	Date of Report
Community Health Services			
Educational Psychology Service			
Children and Young People's Services			
Education Attendance Service			
Speech and Language Therapy Service			
Other (please specify)			

Headteacher Confirmation	
I confirm that the Statutory Assessment procedures have been fully discussed with this pupil's parent(s) and that they have had the opportunity to see the attached information supporting the request.	
Signed	
Date	

### Example 2

Information required whether or not to initiate a Statutory Assessment of a child under Section 323 of the Education Act 1996

Please complete **all** boxes, where not applicable please state the reason why. The checklist **must** be checked off and all **appropriate** reports attached. **Reports will not be considered if older than 18 months.**

Child's details:					
Name:		Date of birth:	___/___/___	Male	Female
First Language:		Additional language(s):		Year Group:	

Details of all those with parental responsibility:		
Name	Address	Contact details
Child's address if different from above:		
Child's Home LEA:		

Current setting	
Name of setting / school:	
Address of setting / school:	
Telephone No(s):	
e-mail address:	
Date child joined the setting/school:	
Attendance over the past year (in %):	
Additional information regarding attendance:	Please indicate the child's SEN below using the areas of need described in the SEN Code of Practice (2001):
	Cognition and Learning
	Communication and Interaction
	Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development

				<b>Sensory and Physical</b>			
<b>Would the parent/carer require assistance in attending appointments?</b>				<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	

<b>Your details:</b>	
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position:</b>
<b>Address:</b>	
<b>Telephone:</b>	
<b>Signed:</b>	<b>Date</b>

<b>Details of involvement of external agencies</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Contact details</b>





# SCHOOL ACTION

Please complete all sections of this form, in accordance with the guidance contained in the SEN Code of Practice 2001 and describe clearly steps taken at School Action and School Action Plus.

**Date Placed on School Action:** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Describe the child, including strengths, interests and talents.**

<b>Describe initial identification and assessment of the child's special educational needs. Include evidence and information of curriculum and personal levels of achievement.</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b> 

<b>Describe the planned and implemented provision that has taken place, including any assessments: What were the objectives of the interventions?</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b> 

**Describe parental involvement at School Action:**

**Describe participation of child at School Action:**

**Describe the child's response to interventions in place and progress towards the objectives:**

**Describe your review of School Action provision and reasons for moving to School Action Plus provision:**

# SCHOOL ACTION PLUS

Please complete these sections in detail and refer to any appended reports, reviews and assessments of the child's special educational needs


<b>Date Placed on School Action</b>	_ / _ / _
<b>Plus:</b>	


<b>Describe the nature and severity of the child's educational needs:</b>	Evidence attached ✚

<b>Describe the impact of the child's needs on their learning and progress:</b>	Evidence attached ✚

<b>Describe impact on curriculum access and participation:</b>	Evidence attached ✚


<b>Describe impact on personal and social development:</b>	Evidence attached ✚

<b>Describe the involvement and views of external agencies (including Educational Psychology involvement):</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b> 


<b>Describe School Action Plus provision and arrangements made for the child with regard to: assessment and planning, curriculum adaptations, grouping, additional support* and the objectives of the interventions?</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b> 
<p>*Please provide clear details of specific provision e.g. child's timetable, individual planning for the child and IEPs.</p>	

<b>Describe parental involvement at School Action Plus:</b>

<b>Describe participation of child at School Action Plus:</b>

<b>Describe child's response to interventions at School Action Plus.</b> <b>What has been the progress towards the objectives</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b> 

<b>Give details of National Curriculum or P levels where appropriate – programmes of study and levels of attainment and progress over the time of School Action Plus:</b>		
	<b>Levels</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Current Year</b>	<b>Previous Year</b>
Mathematics:		
English:		
Science:		

<b>Describe the effectiveness of the interventions and provision:</b>	<b>Evidence attached</b>
<b>Describe amendments to provision based on review of interventions</b>	

<b>Describe how a statutory assessment will support the planning and provision to meet the child’s special educational needs:</b>

CHECKLIST:

<b>It is essential that you provide the following:</b>	<b>Tick if enclosed</b>
The child’s achievements against National Curriculum levels in the core subjects or the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Curriculum and how these relate to both teacher / practitioners expectations of the child and the performance of other children	
Evidence of the involvement and views of external agencies including, where applicable: Educational Psychologist Service, Educational Welfare and Attendance Service, Health Authority and Social Services Department	
Copies of reviewed individual planning for the child	
Copies of other reports or minutes of review meetings held at various stages over the past year, where appropriate	
Evidence of involvement of parents and any written comments	

