

THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers,
SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN
practice and provision

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by

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Introduction

I am a university lecturer working in a Faculty of Arts, Cultures and Education. I currently teach on an undergraduate BA Primary Teaching programme and have the responsibility of teaching on a number of modules across the three years of the degree course. I am particularly interested in the areas of special educational needs (SEN) and inclusion, and this professional interest is reflected in the focus of each of the modules that I teach. One module examines children's well-being and identifies a range of factors (such as relationships and motivation) that can promote or inhibit their development. Another module considers additional factors, such as challenging behaviour, SEN and English as an additional language (EAL) and examines a range of inclusive teaching strategies that can support all learners. The final module develops student awareness of a number of special educational needs and pedagogical approaches that can be used to successfully include all pupils. It also introduces them to relevant policy and legislation, both past and present, in order for them to reflect upon changes that have occurred and possible implications for future practice.

Having previously completed an M.Ed. in Inclusive Education, I then embarked upon the EdD in Educational Policy and Values. As a result of this doctoral study, which has examined national and global issues regarding education policy, I have developed a greater awareness of the forces beyond an individual school setting that can affect policy and practice. I have been able to incorporate my interest in SEN and inclusion within the requirements of the EdD

programme and the potential to examine these areas in greater depth has led to this doctoral research and its specific focus.

The main research question (MRQ) to be investigated is:

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision.

As a result of reviewing literature and research, a number of models of SEN and disability have been repeatedly identified by various authors as potentially impacting upon the focus, development and implementation of SEN policy at global and national levels. Reference has also been made to the subsequent effect this may have on practice and societal attitudes towards SEN and disability. With the recent changes that have been made to the SEN framework, implemented through the Children and Families Act (HMSO, 2014), it is therefore an opportune time to examine both the potential use and influence of a range of models upon policy and to ascertain the perceptions of those involved with both policy and practice.

To support the analysis of the MRQ, a series of sub research questions (SRQs) have been devised. The first SRQ is ***“What are the major models of SEN and disability and what are their underpinning values and influences?”*** This question will examine major models of SEN and disability that may influence the legislation implemented and therefore the provision available for pupils with SEN.

The second SRQ is ***“What influence, if any, have they had on the development of SEN policy and the implementation of related legislation?”*** This question will examine a range of SEN related legislation, enacted between 1978 and 2015 by Conservative, Labour and Coalition governments. It will evaluate any influence that major models of SEN and disability have had upon the development of policy and legislation during this time.

The third SRQ is ***“What is the most appropriate methodology (and methods) to investigate these questions?”*** The selected methodology will be identified and justified in Chapter 3; there will be an evident focus on gathering the perceptions and experiences of school staff. By ascertaining the views and perceptions of those involved at differing levels of policy implementation and practice, the research process will therefore aim to be inductive, as the data gained from the range of participants involved should enable the development of generalised statements about the research process.

The specific method of data collection selected for this research will also be established and justified in Chapter 3. It will aim to involve an approach that enables the compilation of participant perceptions, comments and opinions, in order to develop a more detailed insight into their views on the issue under consideration.

The fourth SRQ is ***“What links can be identified between the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers and the major models of SEN and disability?”*** Interviewee responses will be analysed to identify whether the comments provided can be associated with any of the aforementioned models and which may then indicate the focus and direction of current policy.

The fifth SRQ is ***“What do head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers think of the impact of recent legislative changes on SEN practice and provision?”*** In order to ascertain the perceptions of staff with a range of responsibilities, the participants from each school will hold the roles identified above. This will enable a greater breadth and depth of research, as it will capture and evaluate the viewpoints and experiences of those staff members, but at different levels of policy application and delivery due to their specific role.

Thesis structure

There will be two literature review chapters. Chapter 1 will examine the major models of SEN and disability, the focus applied when using each model to interpret issues of SEN and their indicative measures of success. The focus of this chapter will answer SRQ 1. The second chapter will review and evaluate any influence that these models may have had on the development of SEN policy and the implementation of related legislation and will respond to SRQ 2. Chapter 3 will describe and justify the methodology and method that will be utilised in order to answer SRQ 3. The data collected will be collated and the results presented in Chapter 4, thus responding to SRQs 4 and 5.

Chapter 5 will analyse the findings of the collated data and will therefore return to SRQs 1, 2, 4 and 5 in order to complete this process. Chapter 6 will conclude the thesis and will evaluate the effectiveness of the research in achieving the MRQ; this will be realised through the use of all of the SRQs in addressing the MRQ. This chapter will also discuss the implications of the impact of legislative change on SEN practice and provision and will then provide recommendations for further developments that could ensue as a result of this initial research.

Thesis Structure	Links to SRQs
Introduction	
Chapter 1 -The major models of SEN and disability, their focus and indicative measures of success	SRQ 1
Chapter 2 -The use and influence of these models in SEN related legislation 1978-2015.	SRQ 2
Chapter 3 - Methodology	SRQ 3
Chapter 4 -Results	SRQs 4 and 5
Chapter 5 -Analysis	SRQs 1, 2, 4, 5
Chapter 6 -Conclusion and Recommendations	SRQs 1-5

Chapter 1: Major models and frameworks of SEN and disability

During the past seventy years, a plethora of SEN focused policy and legislation has been devised and implemented for a range of reasons, both nationally in England by successive governments, and internationally by different organisations. Areas under consideration have included: the need for early identification and assessment of individual needs in order to provide effective support, ensuring equal opportunities and rights for all individuals and the introduction of reasonable adjustments to overcome any potential barriers to learning and participation. This policy and legislation will be examined and evaluated in depth in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Prior to this examination however, it is important to review the various meanings that have been ascribed to the concept of SEN, as it is a notion that is not value free. It is possible to apply different interpretations to this concept through the use of a range of models and frameworks, which may then impact upon the focus and development of policy or legislation.

A timeline of the concept of special educational needs

The Education Act 1944 identified that some pupils may require what the legislation defined as “special educational treatment”. Such pupils were considered to be those “who suffer from any disability of mind or body” and therefore required the provision:

either in special schools or otherwise, [of] special educational treatment, that is to say, education by special methods appropriate for persons suffering from that disability
(The Education Act 1944: section 8, sub-section 2, paragraph c).

Although these needs were only generally defined in the 1944 Act, the responsibility for the specific classification of these disabilities was then delegated to the Minister. A greater range of needs was identified, and eleven categories of handicap were defined in the 1945 Handicapped Pupils and School Health Service Regulations. These categories remained unchanged until the recommendations of the Warnock Report were put into place (DES, 1978). An emphasis had therefore been placed upon identifying individual difference and categorising and labelling this need in order to provide relevant support.

The Warnock Committee was established in 1974 to review educational provision for children “handicapped by disabilities of body or mind” (DES, 1978:1) and to consider their medical needs, the arrangements required to prepare them for employment and to review the most effective use of resources to support them (DES, 1978). The final report established the much broader term “special educational needs”, which incorporated the following aspects:

1) the need for the provision of special means of access to the curriculum, including specialist teaching techniques; 2) the need for the provision of a special or modified curriculum, and 3) the need for particular attention to the social structure and emotional climate in which education takes place (DES, 1978:94).

The Report established that a continuum of need should be considered using this term; an individual’s needs could be assessed as either severe or mild, and exist for a short or long term period. The term was therefore more widely encompassing in its identification and also considered factors other than the child, such as wider societal issues and the school environment.

The Framework for Action on Special Needs Education (established to implement the principles of the Salamanca Statement [UNESCO, 1994])

identifies that the term special educational needs “refers to all children and youth whose needs arise from disabilities or learning difficulties” and requires schools to “find ways of successfully educating all children, including those who have serious disadvantages and disabilities” (UNESCO, 1994:6). The emphasis is thus clearly placed upon the school to examine both its organisational methods and attitudes with regard to reducing discrimination and ensuring equal opportunities, and to provide appropriate responses and support for individuals’ needs and disabilities.

The most recent definition of SEN is outlined in the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DFE, 2015a) and states that a child or young person has SEN if:

they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her
(DFE, 2015a:15).

The definition is then expanded upon as the document examines what constitutes a learning difficulty or disability. This is explained as:

a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or
(if the child) has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age
(DFE, 2015a:16).

This current definition continues to reflect the longstanding emphasis upon the need to support a range of children (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009) and to identify learners who may experience difficulties at any time during their education (Terzi, 2005).

However, although the term SEN has been positively received by many for initiating changes in attitudes and language use and enabling greater numbers

of children to access mainstream schooling (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009; Attwood, 2013), other researchers such as Norwich consider that:

the way the concept of SEN has been used in theory and practice has been contentious from its inception
(2014:417)

as issues have been raised regarding the lack of explanation of the term and the view that its use continues to label children.

Models and frameworks of SEN and Disability

It has been suggested by many researchers that the structure and focus of certain policy and legislation may also reflect the premises of one or more of the models that can be applied to SEN and disability. Garner identifies these models as “sets of concepts, ideas and practices” (2009:26). The application of a particular model may impact significantly upon how the concept of special educational needs is viewed within this legislation and policy and the provision that is then considered to be relevant and appropriate to support pupils effectively, as each model views disability and individual or additional need from a contrasting perspective.

In this literature review chapter, the five models that will be examined are the medical, social and human rights models, the state-influenced market approach and the financial crisis model. These models do not have fixed boundaries and some may share certain principles. Each model however, places a vastly different emphasis upon the locus of SEN and disability and therefore the interventions required to support the individual.

The medical and social models have been clearly identified and examined in a range of relevant literature and have been selected for analysis due to their opposing views regarding the role of the individual involved and the reasons for his or her impairment. However, although the social model argues for the rights of the individual in society, this is considered at a more immediate level, with little or no reference to human rights issues at a global level. International human rights legislation will therefore be examined in order to both emphasise the drive for systemic change that is taking place which is involving numerous governments and to examine the potential impact that any ensuing legislation may have.

The state-influenced market approach has been devised and selected for examination as the rights of parents have been strengthened due to legislation which focuses upon consumer rights and choice and the growth in the importance of market-led ideology and competition. Schools therefore have to remain financially viable, attracting pupils and parents and retaining their support as the success of an institution is driven by consumer satisfaction. For parents of children with SEN, consumer rights have been extended by the 2014 Children and Families Act (HMSO, 2014). Parents of a child with an Education, Health and Care Plan can now, if they wish to, manage the personal budget of their child and determine and purchase the type of care and support they deem most suitable. As such, this legislation may impact upon the level of support that a school can provide for this child and any others with SEN and will therefore be examined to ascertain any changes that may already have taken place. A financial crisis model will also be identified as financial crises may influence the type of policy that a government implements in order to support

the economic stability of the country, as well as the funding that is then available to a range of service providers, including education.

The medical model

This model is also variously defined by researchers as the ‘individual tragedy’ or ‘deficit’ model. Hodkinson identifies this approach as “the traditional ideology through which Western society has conceptualised SEN and disability” (2016:20) and this model was the dominant method of identification and assessment used from the 19th Century until the 1970s (ibid). The viewpoint adopted is that the problem or difficulty lies within the child and his or her impairment, and therefore the model constructs this difference as problematic (Glazzard, 2011). As a problem is identified, the model therefore looks for a ‘cure’ (Harpur, 2012:2). It is argued that there is a necessity to understand individual impairments and characteristics in order to provide the specialist support that is deemed to be fundamental in enabling a person’s education to be both positive and appropriate (Terzi, 2005).