Where appropriate involvement of the pupil and any written comments	
Dated and annotated example of child's work, where appropriate (A maximum of 2)	
Please make sure this form is signed and dated by yourself	

# Appendix Four

## Examples of SA2 Forms

Example 1

### **Statutory Assessment of a Child or Young Person Who May Have Special Educational Needs**

**Professional advice as :**

PERSPECTIVE

#### **Section A: Child/Young Person Details:**

First Name:	Surname:
Date of Birth	School/Nursery:
Home Address:	
Postcode:	

#### **Section B: Your Details:**

First Name:	Surname:
Job Title:	Telephone Number:
Contact Address:	
Postcode:	
Date of Interview(s):	

#### **Common Guidelines for Professionals Contributing Advice to an**

#### **Assessment of a Child or Young Person's Special Educational Needs**

1. The report should be based on verifiable facts. Judgements should only be given when supported by evidence that is described in the text of your report. Statements made by others must be attributed, so that the source of any evidence is clear.
2. The parent/carers will receive copies of all papers received as part of the assessment. They will have a right to question the advice and will eventually have a right of appeal against the Statement. Therefore, your report should be discussed with parents/carers (and the family if appropriate).

3. Professionals advising on a pupil's special educational needs are not in a position to give assurances about the specific school arrangements that will eventually be made. You should avoid responding in detail to questions on this subject.
4. In assessing a pupil's special educational needs, professionals should take account of relevant information about ethnic, cultural and language background. You should make clear the limitation of any tests and subjective judgements that are made.
5. Ensure that the report is legible (preferably typed, otherwise written in **black ink**), using extra sheets of paper if necessary.
6. Avoid jargon and be succinct.
7. Further guidelines for specific professional perspectives are available from the SEN Assessment Team and should be referred to as appropriate. Please remember to sign and date the form. Completed forms should be returned to the:

SEN Assessment & Monitoring Team

**Section C: Your Statutory Assessment Advice on:**

Child First Name:	Child Surname:
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Report continued on extra sheets of paper? <span style="float: right;">Yes <input type="checkbox"/></span>

**Your signature:**

Signed:	Date
Please Print Your Name:	

**Please return your completed form to the SEN Assessment & Monitoring Team at:**

Example 2

Statutory Assessment of Special Educational Needs (1996 Education Act)

Advice from the perspective of a: (please tick)	Parent/Carer	Teacher	Social Worker	Health Worker	Other (Please State)	

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM **FULLY** IN BLOCK CAPITALS

Your Name:		Your Address
Telephone No:		
Mobile No:		

e-mail address:		
-----------------	--	--

<b>Child's details:</b>			
<b>Name:</b>		<b>Date of birth:</b>	___/___/___
<b>Current School/ Setting</b>		<b>Child's Address (if different from above:</b>	

<b>Signed:</b>		<b>Dated</b>	___/___/___
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<b>ADVICE ON COMPLETING THE SA2 FORM AND PROVIDING THE REQUIRED EVIDENCE:</b>
<b>Professional Advice on Special Educational Needs</b>
<p>Not all the listed items will be relevant to everyone. Please cover all those appropriate to your professional background. For those areas you do not decide to cover, paragraph headings are most helpful. It is expected that parents and children will have been consulted before you make your comments. This form will be seen by everyone in Statutory Assessment.</p> <p><b>1. Describe the Child</b></p> <p>Strengths and weaknesses in meeting educational demands and expectations</p> <p><b>Physical State</b></p> <p>Health, development, mobility, hearing and vision. Give details of any test given including dates.</p> <p><b>Abilities</b></p> <p>To think, perceive, do, cope, move</p> <p>To communicate, understand, speak and use language</p> <p>To adapt and relate to others at home and in school</p> <p><b>Approaches and Attitudes to Learning</b></p>



Describe fully and give examples of books, materials and achievement against National Curriculum (NC) levels, strengths and weaknesses.

**Detail**

Family circumstances, medical, education, social and emotional history.

Development at home, family, at school and elsewhere

Family size, composition and where child fits in

2. From this description please say what makes the child's educational needs "special"?

Is particular attention needed in any of these areas:

Physical/Thinking/Learning/Communicating/Living and working with other people/being independent/anything else?