Individuals become defined as a result of their “individual pathology”, rather than the consideration of any external barriers that may impede their educational progress (Runswick-Cole, 2011:114). An individual’s impairment is therefore seen to be the source of “problems”, for them and for others, requiring the intervention of what Scott-Hill defines as “normality” to provide the solutions (2004:88). According to the premises of this model, individuals with impairments are seen to be responsible for their own circumstances and are viewed as

“functionally restricted” when compared to those without impairments (Scott-Hill, 2004:88).

Any special needs are then seen to arise from individual limitations; these are considered to be psychological, physiological or neurological in origin (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009). According to this model, once identified, the individual need or deficit can and should then be treated by relevant professionals. This treatment may involve medication or the use of a range of interventions (Hodkinson, 2016) in order to restore them to “normality” (Barnes and Sheldon, 2007:234).

The success of intervention in the medical model is therefore reliant upon accurate identification, assessment and categorisation of the individual’s impairment. Evans (2007:47) suggests that this system of categorisation is “both rigid and arbitrary” as the emphasis upon an individual’s deficits fails to consider any strengths the person possesses, or the effects of the environments they exist in which may either reduce or compound the difficulties they face.

The identification and categorisation of individual need, and the subsequent provision of appropriate support, requires the judgement of relevant professionals (Hodkinson, 2016). However, the diagnoses that are then effected may lead to the treatment of the condition within what Hodkinson identifies as a “specialised, segregated system of education” (2016:25). This has led some

researchers to consider such assessment outcomes, (although seen by proponents of the medical model to be an indicator of success in providing relevant support), to be a mechanistic process which both objectifies and dehumanises individuals with disabilities. Harpur has expanded upon this idea, suggesting that the medical model focuses upon “fixing” persons with disabilities, rather than recognising the potential they have to lead a fulfilling life with a disability (2012:2).

This alternative viewpoint is also reinforced by Glazzard (2013), who identifies that the language associated with this model focuses upon difference, need and deficit, and by Hodkinson and Vickerman, who suggest that by using such language:

we do not instil pride, respect and value for all children, but rather refer to individuals who society feels are not able to be included because of impairment leading to the possibility of exclusionary pressures (2009:78).

Such difficulties are compounded further by the lack of focus of this model on considering and examining the contexts in which individuals are involved (Weedon, 2012) and the potential barriers that exist which may inhibit or impact upon learning; these barriers could be physical, emotional or educational.

In addition to these concerns, it has also been suggested that the medical model is “theoretically weak” as it locates the causes of disability and/or impairment solely within the individual (Hodkinson and Vickerman, 2009:2) and is seen to rely on medical rather than educational judgements (Lindsay, 2003). Liasidou (2012:114) expands upon the importance placed upon medical diagnoses by suggesting that the professionals involved in these assessments

have “vested interests” in continuing such a perspective to ensure the maintenance of the status quo and “their institutionally empowered positions”, and their role, which is then seen to be invaluable in identifying, assessing and supporting the needs of individuals.

The notion has also been proposed that the medical model has promoted what Reindal refers to as “attitudes of paternalism and mechanisms of dependency” (2008:141). Decision making can be seen to have been removed from the individuals themselves at “various macro levels within society” (Reindal, 2008:141) as the opinions and judgements of the medical profession are seen to be the most successful and effective ways of identifying and supporting individuals. Within this model, parents and children are seen as passive recipients of expert medical advice and may then feel disenfranchised and unable to effectively voice their feelings and opinions.

The medical model can thus be seen to define in a narrow way what individuals cannot do, instead of what they are able to achieve. Such a definition is seen to arise as little or no consideration is given to the impact of social, cultural or environmental factors upon the “phenomenon of disability” (Reindal, 2008:141). The potential impact of these aspects is examined in depth within the social model of SEN and disability.

The social model

In contrast to the medical model, the focus of the social model aims to remove the difficulty or problem from the individual and as such identifies it as the “collective responsibility of society as a whole” (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009:109). This model was first defined in the 1970s as a result of the development of “politically oriented groups of disabled people” who called for the re-examination and “transformation of the concept of disability” (Hodkinson, 2016:48). Liasidou (2012:115) suggests that the aim of the model is to emphasise the interrelationship between the “private and the public”, (or individual and society) and the factors, both ideological and structural, that may affect the nature of this relationship to the detriment of the individual.

The model therefore moves away from the idea of impairment being seen as the result of the difficulties that arise from deficits (as seen in the medical model) to the use of the term ‘disability’ and the difficulties that arise for individuals as a result of different aspects of society (Liasidou, 2012). Society is therefore seen to “cause disability by placing barriers to accessibility in the way of people with impairments” (Hodkinson, 2016:27). This argument is expanded upon by Oliver (2013), who suggests that the model identifies that individuals are not disabled by their impairments, but because of the barriers imposed by the society in which they live. As a result, impairment becomes disabling (Harpur, 2012). Society therefore, is required to identify and remove barriers, whether environmental, cultural or structural, to enable individuals to achieve full participation in the community and determine their own goals. Disability is

viewed only as a social construction that exists as a result of those inhibiting factors (Barnes and Sheldon, 2007; Liasidou, 2012).

In the social model, sole reliance upon medical assessments and diagnosis is questioned. The focus of this model emphasises instead the importance of personal experience and action, whether individual or collective, (Gillman, 2004) in promoting awareness of exclusion and calling for policies to be put into place to ensure equality of access and opportunity. Proponents of the social model also suggest that individuals are labelled negatively and therefore disempowered by the emphasis on medical diagnoses and assessments. The use of such labels can impact upon the attitudes held by communities towards individuals, potentially leading to discrimination and prejudice due to lack of knowledge and understanding of the condition or disability, or the use of the paternalistic view previously described. As a result, disability becomes “socially created” (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009). This argument is extended by Armstrong (2005:142), who identifies that disability activists (supporting the social model perspective), emphasise that impairments are “reflective of the diversity of the human condition” and that they only become disabilities when individuals are disadvantaged because of their differences.

As a result, when using this model, it is suggested that a focus should be maintained on removing barriers to participation and thus, what Runswick-Cole and Hodge refer to as “exclusionary practices” (2009:199). Schools would therefore have to review their curricula, organisation, attitudes and ethos in order to ensure the removal of barriers to learning to ensure equity for all pupils

in all areas of their education. When using this model, the concept of special educational needs defined in the Warnock Report (DES, 1978), would also be viewed as having arisen due to “particular constructs of needs” and “systems that have developed ineffective and segregated approaches to the education of particular pupils” (Bines, 2000:24) would also need to be re-evaluated to remove issues of exclusion.

As many of these barriers are seen to have been created either by environmental and social factors (Weedon, 2012), or caused by institutional practices (Terzi, 2005), proponents of the social model call for an integrated approach to the identification and removal of these barriers. This is to be achieved through empowerment and “the politicisation of disabled people” (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009:199), which will move the issue to being the responsibility of society as a whole. As a result, it can be seen that the development of the social model has led to what Hodkinson and Vickerman identify as a redefinition “of the ‘problem’ of impairment and disability” (2009:25) as a change to the perceptions of the wider community is required. The disabled people’s movement has therefore worked to change societal aspects that can impact upon them, such as attitudes portrayed in the media, access to buildings and transport and the legal system (Oliver, 2013).

The concept of inclusion can also be associated with the social model as it is a means to “remove barriers, improve outcomes and remove discrimination” (Lindsay, 2003:3), placing the impetus upon institutions to become more responsive to learners and their needs (Frederickson and Cline, 2010). This

approach changes the focus from attention upon a child's perceived deficits (the focus of the medical model), and the use of educational integration, where the child, (regardless of individual or additional need) was expected to assimilate within an existing education system that was not required to change in order to support this child (Glazzard, 2013). Inclusion is therefore seen as important for the positive benefits such an approach could have in wider society, as it could challenge "narrow cultural parameters of normality" (Runswick-Cole, 2011:113), leading to greater acknowledgement and understanding of diversity and difference, one of the main aims of the social model.

Many educationalists and disability activists support the social model, but some researchers identify this framework as illogical and unhelpful. Lindsay (2003) suggests that it does not focus sufficiently on both the 'within-child' factors that exist due to the needs of the individual and the issue of their interaction with the environment. Harpur (2012) builds on this idea, suggesting that the social model has failed to adequately consider the impact of barriers that were not created by society itself. Even if societal barriers were removed, he identifies that individuals with disabilities would still be impacted by their disabilities. Warnock and Norwich (2010) expand upon this critical stance, acknowledging that the model also does not provide any detailed information as to how the removal of barriers or implementation of adaptations will be achieved.

The model is also criticised for failing to account for difference as it presents disabled people as "one homogenous group, rather than a complex group" (Hodkinson, 2016:29). It is then possible, that the focus of any considerations

for the removal of barriers may be reduced, as it could be envisaged that the removal of specific barriers may benefit all involved, without contemplating the specific needs of individuals, such as gender, race, age or impairment. It has been acknowledged however, that the social model has been influential in the development of ideas about inclusive education (Avramidis and Norwich, 2012).

The importance of equal access to education for all children, regardless of individual or additional need, is the underpinning principle of the third model to be examined: the human rights model.

The human rights model

The main premise of the social model is to remove the barriers that can impact upon an individual and his/her disability. The human rights model is focused upon ensuring the legal rights of individuals and the crucial role governments should play in the implementation of legislative measures designed to protect them. The tenets of this model seek to ensure equal rights and access for all individuals to areas such as health, employment and education. The approach focuses upon the removal of a range of barriers, social, attitudinal or physical, that can impact upon the lives and activities of people with disabilities (Hodkinson, 2016).

Education has been identified as a basic human right since 1948, when the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights was formally adopted (Crowther, 2011). Florian (2007:8) identifies that the Declaration is applied in

order to establish “standards for the rights to education (access) and for human rights in education (equity)” and as such, education is both “a human right and a means of achieving human rights”. Article 1 of the Declaration establishes that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (United Nations, 2015). These rights are specifically identified with regard to access to education in Article 26, where it is stated that:

everyone has the right to education...education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality...parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.
(United Nations, 2015)

The importance of equal opportunity for all individuals and the focus on their rights, regardless of age, is paramount and this emphasis is continued and expanded upon through the introduction of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights [ohchr], 1989). This convention, which came into force in 1990, includes Article 23, which refers to the implementation of special provision for disabled children in recognition of what the Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education refers to as “their vulnerability to segregation and discrimination” (CSIE, 2015a). The article identifies that there must be effective access to education and that it must be received “in a manner conducive to the child’s achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development” (ohchr, 2015).

Mittler (2008:4) suggests that the majority of countries which ratified this convention “fell short” of achieving these modest requirements, many to a “major degree”. He identifies that disabled people are often overlooked when national and international initiatives are planned and implemented and that this has appeared to continue despite the convention. Mittler argues therefore, that

governments should be more responsive in their provision of services, which should be considered within the tenets of the inclusion agenda.

Articles 28 and 29 focus on the right of the child to education which is to be achieved by making all levels of education available and accessible to all children in order to develop their abilities, talents and personality to their fullest potential. This emphasis was continued by the United Nations through the creation and implementation of the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education and its associated Framework for Action (UNESCO, 1994).

The Salamanca Statement is seen to identify an international commitment to inclusive education (Glazzard, 2013; Hardy and Woodcock, 2015) through the promotion of policies and policy change. The Statement and its Framework for Action was adopted by 92 governments and 25 international organisations following the World Conference on Special Needs Education, which took place in June 1994. The Statement reaffirmed the right to education for every individual and called upon governments to:

adopt as a matter of law or policy the principle of inclusive education, enrolling all children in regular schools, unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise
(UNESCO, 1994: ix).

The terminology “all children” is expanded to identify disabled children, gifted, street and working children, those from nomadic and minority groups and those from other disadvantaged groups (UNESCO, 1994) as well as those children with disabilities or learning difficulties.

This focus on inclusion was to be achieved by assigning priority to policy and available budgets to improve education systems and through the development and establishment of mechanisms to plan, monitor and evaluate such provision (UNESCO, 1994). The supporting Framework for Action on Special Needs Education reaffirms that inclusion and participation are “essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights” (UNESCO, 1994:11). Its purpose is to inform policy and provide guidance on implementing the statement principles at both national and school levels; the former should recognise the principle of equal opportunities through legislation and the latter through the consideration of curriculum, pedagogy, ethos, access and organisation.

However, Lindsay suggests that there is an implicit tension apparent in this Framework between what he describes as the “application of the proposed system for all children and a view that it may not be effective for all” (2003:4). He is referring to the continued focus on access to both mainstream and special education systems, which he suggests, impedes the development of inclusive policy. Lindsay also argues that the continued use of the policy caveats (that mainstream education must reflect the wishes of the parents and must not be incompatible with the education of other children), suggests that the policy of inclusion is still “insufficiently strong” and that “absolute commitment to total inclusion is necessary” (2003:5).

The most recent human rights focused document to be examined is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations,

2006) and is the first human rights convention protecting the human rights of individuals with disabilities (Harpur, 2012). This Convention came into force in 2008, recognising the right to equality and non-discrimination through the right to access schools and education programmes, public transport and buildings (Harpur, 2012). It also makes special provision for children and reasserts the right to inclusive education (CSIE, 2015b). Disability is recognised as an evolving concept that results from the interaction of individuals with a range of barriers which impact upon their ability to equally access and participate in society (Armstrong et al., 2011a). Article 24 reinforces the right both to education and for there to be an inclusive education system (at all levels of schooling) involving the implementation and use of appropriate resources to support individuals. It has been noted however, that upon ratification, the United Kingdom government declared a series of reservations regarding the convention as well as a declaration concerning Article 24 to ensure that the UK education system included both mainstream and special schools. These reservations reinforce Lindsay's idea of the continuation of the tension between the goal of a fully inclusive education and the potential impact and influence of different approaches to education provision (Crowther, 2011).

Inclusion and inclusive practice are however, complex and contested terms, despite the "watershed moment in the inclusive education policy terrain" that the Salamanca Statement initiated (Hardy and Woodcock, 2015:145). Norwich (2005) argues that inclusion involves welcoming and nurturing pupils into a community; Lindsay (2003:3) however, suggests that the "manifestations in practice (of inclusion) are many and various". This has led to potential

challenges for teachers (Hodkinson, 2010) as classrooms have become more diverse and policy has incorporated different interpretations of the term.

There are some similarities that can be made between the main principles of the social model and the human rights model. They both focus on the promotion of equal rights and access to a range of services and opportunities, as well as the removal of barriers that can potentially impede the inclusion of an individual in society. Although these similarities are apparent, there are also some important differences. The social model focuses primarily on disability and impairment, and the collective duty of the individual's immediate society in removing barriers to their involvement in this community. The human rights model however, is conducted at an international level and considers a wide range of individual needs, requiring national governments to put legislative measures in place to ensure the enactment of these rights into practice. There are links that can also be made to the development of the state-influenced market approach, as individuals are able to act as consumers and exercise their legislative rights in order to gain equal access to a range of services, such as education.

The state-influenced market approach

There is a strong focus in much government thinking to suggest that a nation's education system is a principal means of raising the knowledge and skills base of individuals in order to enhance economic efficiency, and also as a way to increase equality and social mobility (Le Grand et al., 2008). Policy and legislation has therefore been enacted to effect such aims into practice.

However, as suggested by Le Grand (2003) and Bradbury et.al, (2013), there have been, over a period of time, significant changes apparent in policy-makers' perceptions, which have resulted in:

a policy drive to replace state-based delivery systems by market-based ones, which were viewed as better placed to harness the forces of self-interest to serve the (newly discovered) consumers of public services (Le Grand, 2003:23).

This has resulted in reforms that have been designed to increase consumer choice and thus ensured that providers have had to become more responsive to the requirements of their users (Le Grand et al., 2008), as "parents are seen as the driving force behind change in the education system"; with the powers of schools and local authorities reduced as they "become subordinate to the needs of the parent as consumer" (Wright, 2012:284).

Neo-liberalism is a body of thought which currently underpins much market thinking and this approach has been implemented by successive governments since 1979. This stance argues that the individual is most effectively supported and advanced through the promotion of mechanisms such as entrepreneurship, free markets and free trade (Forsey et al., 2008; Bates, 2012) that operate within an existing framework, such as a national government. It is therefore considered by proponents of neo-liberalism, that such a focus offers "the basis for greater levels of social efficiency and wealth" as the individual achieves greater freedom and choice, thus providing "well-being and happiness" (Forsey et al., 2008:75) and the ability to "achieve their desires" (Wright, 2012:281). The neo-liberal ideology can therefore be identified as an essential underpinning element of a state-influenced market approach. With regard to education, within this neo-liberal approach, parents and children are classified as the "consumers" of education; teachers are seen as the "producers", who, Ranson

suggests, are identified as having “pursued their own ideas and interests” at the expense of the consumers (1990:8). This viewpoint, has thus provided evidence and support for greater rights and choice for parents within the education system. Gorard et al., (2003) suggest that allowing individual choice may increase equity as markets are seen to reduce bureaucracy, enabling those involved to have greater freedom of choice, although the opportunity for all concerned to access such choices could be impacted by a number of factors such as availability of services or socio-economic circumstances (Richardson, 2010).

Beveridge (2005) suggests that the quality of engagement that exists between schools and parents can be linked to children’s educational outcomes and achievements. She also identifies however, that there is a tension between the policy ideas of parents as both consumers and partners. Pinkus (2003:137/8) continues this idea, suggesting that there is “an incongruity in the perceived role of parents” and “little recognition of the inherent contradiction between the ‘partner’ status and ‘consumer’ status of parents”.

To counteract such difficulties, Beveridge argues that it is necessary to initiate a partnership that encourages effective communication between home and school. This relationship can then lead to greater knowledge of the other party and understanding that the contributions of all those involved are valued (Pinkus, 2003). To develop such a partnership, Sime and Sheridan suggest that “more innovative approaches and the direct involvement of parents in shaping the nature of provision” are required (2014:336). Their research conclusions indicated that various factors are required to provide successful support and

that these include: strong leadership, commitment to engaging parents, flexible provision, purposeful communication and a positive school ethos. However, with “the education of children...now more than ever before based on a market model” (Pinkus, 2003:137), the current tension regarding the dual role assigned to parents by policy will continue. Schools will therefore have to consider ways in which they can work to address this difficulty.

For a number of ‘consumers’, who have children with SEN, this state-influenced market approach has recently provided them with greater opportunity of choice regarding the procurement of support for their children’s needs. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (DfE, 2015a) states that if a child has been issued with an Education, Health and Care Plan (equivalent to the previous statutory statement of need), parents have the right, if they so choose, to assume responsibility of the individual budget available for providing the specific resources and professional care required to effectively support their child. Norwich (2014) suggests that this more user-led policy focus is:

in keeping with wider social policy directions and the adoption of an even stronger marketisation of public service provision in education and health services
(2014:415).

In this scenario, parents would be able to use their knowledge and understanding of their child’s needs to commission the services of a wide range of providers, (potentially different to those previously contracted by the school), to support their child both in and out of the school setting.

Norwich then counters this notion, however, by identifying that there is “no longer term vision” of how this provision “is interconnected with or dependent on

the wider education service” (2014:415). This change has been concurrently introduced alongside greater opportunities for community and voluntary services to bid to act as providers. Such a change may then be seen as having the potential to reduce, as well as increase, the diversity of provision available, as this new market place may also negatively impact upon the resources and support schools and/or local authorities are able to provide as their budgets would be proportionately reduced as funding is allocated to other providers. This competition would however, be viewed by neo-liberals as evidence of the effectiveness of the state-influenced market approach, as the service would then be delivered by the most successful and efficient provider.

As a result of the policy emphasis placed on the rights of the consumers, schools begin to take on some of the characteristics of enterprises (Levin, 2003). These new economic enterprises are then subject to the greater choice individuals are able to exercise and will therefore succeed or fail in the same way as any business, dependent on their results. Proponents of neo-liberalism would consider this to be an inevitable and desirable result of the interplay of competitive forces.

Although greater parental choice has been identified in policy in positive terms, the possibility of exercising this choice may not be able to be achieved equitably for all parents, particularly those whose children have SEN. Le Grand (2003) refers to the notion of “cream skimming”, where selection of pupils of high ability may take place at an oversubscribed school, in order to improve exam and league table performance. This can:

lead to polarisation or segregation in terms of ability with able pupils being increasingly concentrated in high-performing schools and less able pupils

in low-performing ones
(2003:110)

and may result in particular consequences for communities regarding their diversity, as the right to choose can lead to increased segregation with regard to both social class and special educational needs. As attainment can be linked to a child's socio-economic background, other schools may either close or become poorly resourced 'sink' schools where the pupil population is comprised of children who are academically low achieving, have SEN or are economically disadvantaged (Gorard et al., 2003). Walford (2008) expands upon this issue by suggesting that this disadvantage can worsen over time, as a school then becomes less able to respond to and improve its situation.

To further compound the potential difficulties for parents of children with SEN, the SEN/Disability Code of Practice (DfE, 2015a) has also replaced the two previous levels of school support (School Action and School Action Plus), identified in the earlier Code of Practice (DfES, 2001), with one new level of school SEN support. These previous support levels had enabled a school to initially provide children on the SEN register with early in-school support (School Action), with the opportunity, if little or no progress was being made, to then access the additional expertise and resources that could be provided from outside agencies (School Action Plus). The new SEN/D Code of Practice identifies that children will only move to the SEN support level when they do not make sufficient progress after the implementation of appropriately differentiated work. According to Attwood, this "raised threshold" will effectively "de-classify many children currently on SEN registers" (2013:182), and create the potential for pupils to become disaffected, or exacerbate existing behavioural difficulties

as they will no longer receive the additional support previously provided, as their needs are now expected to be addressed through “high quality teaching targeted at their areas of weakness” (DfE, 2015a: 95; paragraph 6.19).

Parents of children with SEN may now also be competing with other parents in the SEN/disability market place. Riddell (2007) has argued that some parents are now pro-actively exercising their market rights in order to ensure that their children receive appropriate support and have access to resources. Although achieving such support may involve an assessment that ultimately leads to a definition of special educational needs, the ensuing label is seen as necessary by parents to ensure the acquisition of this support. Tomlinson (2012) also argues that such demands are now being made by middle class and articulate parents, who have been promised more choice by successive governments, and who wish to achieve the security of provision that such labelling will provide. The available budgets to fund this support may however, be impacted upon due to the imposition of any funding cuts that are considered a priority as a result of the prevailing economic situation.

Another aspect that can be associated with the state-influenced market approach is the standards agenda. Ainscow et al., define such an agenda as:

an approach to educational reforms which seeks to ‘drive up’ standards of attainment, including workforce skill levels and ultimately national competitiveness in a globalised economy

(2006:296)

They comment that this approach is ‘intimately linked’ to other policy areas, including the ‘marketisation of education...and a regime of target setting and

inspection...to force up standards' (ibid: 296) and this notion is supported by Norwich (2014). The increased influence of the state is also apparent through the centralised introduction of a National Curriculum and its assessment procedures, which result in detailed target setting and the provision of data.