Say is any weakness or special skills mentioned in 1) need special attention?

Describe any response to earlier help

Suggest methods/approaches/need for individual attention/implication of medical conditions or family circumstances.

Please note that if you are recommending any of the following, we need to be advised regarding who will provide the intervention, for what length of time per week and how it will be funded:

**Speech and Language Therapy**

**Occupational Therapy**

**Physiotherapy**

**Other as appropriate**

**Please attach your report/advice to the back of this form**

## Appendix 5

### Observation Schedule

Date of observation:		
Year/Class:		
Lesson/Topic:		
Question(s) to be addressed:		
<b>What do teachers understand about statements of SEN?</b>		
<b>What do teachers believe about inclusion?</b>		
<b>How does inclusion affect teaching style and expectation?</b>		
Focus	Notes: relate to research question	Reflection/Impact on research
1) Planning and teaching for all children?		
2) Attitude towards Alex		
3) Alex's participation (teaching, groups)		
4) Responsibility for Alex		

## Appendix Six: Example of Raw Data

### Observation Schedule

Date of observation: 24/06/05		
Year/Class: Year One		
Lesson/Topic: Literacy		
Question(s) to be addressed:  <b>What do teachers understand about statements of SEN? (1a positive; 1b negative)</b>  <b>What do teachers believe about inclusion? (2a positive; 2b: negative)</b>  <b>How does inclusion affect teaching style and expectation? (3a positive; 3b negative)</b>		
Focus	Notes: relate to research question	Reflection/Impact on research
1) Planning and teaching for all children?	Plans not visible for inspection but whole class writing stories about Teddy Bears Picnic while Alex was reading high frequency words. Use of visual time table with PECS symbols for Alex  Rest of the class discussing about things to include in their cards to the Headteacher who was retiring (3b) while Alex read a book with the LSA.	2a/b: Geographically sharing the same classroom but different activities.  The LSA did not attempt to try and include Alex in the activity. Lit rev. 2.5.3- Use of Resources  Who is the Statement benefitting? (Tomlinson 1982/Rose 2000)  Different expectations for Alex compared to rest of class. See Lit rev. 2.5.2 Cultural marginalisation
2) Attitude towards Alex	<b>Class teacher teaching the rest of class, LSA teaching Alex.</b>  LSA says to Alex, "Read it to me" and Alex replied "I read" and this was understood to mean (judging by the TA's action) 'I would like you to read it to me' (As she held the book in front of Alex and started to point at the words). Alex made sounds (imitating what the LSA was saying)-reading but looking distressed with	<b>2b/</b> could this be as a result of 1b? Not part of class  LSA doesn't seem to have listened to Alex here. Did he want the LSA to read the book? Was his contribution valued by anyone here? Power relations- lit rev. 2.5.1  2b Geographically Alex is excluded within the class. This is literally

	<p>hands on both ears and rocking.</p> <p>Alex worked in his area with his LSA (boxed in/boarded area), rest of the class worked in groups in the main area of the class under the teacher's supervision.</p>	<p>'sectioned' as Shelley describes it. (Cross check this with Miss Sugar's views about Statements – (that it is a good thing 1a) and – contradictory / beliefs about inclusion. Section 2.5.3; 2.5.2</p>
<p>3) Alex's participation (teaching, groups</p>	<p>Teacher stopped the class asks them to look at her. Alex and LSA show no regard for the announcement. No one expects Alex to do the same as everyone else.</p> <p>"must never be placed in a lesson..."</p> <p>Foucault, 1977:179- (see thesis p74)</p>	<p>3b – expectation is different for Alex. Two tier system. Alex behind the boarded area is like an invisible pupil in this classroom. Out of sight, out of mind – but would it have made a difference if he wasn't behind the boards? (Need to look out for this). No social contact with his peers- do the other children care? What's Alex's boundaries in this class?- section 3.2?</p> <p>Construction of difference- 2.5 pgs 62&amp;64</p>
<p>4) Responsibility for Alex</p>	<p>Through out this forty minutes lesson Alex worked with is LSA.</p>	<p>LSA totally responsible for Alex's learning this session.</p> <p>No contact with the class teacher not even to check that he was on task.</p> <p>Lit rev: 2.5.3; 3.4; 3.5;</p>