The publication of attainment data occurs in many countries, including England. Power and Frandji (2010:386) suggest that this process has been seen as "an integral part of stimulating market forces in education as knowledge has become an "important aspect for national economic competitiveness" (Stangvik, 2014: 92). Lauder et al (2006) acknowledge the importance of acquiring knowledge and skills as these add to an individual's credentials when competing in the economic workplace. They also identify, however, that individuals who are bereft of these skills, for whatever reason, are then excluded from access to opportunities that are readily available to others. Children with SEN are often seen to be an "impediment" to a school achieving positive academic outcomes (Mintz and Wyse, 2015:1161), as they negatively impact standards of attainment. For pupils with SEN, the influence of the market on the education system may thus impact in a negative way on their ability to access equitable provision.

The influences of the state-influenced market approach, the driver of the standards agenda and the impetus for global competitiveness, appear to combine together to support each other and ensure that those involved in education work to achieve them.

The financial crisis model

At both national and global levels, governments have to manage and mediate regularly occurring periods of “socio-economic crisis” (Carpentier, 2009:194), which may occur either due to a crisis in the banking system, or the crises which Avis (2011:423) refers to as those “that are inherent to the capitalist system...the tendency towards boom and bust”. Governments must also consider a growing demographic pressure upon financial reserves. This includes an aging population; more elderly people are surviving longer into retirement age and are therefore dependent upon the state for financial support. A smaller proportion of the population are working and contributing to the state through taxation; the discrepancy between taxation income and pension funding may impact upon the budgets available for welfare provision.

The management of such crises has been effected in a number of ways. Before 1945, Carpentier (2009:194) identifies that governments increased levels of public expenditure, particularly in education, in order to “revive productivity levels by developing the workforce in conjunction with new innovations”. He also suggests that after 1945, a further change took place as “educational development became not only a way out of the crisis, but a driver of economic growth” (2009:194); funding for education therefore became imperative in enabling post-war economic growth and development.

A change in policy direction took place, however, during the economic crisis of the 1970s as, for the first time, the economic downturn was also matched by a reduction in the public funding provided for education. This type of reduction

was also a central concern during the 1980s and 1990s, as governments planned to reduce deficits; according to Levin (2001:71), many reforms “were at least partly about efforts to control costs or to improve productivity”, in order to increase a country’s ability to successfully engage in a global economy.

The most recent financial crisis occurred in 2008. Gamble suggests that the reaction of the market to this event “was so extreme that the financial system appeared to be on the point of collapse”, which could therefore cause major disruption “to the international economy, to public order and to political stability” (2010:703). The global recession which then ensued precipitated governments to use large amounts of their financial reserves to bail out banks, rather than to spend it on other uses. They therefore needed to initiate a raft of reforms to social and economic policies. Richardson (2010:495) suggests that governments implement two stages of response to such a crisis, and these are “a period of stimulus followed by a move towards austerity”, as there is then an emphasis on reducing public expenditure. This idea is extended by Gamble (2010:704) who suggests that a large increase in deficits initially took place in 2009, due partly to a “bank rescue package and...the stimulus aimed at lifting the deflationary downward spiral”. He continues by stating that governments are now focussing on deficit reduction plans, which will inevitably and significantly impact on a range of frontline services, including education.

A number of researchers identified at the time of this crisis, that the major UK parties shared a “single position” (Jones, 2010:793), which was that the country’s problems were debt related, requiring a “massive shock therapy, in

the form of cuts in public spending” in order to solve them (ibid; Avis, 2011; Gamble, 2010). Reforms to public expenditure can be associated with the prevalent neo-liberal discourse, as the approaches associated with this ideology emphasise the use of “management... competition, cost cutting and efficiency” (Bates, 2012:90) to achieve economic and financial success. Slater (2015:2) builds on this idea, by suggesting that neo-liberal reformers also “position further privatisation as the primary mechanism of recovery”, as the greater involvement of the market in a range of contexts is seen as a means of inspiring innovation and the development of “enterprising, self-sufficient and competitive individuals” (Bates, 2012:90), who are able to independently and successfully manage and organise their lives.

A Coalition government (formed by the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats) was elected in 2010. Taylor-Gooby (2012:62), has suggested that the objective of this government was the introduction of “permanently lower spending, lower debt and market-led growth”, which will be achieved through a “shift of responsibility in many areas, from state to private providers, citizens or the community” thus re-emphasising neo-liberal approaches. This idea is reinforced by Avis (2011:421) who identifies that there is a political agenda apparent to “re-order the relationship between the state and the welfare/public sector” and that this agenda has been continued by the Conservative government elected in 2015.

It has been suggested by Gamble (2010:705) that the politics underpinning spending cuts “lays bare the nature of the state and its priorities” as choices

have to be made “about which departments and which social groups should carry the heaviest burden”. This impact is often felt most acutely by those who are already facing difficulties, whether this is due to cuts to welfare budgets or lack of employment prospects due to the economic downturn (Richardson, 2010). Taylor-Gooby (2012) has suggested that such changes are part of a systematic reform which moves beyond immediate cost cutting measures and seeks to modify the long-term context in which provision and policy is enacted. The same author claims that it is likely that such changes will continue to “damage living standards for some of the poorest groups. The likely outcome is an increase in poverty and inequality” (ibid: 78), thus continuing to create difficulties for specific groups and individuals.

The wider implications for education, suggest therefore, that continuing reductions in funding, (to enable central government to meet its austerity targets), may impact significantly upon a school’s ability and flexibility to support pupils, especially those with SEN, as funding will have to be prioritised, and planning developed, to ensure that remaining budgets are utilised in the most efficient way. This financial crisis model can therefore be seen to act as a fifth and final model, as policy decisions on SEN may be made primarily because of the demands that arise from this approach. A government may not wish to acknowledge the power of this influence, however, and may use any of the other models as justification for any selected policy direction.

The five selected models have, so far, been examined independently of each other and it has been identified that each of them has a particular view of SEN

due to the underpinning principles of the model in question. The table presented below therefore provides an overview of all of the models, identifying: main aims, underpinning values and measures of success, in order to summarise the perspectives of each model and the contrasting emphasis which is then placed upon the role of the individual and society. Reference is also made to a range of documents and legislation that appear to demonstrate the influence of one or more of these models within their content and policy direction.

A summary of the five models: drivers, values and measures of success

Model	Driven by	Underpinning values	Success is measured by	Major legislation
Medical	The need to provide effective interventions to treat individual needs or deficits.	The use of medical diagnosis to identify, assess, categorise and treat impairment.	The provision of appropriate support in order to mediate the effects of the impairment.	Code of Practice 2001 Removing Barriers to Achievement 2004 Code of Practice 2015
Social	The aim to remove the difficulties that arise for individuals with disabilities due to societal barriers.	To promote awareness of potential exclusionary factors and for implementation of policy to ensure equality.	The implementation of policy and legislation. Greater societal awareness of disability, equality and diversity.	Warnock Report 1978 Education Act 1981 Inclusion Statement 2000 SENDA 2001 Disability Discrimination Act 2005 Equality Act 2010
Human Rights	The desire to achieve equal rights (at an international level) for all individuals, regardless of specific need or status.	To remove barriers (social, attitudinal or physical) that may impact upon the lives of individuals.	The commitment of national governments to agree to, and implement, relevant policy and legislation.	Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948 UN Convention- Rights of the Child 1989 UNESCO Salamanca Statement 1994 UN Convention- Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006
State Influenced Market Approach	To promote free markets and trade.	The desire to reduce bureaucracy and increase the choice available to consumers	Change in government role in providing services in a range of areas e.g. health, education, social care.	Education Reform Act 1988 Children and Families Act 2014 Code of Practice 2015
Financial Crisis	The need to introduce measures to initially support and then maintain a country's economic stability as a result of the effects of a financial and economic downturn or recession.	The desire to reduce and then completely remove any financial deficits that accrue as a result of a financial crisis.	Development of policies that enable the implementation of funding cuts to ensure economic recovery and the creation of a government budget surplus.	SEN/D Code of Practice 2015

Conclusion

The five models examined in this chapter demonstrate very different aims and values. The medical model portrays the individual and his/her impairment as the problem, which requires intervention in order to 'fix' the issue. As a result, attention is seldom given to the wider context in which the individual lives and how modifications to this context may enable greater equity. This idea is examined however, in the social model as it emphasises that a range of societal barriers can impede the lives of people with impairments, causing them to feel disempowered and discriminated against, until these barriers are removed through the external intervention of the state. The human rights model also promotes the implementation of individual legal rights to equity, and the role of governments. The state-influenced market approach concentrates on raising economic efficiency as well as providing choice for its consumers. This approach however, may be impacted upon by the financial crisis model and the priorities that are established due to the necessity to manage national budgets. This may include reductions in funding for projects that aim to increase access to services for people with disabilities, thus continuing the potential of their exclusion from equity of choice and participation.

Elements of most of these models are apparent in relevant policy, documents and legislation that focus on the implementation of provision for pupils with SEN. The different underpinning principles of these models may differentially influence the direction and content of such policy and those issues that are considered to be the priorities for implementation. The impact upon the support for pupils with SEN may be significant and is the focus of Chapter 2.

Chapter 2: The use and influence of these models in SEN related legislation 1978-2015

Chapter 1 has identified and examined five models that may potentially influence the development of policy content and direction. These are the medical, social and human rights models, the state-influenced market approach and the financial crisis model. Although they each have very different aims and underpinning values, these models may, to a degree, interact with policy formation. The use of these models therefore, may significantly change the provision deemed to be the most effective for pupils with special educational needs.

During the time period of 1978-2015, an extensive range of documents has been published, policies developed and legislation enacted, in order to develop effective provision for pupils with SEN. Documents have therefore been selected for analysis to investigate the influence of these models in framing the present context. The overall aim of this chapter is to complete this analysis by focusing upon the five different models. Reference will also be made to academic literature to further develop the analysis, in order to ascertain the influence of any of these models and to identify any developments or changes in their use during the time period.

The documents, policy and legislation that will be examined in this chapter have been selected as they have been seminal with regard to their importance during the designated time period. The Warnock Committee, enquiry and subsequent report (DES, 1978) was the first to be commissioned by any UK government to

review educational provision for all handicapped children, whatever their handicap. This report abolished the longstanding use of the term 'handicap', reconceptualised the terminology and approach to be used when identifying and providing for SEN and determined that "up to one in five children at some time during their school career will require some form of special educational provision" (ibid: 41). Hornby (2011) suggests that it was this report that accelerated the impetus to introduce inclusive education, both in the United Kingdom and other countries.

The 1988 Education Reform Act initiated a range of major changes to the education system, providing an increased choice of types of school, the delegation of budgets to individual schools and a greater central control over curriculum and assessment procedures. Although not directly or solely focused upon issues of SEN, the outcomes of this legislation continue to impact upon planning and support for pupils with SEN, as an even greater range of types of school, with varying curriculum and assessment procedures, has been further developed by successive governments.

The SEN strategy "Removing Barriers to Achievement" (DfES, 2004) was constructed within the wider child protection framework implemented in "Every Child Matters" (DfES, 2003). This SEN strategy focused upon early identification and support, with particular consideration of issues of social inclusion to ensure that individuals or groups at risk of disengagement and exclusion from the education system were provided with support and opportunities to succeed.

The most recent Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice provides “statutory guidance on duties, policies and procedures relating to Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014” (DfE, 2015a:12). This section of the Act focuses on children and young people with SEN or disabilities in England and introduces a new framework for SEN, which replaces the existing legislative system, introducing procedures such as personal budgets and Education, Health and Care plans.

The Warnock Report (DES, 1978)

Warnock and Norwich (2010) identify that one reason for the commissioning of the committee was the enactment of the 1972 Education Act. This legislation provided all children, however severe their disability, with an entitlement to education. As a result, the committee’s task was “to articulate a concept of education that could make sense in the context of any child, anywhere on the continuum of ability or disability” (Warnock and Norwich, 2010:16).

Medical model influences are apparent in the Report, as although it recommended the abolition of the term ‘handicap’, replacing it instead with the concept of special educational needs, continued reference is still made to different categories of need, or what the Report refers to as “future forms of description” (DES, 1978:43). It is recommended that the term ‘educationally sub-normal’ is replaced with the description of ‘learning difficulties’, (which can be moderate, severe or profound and multiple) and that children with particular difficulties should be described as having “specific learning difficulties” (DES, 1978:43); however, the term ‘maladjusted’ is retained as “it remains a

serviceable form of description” (ibid: 44). Borsay (2011:11) suggests that the Report’s definitions of the three bands of learning difficulty, later referred to in the 1981 Education Act, “merely produced a change of terminology” and have thus retained a medically focused classification. The continued use of categories, however modified, perpetuates the notion of the difficulty as located within the child and requiring remediation.

The Warnock Report also established five school-based stages of assessment. At any stage, this assessment could be supported by information from “medical, social and other sources” (DES, 1978:60) and is ratified within the 1981 Education Act. Assessment at stages 4 and 5 required a multi-professional approach to assess the child’s needs; the outcome of this assessment could lead to a statutory statement that detailed the provision a child was then entitled to. Such an assessment was again medically focused, categorising the child’s individual difficulties and deficits and recording the interventions required that would enable their “normalisation” into the education system (Hodkinson, 2016:31).

There are also a number of ideas within the Report that can be associated with the tenets of the social model of SEN and disability, and this model can be identified as the predominant approach within this document. It is identified that “the purpose of education for all children is the same; the goals are the same” (DES, 1978:5), and that it was assumed that all children, “irrespective of their abilities or disabilities, should aim towards [these goals]” (Warnock and Norwich, 2010:12). This reference to common goals reflects the social model

imperative of ensuring “the same rights to full equality in society and education as all citizens” (Hodkinson, 2016:31), achieved through the removal of any barriers that may impact upon an individual.

The report recommended that categories of individual handicap should be replaced by the term “special educational needs” and this term was defined in the 1981 Education Act as a “learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made” (Chapter 60:1; subsection 1.1), due to a child having a significantly greater difficulty in learning or a disability that prevents full access to educational facilities. Hodkinson (2016:80) suggests this more positive terminology reinforces the idea that the previous use of handicap to categorise children was “both damaging and irrelevant”, and this idea is supported by Lauchlan and Greig (2015:71), who comment that the 1981 Act “resulted in a move from special education” as a separate consideration from mainstream education, “to a more all-encompassing idea of SENs”.

Frederickson and Cline (2010) develop this idea further, suggesting that the level of need experienced is the result of both an individual’s strengths and weaknesses and external factors such as the support available and suitability of the education being provided. The identified need is therefore not solely due to difference or deficit, as the interrelationship of the individual and the environment is acknowledged.

The potential influence of external factors upon a child’s learning and progress is acknowledged as it is identified that “schools differ...in outlook etc...all of which help to determine the degree to which the individual is educationally

handicapped” (DES, 1978:37; paragraph 3.5). Particular reference is also made to the fact that “behavioural disorders may be brought about or accentuated by factors at the school, such as its premises, organisation or staff” (ibid: 59; paragraph 4.33). The report therefore suggests a range of provisions that should be put in place, ranging from favourable staff attitudes to modifications to the physical environment and the use of specialist equipment. This emphasis on the influence of external factors upon an individual’s access and equity to education once again reflects the principles of the social model.

The Warnock Report also makes explicit reference to integration, affirming support for “the principle of the development of common provision for all children” (DES, 1978:100). This focus on integrative practice represented a “shift away from a de facto assumption that certain needs would automatically be met in separate special school settings” (Lauchlan and Greig, 2015:72) and identified that, from the time of the report and the 1981 Education Act, pupils with SEN “would be every teacher’s responsibility” (Hodkinson, 2016:80), thus reiterating the necessity for positive and affirming attitudes towards, and understanding of, difference. This focus upon integration (the precursor to educational inclusion previously identified in Chapter 1), underpins the social model as emphasis is placed upon enabling individuals with disabilities to engage fully and equally in all areas of society.

In retrospect, Warnock now identifies what she refers to as “the superficiality of our approach [which] is reflected in our belief that we could abolish categories or avoid labelling” (Warnock and Norwich, 2010:125). She also considers that

as a result of attempting to avoid categorisation, children with very different needs were often referred to “as if they were all the same, i.e. special educational needs (SEN) children” (ibid:19), thus creating a new category. This could potentially limit the range of support seen to be necessary, and potentially its effectiveness, as the assumption could prevail that one single type of provision could be utilised that would be effective in supporting all children identified by the term SEN.

Farrell (2001) further develops the limitations of using a category based system, suggesting that as a result of labelling, little focus is given to external factors that may be impacting on the child, as the emphasis remains instead on cure or care (Hodkinson, 2016). A focus on categorisation can also “have the effect of lowering expectations as to what a child might achieve” (Farrell, 2001:4) as the child then has “fixed characteristics” (Dyson, 1990:59) as a result of medical assessments and diagnosis; less may then be expected of him or her in terms of attainment in comparison to non-disabled peers. Norwich also suggests that the concept of SEN has become a “superordinate category, a super category” (Warnock and Norwich, 2010:64), which has merely switched categories of individual difference to that of a category focused on additional provision.

Many of the underpinning principles of the social model can be identified in the Warnock Report, as it focuses on equity with regard to educational goals, the importance of integration and the potential impact of external factors upon the individual’s ability to engage fully within his or her community. This emphasis reflects the shift in thinking that occurred during the 1970s, where the medical

model was increasingly considered to be a “mechanistic process” of identification, diagnosis and treatment when associated with education (Hodkinson, 2016:25).

The continued use of categories of need was supported by a change to a more positive use of language and terminology, which clarified the type of provision that a child may require. The Warnock Report also identified that a “full investigation of a child’s disabilities calls for more than a medical examination” (DES, 1978:58), and thus emphasised the importance of a multi-professional approach in order to fully meet and support a child’s needs, as a range of external factors could impact upon a child’s development.

Although considerable reference can be made to the influence of the social model in the Warnock Report, it does not refer to any legal definitions of human rights. It is identified however, that “education...is...a human good, to which all human beings are entitled” (DES, 1978:6; paragraph 1.7) and that “whatever their disability, disorder or difficulty, they should be given the chance to reach the highest level of achievement possible for them” (ibid: 163; paragraph 10.3).

Warnock has recently revised her initial ideas of considering inclusion as the most beneficial means of accessing education. Rather than including all children ‘under the same roof’, she now believes that “we should consider the ideal of including all children in the common educational enterprise of learning, wherever they can learn best” (Warnock and Norwich, 2010:13), to ensure that

pupils feel that they belong, thus engendering the potential for positive learning and well-being. This notion is supported by Hornby (2011), who suggests that although it is a human right for pupils to be educated alongside their peers in a mainstream class, it may not morally be the most appropriate option. He identifies that the right to an appropriate education, suited to individual needs is more important. Farrell (2001) extends this idea, considering that this basic need may only be met if a child attends a special school and that parents and children must not be denied their right to choose.

The concept of special educational needs “was widely seen as promoting a charter for the integration of children with special educational needs into the mainstream sector” (Armstrong, 2005:140); however, he also acknowledges that in retrospect, “such claims were massively overstated”. Borsay (2011:11) also supports this view, concluding that the 1981 Education Act “did not facilitate the inclusive education essential to human rights”. There were significant caveats in the 1981 legislation, as it confirmed that the mainstream education of a child with SEN had to be compatible with:

- a) his receiving the special educational provision that he requires;
- b) the provision of efficient education for the children with whom he will be educated; and
- c) the efficient use of resources

(Chapter 60: 2; subsection 2.3).

Although schools and local authorities would have to provide evidence for any incompatibility, these let-out clauses continued to emphasise the lack of equity that existed for some pupils.

As the publication of the Warnock Report occurred prior to the introduction of the majority of the human-rights legislation identified in Chapter 1, this may

explain why there are only general references to “human good”. Direct links could have been made however, to the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (United Nations, 2015) as this refers to rights to access and equity in education.

There is also no direct reference made to market influences; comment is linked only to the development of parental choice with regard to elements of the SEN process, which does not necessarily involve the use of market mechanisms. The Warnock Report recommends that parents should have the right of appeal to the Secretary of State “against a decision to record or not to record their child as in need of special educational provision” (DES, 1978:71; paragraph 4.74) and this right of appeal, as well as a process of appeal to follow if parents disagreed with a statement, were both ratified within the 1981 Education Act.

It is acknowledged that as a result of the 1981 Act, certain processes were made more explicit and accountable, and the status of parents was raised (Farrell, 2001), although these elements were only later linked with the state-influenced market approach. Hodkinson (2016) also comments that the final decisions always remained either with the local education authority, or ultimately, the Secretary of State, as the 1981 Act contained the caveats regarding compatibility of need and efficient education for the peers of the child with SEN.

During the commissioning and completion of the Warnock Report, a global economic downturn and recession was being experienced. The Report recommended a range of measures that would involve substantial additional

expenditure, and although no direct reference is made to the impact of these economic difficulties or the necessity for budget reductions or austerity measures, the Committee acknowledges the “continuing financial constraints on central and local government” (DES, 1978: iv). Hodkinson also suggests that “the lack of extra money to implement the 1981 Act, meant effective integration became subject to a postcode lottery” (2016:82) with regard to its implementation.

The major influences that can be identified within the Warnock Report therefore, are associated with the medical and social models. The medical model had been the dominant approach used prior to the report and an emphasis on diagnosis, categorisation and remediation is still apparent. The impetus of the disability movement however, and the ideological impact of the social model, created a focus upon the concept of disability which heralded the beginning of a period of significant change. The Report and the 1981 Education Act were seminal materials as they initiated the re-evaluation of attitudes towards the inclusion of all children, changed the terminology used and provided legal mechanisms to support the integration of pupils with SEN within mainstream schools. Major legislative reforms, affirming the rights of pupils with SEN, were now in place, the main elements of which have only recently been replaced by the new framework. Although this process also led to the consideration of human rights and a focus on consumer choice and implications for funding provision, these three models received far less emphasis within the Report, as the overarching aim of the Warnock Report had been to review educational provision for ‘handicapped’ pupils. The latter two however, are evident within the 1988 Education Reform Act.

The 1988 Education Reform Act

This was a ground breaking piece of legislation as it introduced a “radical change in the culture and ethos of state schooling” (Deem, 1990:158). Such a radical shift was identified by the government as being necessary in order to “inject a new vitality into that system [education]” as it had become “producer dominated” and should therefore be returned to the consumers (Baker, 1987; quoted in Maclure, 1989: vi). This view is contested by Maclure, (1989: v), who argues that the actual aims were to reduce the influence of local authorities, teachers and their unions and to increase their accountability, thus “altering the basic power structure of the education system”, as the Secretary of State was also provided with increased discretionary powers with regard to financial, curriculum and assessment arrangements.

Although as previously identified, this legislation did not focus solely upon SEN, the new procedures directly affected outcomes for pupils with SEN, and demonstrate influences that can be linked to the models being used for analysis. These new procedures included the launch of a National Curriculum, its associated assessment and reporting arrangements, the management of budgets, pupil numbers and admissions, which were ceded to schools and the introduction of grant maintained status schools.

The National Curriculum document introduced was subject focused and supported by an assessment system which allocated designated levels to achievement and attainment. Pring (1989:107) suggests that “setting norms of attainment for the population as a whole...has been seen by many not to take

sufficient account of...individual variation". This idea is extended by Barker, who suggests that the curriculum is:

designed mainly for those with good general intelligence and leaves many unable to improve beyond a well-defined cognitive ceiling...many below average students are stuck permanently, unable to engage with concepts at the next level (2008:676).

Such a system therefore, favours those individuals who are capable of the required attainment.

The narrow parameters of the National Curriculum and the focus on attainment were unsupportive of those with individual needs, who were unable to meet these norms or standards. Instead of considering any potential barriers to learning and establishing a means to overcome them, the new procedures allowed for "the modification or disapplication of parts of the National Curriculum" for pupils with statements, (Fowler, 1990:69), thus removing these children from the system, rather than reappraising the system itself. There is resonance with the medical model as the problem is seen to lie with the child and not the system. As the pupil is unable to accommodate the demands of the curriculum, he or she is removed from the system, due to an inability to assimilate with the required norms. Failure to achieve the attainment levels set out in the assessment procedures could then be ascribed to the child's learning difficulties, rather than to a narrow, prescribed assessment system which focused on academic achievement.

The 1988 Act also provided an entitlement for all children to access a broad and balanced curriculum and this provision of greater equity can be associated with the tenets of the social model. This development would enable the removal of any barriers that had previously segregated some children from their peers.

Russell, (1990:212) argues that such an entitlement could be advantageous for pupils with special needs as they had been “too readily excluded in the past” and now had equity with their peers regarding access to learning. It is, however, also suggested by Russell that the multi-professional support to be provided for pupils with SEN, (recommended in the Warnock Report and endorsed by the 1981 Act), would be potentially more difficult to organise due to the devolvement of budgets to individual schools. The necessity to achieve the required attainment standards may mean that greater support would be provided for those pupils on the borderline of achieving the norms required, resulting in less support being allocated to those who would not achieve the stipulated requirements. This could potentially lead to disaffection among pupils with SEN (Hornby, 2011).

There is no direct reference to the issue of human rights within the 1988 legislation. Wedell identifies however, that the Act “promotes the National Curriculum as an entitlement for pupils” (1988:99). He suggests therefore, that any modifications or disapplications which are then applied to the curriculum can be seen to be an infringement of a pupil’s right to access this curriculum as the individual no longer has equity with his or her peers. He expands upon this idea by suggesting that the promotion of an individual’s rights to equal access to all aspects of learning may then, paradoxically lead to the provision of inappropriate curricula and pedagogy, as the right to equity of learning content (without modification), will result in the individual’s inability to access this learning without support. Regardless of the option applied, a pupil’s rights cannot then be fully achieved, thus limiting equity of opportunity. The publication of this legislation also occurred prior to the introduction of the majority of the

human-rights legislation identified in Chapter 1. Direct links could have been made however, as previously suggested, to the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights (United Nations, 2015).

There are many state-influenced market approaches that can be identified within the 1988 Act: these include the processes of local management of schools, open enrolment and grant maintained schools and each has the potential to impact upon equity for pupils with SEN. Maclure (1989: x) considers that a basic concern of the Act is “competition as a spur to quality” as staff are encouraged to ‘sell’ their schools, and consumers are provided with greater power to take advantage of a more flexible education system. Paradoxically, one of the main elements of the Act was to introduce and enforce a National Curriculum; however, although this ensures direct central control over pedagogy, Maclure argues that:

it is only possible to take the risks inherent in setting schools free of the local authority’s leading reins if there is a clearly defined National Curriculum in being, or if the Secretary of State has the power to prescribe and police it” (ibid: ix).

Ball refers to this as “fragmented centralisation” (2008:186) as established autonomies are removed from schools, but new ones are granted simultaneously. The curriculum was part of a mechanism aimed at raising standards, and as a result, could have significant consequences for children with SEN, who may find themselves “devalued in a competitive market” (Bajwa-Patel and Devecchi, 2014:120). Pupils who are unable to meet the required norms can become “unattractive clientele for schools struggling to improve standards”, meaning that schools are “increasingly looking for ways to attract ‘motivated’ parents with ‘able’ children” (Runswick-Cole, 2011:116). Schools may also then be more likely to admit those children who are “the easiest and

cheapest to teach” (Ball, 2008:187), rather than those who can “deflate the figures of successful performance” (Pring, 1989:65), thus once again excluding a group of children based on perceived individual deficits, in order to demonstrate success in the standards required of schools within the state-influenced market approach.

Local management of schools devolved budgets to governors of schools with more than 200 pupils on roll (Pring, 1989) and enabled the schools to directly manage the cost of salaries, daily maintenance and resources. Although this provided schools with greater freedom, they were also handed full accountability, with the possibility of having to make “invidious choices previously shouldered by the local education authority” (Fowler, 1990:62). These choices could include difficult decisions that may have to be made when allocating school budgets, as the funding required for supporting pupils with SEN could potentially account for a considerable proportion of the amount available.

Schools were also provided with the opportunity to recruit more pupils (limited by the physical size of the school); however, the budget amount allocated thus became dependent on the number of pupils enrolled. Open enrolment therefore had the effect of increasing competition between schools, which is a major element of the market mechanism; this could however, make more unpopular schools unviable (Maclure, 1989). Pring (1989) suggests that the government justified this approach as a means of extending parental choice as well as ensuring that schools became more responsive to consumer demands. This approach could however, impact upon provision for pupils with SEN, as if

resource allocation to a school was too low, due to falling numbers, schools may not be able to provide pupils with the support they required.

Grant maintained status enabled primary schools with more than 300 pupils and all secondary schools to opt out of local authority control, to be financed by central government and managed by the school's governors, some of whom would be parents. Reay (2008) identifies that a recurring theme of the Act and evident in all of the changes described above, was accountability to parents. They were encouraged to become consumers, and were then provided with a wider range of school choices to best suit their child's needs. Some parents, however, are more articulate and informed, and thus able to take better advantage of the new systems. Gewirtz et al., (1995:183) suggest that those parents "who are not well placed to exploit the market to their advantage, either because of insufficient finances or inappropriate cultural and social capital" are disadvantaged in comparison. These may include parents of pupils with SEN, who have to compete with other parents for the resources necessary to support their children.

Schools were placed within a hierarchical system, with maintained schools becoming "the paupers of the system and the preserve of those unable or willing to compete in the market" (Whitty, 1990:32). Although parents had become the consumers, their children were "commodities with varying market value" which was based on any additional needs they may have (Bajwa-Patel and Devecchi, 2014:120). Warnock and Norwich (2010) conclude that, as a result of these changes, education moved away from a focus on the whole person to "a much more sceptical insistence that education must be useful in

some directly marketable way” (Maclure, 1989:156), thus potentially impacting upon the chances of those pupils who may not be able to develop the required employability skills.

During the 1980s, Ranson (1990) identifies that the effects of the 1970s economic crisis and recession were still apparent. He suggests that, “contraction seemed inevitable” as “the cost of services outgrew the political will to pay for them “(1990:6). The state-influenced market approaches of the 1988 Education Reform Act were therefore susceptible to the reduction in government funding that occurs in periods of austerity. Central reductions in budgets allocated to local authorities could result in less funding provided to schools. This could significantly impact upon the provision of support and resources for all pupils, but particularly those with SEN as such support could be both expensive to source and implement.

The centralisation of education was an influential factor within the 1988 Education Reform Act; however, the major influence acting upon SEN was that of the market. The 1988 Education Reform Act was implemented at a time when much of market thinking was underpinned by the ideology of neo-liberalism. Policy in all areas of government was therefore focused on free markets, trade and consumer choice, contextualised within the current economic situation. With regard to education, greater freedoms were provided to schools as a result of the procedures previously identified, and an increased range of types of school enabled parents to act as consumers within the education “market-place” if they wished to do so. Such an approach however, impacted significantly upon the rights of pupils with SEN, as their individual

needs could be seen to place potential restrictions upon a school's ability to achieve a competitive edge over their rivals. Their potential inability to achieve the required norms of attainment, and the financial implications of the funding necessary to support them in their access to the curriculum, could reduce a school's viability in the education market place and therefore increase the school's reluctance to accept them as part of their learning community. This approach was also susceptible to the vagaries of the financial market as the level of available funding could, at any time, be at risk due to periods of economic uncertainty.

Removing Barriers to Achievement (DfES, 2004).

Successive Conservative governments between 1979 and 1997 primarily based their approach to education on raising standards through the "introduction and maintenance of market forces" (Hoskins, 2012:6). The Labour government (1997-2010) continued this focus on market forces and regulation; however, their policy was also informed by "their commitment to a social justice agenda" (ibid: 6). Social justice in education was to be achieved by tackling issues of social exclusion; this was specifically defined as both relating to poverty and "being unable to participate in normal social activities" (ibid:12).

Removing Barriers to Achievement focused upon four areas: early intervention; removing barriers to learning; raising expectations and achievement and delivering improvements in partnership (DfES, 2004). Armstrong et al., (2011b) identify that this document aimed to locate special educational services within

the broader strategy of child protection. They expand upon this idea by suggesting that the strategy:

locates special educational interventions in relation to 'risk factors' associated with educational failure, communication breakdown, parenting inadequacies, school disorganisation and individual and/or peer group difficulties (Armstrong et al., 2011b:93),

thus ensuring a focus upon individual, family or community difficulties and deficits. This emphasis can be mainly associated with the medical model, as the impetus of intervention is to 'fix' the problems of those with difficulties. It can however, also be related to the human rights model, as the support provided to overcome these difficulties would then enable those individuals, families and communities to participate successfully and equally in society.

The medical focus is reinforced within the strategy as reference is made to the importance of early identification "so that parents can be confident that once problems have been identified, help will be forthcoming" (DfES, 2004:15; paragraph 1.10). The assistance available includes "interventions to help those who are falling behind their peers" (ibid:17; paragraph 1.14). This focus again has resonance with the human rights model, as the need for equity of support and relevant services is recognised. Reay, however, argues that such interventions are "disciplinary in so far as they are about early interventions into what are perceived to be dysfunctional families" (2008:645). She suggests that under New Labour, working-class parents were viewed as choosing "not to support their children, or in relation to choice of school, to make the wrong choices" (ibid:646), rather than because of a lack of available resources or their previous negative experiences of schooling. This idea is expanded upon by Armstrong (2005:148), who comments that policy focused upon "children, parents, communities and schools that are seen as potentially problematic". He

also argues that Removing Barriers to Achievement identifies child poverty as 'the underlying cause of educational disadvantage' and that it suggests 'the effects of poverty can be transformed through social interventions aimed at those most at risk' (ibid:145).

The strategy also describes the development of CD Rom teacher resource materials to provide information on a range of SEN (Autism, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, dyslexia, speech, language and communication needs and learning difficulties), as "each of these presents particular and growing challenges for schools" (DfES, 2004:31). Reference is also made to the "Three Waves of Support" model (the final level of which involves one to one intervention for those requiring the most intensive support). This range of measures is defined by Lloyd (2008:228) as "compensatory and deficit approaches geared towards normalisation and standardisation of groups". She continues this argument by identifying that children with SEN, through the use of this strategy are supported only in their attempts "to jump over the barriers, rather than at dismantling and removing the barriers in order to provide full participation" (ibid:234).

Analysis of the strategy identifies the influence of the medical model, as there is an emphasis on early identification and intervention. Although there is resonance with this model, it is not the only approach that can be identified, as there are links that can be made to the social model.

It is clearly acknowledged within the document that difficulties in learning arise as a result of individual impairments, but that they can also occur as a result of “an unsuitable environment-inappropriate groupings of pupils, inflexible teaching styles, or inaccessible curriculum materials” (DfES, 2004:28), and that to create a positive learning environment for children with SEN, head teachers must ensure that “staff develop the skills and confidence to respond effectively to children’s SENs” (ibid:32). The concepts of inclusion and embedding of inclusive practices implied here are associated with the social model and acknowledged by Lloyd as “central to the achievement of the aims and intended outcomes of the strategy” (2008:225); however, no specific means as to how this can be achieved are identified, in contrast to the myriad of approaches specified to support meeting individual needs or difficulties.

Reference is also made to the necessity to take steps to overcome barriers to learning, for example through the use of reasonable adjustments to ensure equity of access, a main principle of the social model. The National Curriculum Inclusion Statement is also referred to, the principles of which (setting suitable learning challenges, responding to pupils’ diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning and assessment) aim to support teachers in planning and teaching the curriculum; however, no further detail is again provided as to how these principles can be built upon. The SEN strategy also acknowledges that, “while there is increased flexibility...we have some way to go in developing a curriculum that meets the needs of all learners” (ibid: 65). There is no specific reference made here either, as to how this might be achieved, or any identification of the need for existing mainstream approaches to change.

In summary, the strategy refers to many plans and approaches that the government intends to implement in order to support the four identified areas. Although some plans are given specific dates for implementation, many aspects are referred to in much more general terms; these only identify intentions for action, with no accompanying timescale to assess the achievement of these actions.

An emphasis is also retained upon social inclusion, which has a focus upon educational outcomes, access to the mainstream of society and the re-engagement of marginalised groups (Dyson, 2001). Reference is made to the need to “unlock the potential of the many children who may have difficulty learning, but whose life chances depend on a good education” (DfES, 2004:14) with the “acid test for the success of this strategy” identified as “whether children with SEN are doing better in school” (ibid:79). This move from inclusion, with its focus on presence and participation in learning, to removing barriers in order to achieve effective educational outcomes, is seen by Lloyd (2008:227) to be the “central issue of contention” as this maintains the focus upon the requirement to achieve norms of behaviour, instead of on the individual.

There is greater evidence of the influence upon the social model apparent within this document, as reference is made to the impact of external factors, inclusion and reasonable adjustments. These ideas remain very general, however, as no specific detail is provided on how any developments to practice will be planned or implemented.

No direct reference is made to notions about human rights within “Removing Barriers to Achievement”. Emphasis is placed however, on the premise that “all children have the right to a good education and the opportunity to fulfil their potential” (DfES, 2004:6). This focus is reinforced by two further statements that all children and young people “have a right to have their views taken into account in decisions about their education”, as all children “even those with the most severe or complex needs will have views about their education and the choices before them” (ibid: 67). This emphasis again underpins the main inclusion agenda, as this approach is “predicated on a human rights approach to disability and difference” (Liasidou, 2012:18) and reinforces the importance of an individual’s presence and participation in their community. Three of the pieces of human rights legislation described in Chapter 1 had been enacted by the time of this strategy; reference to these documents could have further underpinned the importance of equity for all pupils.

There are also no direct links to the state-influenced market approach within the document, although it is identified that consumer, or parental rights, have been strengthened with regard to choosing a mainstream place for their child. It is also acknowledged that parents can access an SEN and Disability Tribunal as a “last resort” if they have followed all other procedures and are still not satisfied with the provision their child receives (DfES, 2004:80; paragraph 4.16). The state-influenced market approach was still a key mechanism in many of the Labour government’s policies; however, this strategy focused on resolving issues of social inclusion by providing support for those at risk due to such issues as economic or social disadvantage. The aim was to address these factors so that individuals could acquire the appropriate skills for adult life and

the workforce; ultimately, they would then be able to effectively act as consumers within the market place.

No reference is made to the exact funding that would be required to implement the requirements of this strategy. It is claimed that existing SEN resources will be delegated, but no mention is made of any increase to relevant budgets. Training is to be provided on SEN issues and ICT for teachers and teaching assistants, but no further detail is provided as to what this will include. It is possible that no specific budget allocation is stated, as this will enable the government, in times of financial constraints, to modify provision swiftly and efficiently.

The main influences impacting upon this document then seem to retain a focus for both the medical and social models because emphasis is placed both upon the necessity for the identification of a difficulty and intervention to support the child or family's issue (medical model), as well as acknowledgement that some difficulties can be caused by the external environment (social model). It is important to note however, that the social model emphasis has been modified from educational inclusion (equity in learning opportunities) to social inclusion (engagement of marginalised groups). This modification may well reflect the aims of successive governments to raise standards and achievement levels in order to develop the efficiency and competitiveness of a well-skilled workforce and can again be associated with the neo-liberal approach, as education is seen to be the major factor in achieving these goals.

The SEN/D Code of Practice (DfE, 2015a)

This is the third Code of Practice to be implemented. Norwich and Eaton (2015) suggest that the key principles of the previous versions were “person centred without using the label”; they continue however, by identifying that “one of the hallmarks of the new system is adopting and extending current principles and practices and changing their terms of reference” (2015:121). These terms have been reviewed as a result of the Conservative government’s current SEN policy direction. This policy includes the belief that SEN has previously been over identified, and is supported by statements from Ofsted (2010:9) which reported that some pupils are wrongly identified as having SEN, and that “expensive additional provision is being used to make up for poor day-to-day teaching”. The government also argues (as stated in the Conservative 2010 election manifesto), that there has been a bias towards inclusion, demonstrated through the closure of special schools and the focus on increasing the numbers of pupils with more complex needs attending mainstream school. These issues supported the commissioning of the 2011 Green Paper (DfE, 2011) which had the overall aim of radically reforming the system. As a result of the Green Paper and ensuing legislative reforms, there are many changes demonstrated in the Code of Practice, which are now being implemented in schools.

The idea of bias is refuted by Runswick-Cole (2011), who argues that there has been a continued focus on the medical model in education, rather than consideration of the social model and its impact for promoting equity. She also refers to the continued use of legislative caveats (described on page 50) that

can exclude pupils with SEN from mainstream if their presence is incompatible with the provision of effective education for their non-disabled peers.

In conjunction with the two previous Codes of Practice, the 2015 version contains a medically focused definition of SEN, which identifies that “a child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her” (DfE, 2015a:15; paragraph xiii). The medical model is emphasised further as four areas of need are included in the document to provide “an overview of the range of needs that should be planned for” (ibid: 97; paragraph 6.27); these are communication and interaction, cognition and learning, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and sensory and/or physical needs. Hodkinson (2016:19) therefore concludes that the Code of Practice “makes plain how factors internal to the child should be considered as the prime focus”, placing the medical model once again at the centre of policy and provision.

Direct reference is made on three occasions to the fact that “high quality teaching” will “meet the individual needs of the majority of children and young people” (DfE, 2015a: 25; paragraph 1.24) and should be considered as “the first step in responding to pupils who have or may have SEN” (ibid: 99. Paragraph 6.37). This focus appears to have assimilated Ofsted’s 2010 report findings and the government’s belief that SEN is over identified. This measure could also be seen to be a cost-cutting exercise, as the Code of Practice also states that “improvements in whole-class provision tend to be more cost effective and sustainable” (ibid:94; paragraph 6.15).

This emphasis has links to the financial crisis model as reference is made in the Green Paper response document (DfE, 2012:3) to “the difficult financial situation we face”, which makes it “vital for us to make the best possible use of resources”. The influence of this model can also be further identified as Attwood (2013) suggests that the changes made to the SEN framework will ultimately enable the government to reduce the centralised SEN budget, as fewer children will be identified as having SENs. As schools will have autonomy with regard to their SEN expenditure (with the exception of local authority contributions for EHC Plans), Attwood concludes that the government will therefore be “distanced from blame when children are not adequately provided for” (ibid:186), removing it from any direct responsibility, and thus increasing the accountability of schools to their consumers.

This new approach will theoretically lead to fewer pupils requiring any support that is additional to or different from their peers; this is the definition for the one main level of special educational support that is now available. Attwood (2013) argues that raising the threshold for meeting the criteria for accessing support is harmful and will de-classify many children currently on SEN registers, as their difficulties will become “normalised” within the environment, with any additional problems being identified as the result of their individual failure to demonstrate sufficient achievement (Glazzard, 2013). Statistics published in 2015 support this argument, as it was reported that numbers of pupils identified as having SEN had fallen from 21.1% in 2010 to 15.4% in 2015 due to “more accurate identification of those with SEN following implementation of the SEND reforms” (DfE, 2015b:3).

Attwood (2013:183) also suggests that “pretending that a problem does not exist does not make it go away” and this idea is continued by Orton (2012:119), who considers that the new SEN support level “could result in a retrenching to a medical, deficit model of SEN”, as it “could increase the pressure to label children with ‘conditions’ to gain access to resources”. There are only two pages of the entire Code of Practice which describe in general terms the model which can lead to children being identified as requiring SEN support; there is however, no further information included regarding specific procedures for identification and continued support (Norwich, 2014).

The new Code of Practice also provides for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) to replace statutory statements. The focus remains upon the use of the medical model, as children will still have to undergo medical examinations and their needs will continue to be monitored, assessed and reported upon (Attwood, 2013). The EHC Plans will continue to provide a full description of the child’s special educational needs, but the title is seen by Norwich and Eaton (2015:119) to be “misleading” as they are “basically educational plans where health and social care needs are included in so far as they relate to SEN”. The focus therefore remains upon mediating the child’s individual needs through intervention and support.

As previously stated, there is a substantial medical model influence within the Code of Practice. There is very limited reference, however, to aspects of the social model within this version of the document. Specific reference is made to the fact that “all providers must make reasonable adjustments to procedures,

criteria and practices” (DfE, 2015a: 17; paragraph xx), and that a culture of high expectations must be established to ensure that all children with SEN are included in “all the opportunities available to other children and young people so that they can achieve well” (ibid: 27; paragraph 1.31).

Attwood (2013) also identifies that the social model can be seen as being applied as there is an increased focus on good teaching practice and the provision of resources that may lead to many children being supported effectively and therefore able to be removed from school SEN registers. Ellis and Tod (2012) suggest that the new guidance may support teachers in improving interactions as any adjustments in policy “should be seen as an endeavour to assess the quality and efficacy of the interaction between the pupil and their learning environment”, thus removing the need to “find a ‘cause’ for individual differences” (2012:64). Lamb (2012:110) continues this idea however, by arguing that this process could be counterproductive if schools then “retrench their efforts on a smaller group of children...without addressing the needs of others”, thus failing to achieve the underpinning principles of the social model with regard to equity of opportunity.

There is limited reference to the human rights model within the Code of Practice. General reference is made to the fact that local authorities must have “regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child’s parents” (DfE, 2015a:19; paragraph 1.1), and that they should be engaged in “commissioning decisions, to give useful insights into how to improve services and outcomes” (ibid:42; paragraph 3.18). Specific reference is

also made to children's rights to receive information and to express their opinions in accordance with Articles 12 and 13 of The Convention on the Rights of the Child (ohchr, 1989) and to the UK government's commitment to inclusive education for disabled children and young people, as described in Articles 7 and 14 of The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006). No further detail is provided however, as to how these commitments will be achieved.

There is greater evidence of the state-influenced market approach within the document. Norwich and Eaton (2015:119) identify that Conservative SEN policy reflects wider social policy directions as "an even stronger market approach to public service provision in education and health services" has been introduced. This is most in evidence in the Code of Practice in the allocation of personal budgets to the parents of children with an EHC Plan. This budget is a designated amount of money "identified by the local authority to deliver provision...where the parent or young person [over 16] is involved in securing that provision" (DfE, 2015a:178; paragraph 9.95). Robertson suggests that this system is potentially divisive, as it may lead to more parents requesting assessments in order to achieve guaranteed resources, which could then reduce the level of support schools can provide to other children. There is the possibility that SENCOs could become "ration book" managers of increasingly scarce resources and that "decontextualised interventions that are counterproductive" may be selected by parents which potentially will not fully support their child's needs (2012:80).

Parents also maintain certain rights as consumers as they can request an assessment for an EHC Plan and can also ask for a particular school to be named in the plan if it is approved. If either, or both, of these requests are refused, parents have the right of appeal, unless the school is deemed to be unsuitable for the child or the child's needs are incompatible with the efficient education of other pupils; this caveat has been retained from the 1988 Education Reform Act regulations.

There is substantial evidence of the influence of the medical model in the Code of Practice as emphasis continues to be placed upon a pupil's needs which label that individual as 'different' from his or her peers. There are very limited references in the document to any social model influences or the notion of inclusive practice. State-influenced market approach approaches can clearly be identified in this document, adhering to previous policy direction, with consumers being provided with increased rights, even though these rights may impact upon the support available for other children. Neo-liberal ideology can again be seen to be acting as a major influence on policy. The impact of the current financial restrictions imposed by the government, and its belief that SEN is over-identified and disproportionately supported in educational practice, has the potential to impact greatly upon both provision for pupils with SEN and the ideology that underpins the decisions regarding the allocation of funding.

A summary of the influences of the five models in the reviewed documents

	Medical model	Social model	Human Rights model	State Influenced Market Approach	Financial crisis
The Warnock Report/ 1981 Education Act	-continuation of the use of categories of need -5 stage assessments -statutory statement of need	-common educational goals -concept of a continuum of "special educational needs" -consideration of attitudinal and environmental factors -concept of integration	-education as a 'human good' -caveats regarding compatibility of individual needs with education of peers	-parental right of appeal if SEN is recorded/not recorded	-no direct reference, although reference is made to continuing financial constraints for central and local government
The 1988 Education Reform Act	-National Curriculum: focus on attainment and achievement -modifications and disapplications process -comparison statistics	-access to a broad and balanced curriculum	-no direct reference	-local management of schools -open enrolment -grant maintained status	-no direct reference; however, funding to schools is dependent on central government who could reduce budgets in order to manage any deficits due to recession.
Removing Barriers to Achievement	-early identification to identify 'problems' -resource materials focusing on individual conditions	-need to develop a positive learning environment and to consider external factors -reference to inclusion -reference to reasonable adjustments	-right to a good education and to fulfil potential	-strengthening of parental rights to choose a mainstream place for their child	-no direct reference; however, any required funding or training is referred to in general terms.
SEN/D Code of Practice 2015	-SEN definition -four areas of need -raised thresholds which de-classify children with SEN -EHC Plans	-reasonable adjustments -focus on good teaching practice and provision of resources	-reference to The Convention on the Rights of the Child -reference to The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	-option of personal budgets for parents of children with EHC Plans	-no direct reference, but changes to the framework will result in fewer children being identified, which will positively impact upon the finances required to support SEN.

Conclusion

The influence of the five models under discussion can be seen within the policy examined in this chapter; the level of this influence however, is markedly different. None of the policy examined is solely reliant upon the use of one model; several models may interact within one document, emphasising the different priorities that a government may need to consider and resolve at any one time.

The use of the medical model can be identified as a consistent influence on policy as the importance of mediating deficit and difference through intervention is defined in all of the selected policy, albeit in different ways. This emphasis locates the cause of SEN within the individual and can be seen to be diametrically opposed to the social model, which identifies the problem as being caused by barriers imposed by society. The social model can also be seen to be opposed to the state-influenced market approach model, as greater government expenditure may be required to implement changes to achieve equity; at times of austerity, this funding may also be impacted by budget restraints and deficit reduction mechanisms.

It is more problematic when attempting to make connections between the documents being discussed and the human rights model; this lack of focus may therefore negatively impact upon provision for SEN, and the ability to apply international law if an individual wishes to appeal against issues of inequality apparent in national legislation. Consideration is given to the development of parental choice; however, this element has been subsumed within the state-

influenced market approach, rather than with the social and human rights approaches. As there is currently very limited emphasis upon the human rights model, it is an issue that requires much more discussion and development by national governments.

Policy direction can be influenced and mediated by the political priorities that exist at the time of development. Current policy emphasis, as seen in the evaluation of the 2015 SEN/D Code of Practice, appears to be influenced by elements of the medical model, the state-influenced market approach and the financial crisis model. The use of these models reflect the current government's emphasis upon reducing a perceived over-identification of SEN, the reduction of focus upon the concept of inclusion and a desire to reduce the SEN budget. Any potential impact of these ideological and budgetary approaches will be examined as part of the empirical research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The aims of the research are to investigate a number of the major models of SEN and disability and to examine any influence they have had on the development of SEN policy and legislation. The main research question that will be considered is:

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision.

Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007:2) suggest that research questions are not framed by “operationalising variables”; they argue instead that questions are designed to investigate topics, focusing on both their complexity and context. Research objectives can therefore be seen to drive studies, rather than a particular paradigm or method (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). To support and underpin the research, a specific methodological approach must be selected. Research methodologies are comprised of theoretical perspectives which provide the justification for the methods selected for use (Burgess et al., 2009; Bogdan and Knopp Biklen, 2007). Within any chosen methodology, there are ontological and epistemological perspectives embedded in the framework (Crotty, 2003), which identify a specific view of both reality and knowledge.

This chapter will be divided into three sections. The first part will focus upon examining ontological and epistemological perspectives and the beliefs and principles of a number of paradigms. A rationale and justification will be provided, regarding the ontological, epistemological and paradigmatic approaches that have been selected for this research. The second section will provide a justification of the specific methodology and method that will be

utilised. It will also consider key issues such as generalisability, warrantability and transferability. Reference will also be made to interviewee selection, sampling procedures and research ethics. The final section will reflect and comment upon the initial framing of the interview questions, their development and the subsequent piloting procedure and the research process itself, identifying any issues that arose during the completion of the interviews.

Ontology

Ontology is identified as the study of being (Crotty, 2003; Burgess et al., 2009) and is concerned with “the inescapable and ultimate reality that we are all part of” (Plowright, 2011:176). Ontology proposes a specific set of ideas or beliefs which Denzin and Lincoln (2003) suggest determine the questions to be examined and therefore the knowledge to be ascertained through the use of a particular methodology; as a result, differing perspectives of reality can be applied.

One ontological viewpoint can be defined as realist (King and Horrocks, 2010). This perspective views that there is a world that exists independently from humans. This world consists of “objects and structures that have identifiable cause and effect relationships” (ibid: 9). It is believed that only one reality exists (Mertens, 2010) and that this reality is “mind independent” (Plowright, 2011:177) as it is an objective reality that does not depend on an individual’s perceptions, understandings or descriptions of that reality.

In contrast, a second ontological perspective can be identified as relativist, which suggests that the world is diverse and much less structured. An individual's understanding and experiences are relative to his or her cultural and social experiences, which are open to interpretation (King and Horrocks, 2010:9). Reality is therefore socially constructed; as a result, there is the potential for multiple realities, which are "socially and experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the persons who hold them" (Lincoln et al., 2011:102). This ontological reality is described as "mind dependent" by Plowright (2011:179). The researcher's goal is therefore to understand these multiple constructions of knowledge and meaning (Mertens, 2010).

A relativist ontology has been selected for use in this research, as its aim is to ascertain and analyse the interviewees' experiences and views of the impact of changes on their own school context.

Epistemology

Epistemology refers to the relationship of the "knower to the known" (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003:45), and the nature of the knowledge we can have about the world (Greene, 2007). It is also concerned with how we can justify the truth, or warrantable nature of the beliefs that are held by individuals (Bryman, 1988; Plowright, 2011).

There are also important, differing epistemological perspectives regarding the nature of this knowledge of the social world and how it can be produced (Bryman, 1988). One stance assumes that objectivity is paramount and is achieved through “observing from a somewhat distant and dispassionate standpoint” (Mertens, 2003:141). Individuals are considered as being independent of each other.

A second viewpoint rejects this view of human knowledge (Crotty, 2003) as within this perspective, meaning only exists as a result of participant engagement with the world and its realities. Interaction between individuals is seen to be essential, as knowledge is socially constructed through the relationships, activities and shared understandings that are then experienced (Plowright, 2011). Meanings are therefore mutually created; however, as reality and knowledge are socially constructed, they are constantly changing (Sale et al., 2008). This epistemological stance will be used in this research as interaction between the interviewer and participants will be necessary in order to gain knowledge of the impact of legislative changes on school practice and provision.

Paradigms

A paradigm can be defined as a set of beliefs that determine an individual’s way of thinking about a particular issue (Burgess et al., 2009; Plowright, 2011). This explanation is expanded upon by Bogdan and Knopp Biklen’s definition, as they describe a paradigm as “a loose collection of logically related assumptions, concepts or propositions that orient thinking and research” (2007:24). The use

of a particular paradigm can therefore determine and influence the view that a researcher has about the world, and the nature or type of research that should be undertaken (Creswell, 2009) and how the results should be interpreted (Bryman, 1988). Denzin and Lincoln also further define the term 'paradigm' (2003:33) as "the net that contains the researcher's epistemological, ontological and methodological premises" and that this framework guides the actions that are then undertaken. Any particular beliefs that are held therefore, influence the type of knowledge we can obtain about the world, and about what knowledge should be seen as important (Greene, 2007).

These paradigms will be examined in order to identify the variations that exist with regard to their specific principles. Reference will also be made to previous definitions of ontology and epistemology to further develop the analysis.

The Positivist Paradigm

Positivism is a view of the world that deals solely with "assumed certainties and reliable facts" (Burgess et al., 2009:54), which are to be derived only through experience or observation. This paradigm is not concerned with "ultimate causes that might derive from outside the framework of science" (Baggott, 2005:232). Scientific knowledge is seen to be achieved through the "accumulation of verified facts" and theories are seen as "providing a backcloth to empirical research in the sense that hypotheses are derived from them" (Bryman, 1988:15). Genuine knowledge can therefore only be achieved by means of observation and experiment; the focus is upon obtaining objectivity, measurability and predictability (Cohen et al., 2007).

Positivism assumes an objective ontological reality that is mind independent (Plowright, 2011) and which can be measured only through the use of scientific methods (Crotty, 2003), leading to justifiable or warrantable knowledge (Bryman, 1988). As any observer must remain neutral, there is an epistemological basis of independence between a researcher and participant in order to maintain scientific objectivity. The underlying aim therefore, is to provide objective and value free knowledge which must be unbiased and unaffected by the research/researcher process (King and Horrocks, 2010).

There are several criticisms raised against this paradigm. The first is that the tenets of positivism define human life only in observable and measurable terms rather than also considering experience, which therefore excludes the ideas of “choice, freedom, individuality and moral responsibility” (Cohen et al., 2007:17). The emphasis on a scientific viewpoint also fails to take into account an individual’s ability to interpret and understand his or her experiences (Cohen et al., 2007). Human behaviour is therefore seen as passive, “thereby ignoring intention” (ibid:18) and the possibilities for pro-active responses to experience and interaction.

The Post-Positivist Paradigm

This paradigm has retained the ideas of positivism in that it continues to assume that the social world exists independently of any human knowledge of it and focuses upon the use of objective scientific methods (Greene, 2007). It differs however, in the way that it challenges the positivist idea of the absolute truth of knowledge (Creswell, 2009), as this stance recognises that it is

impossible to be certain of such knowledge when studying human actions and behaviour. Epistemologically, there remains a focus upon objectivity, but this is tempered by the recognition that knowledge is fallible as researchers cannot remain completely neutral, as the “theories, hypotheses and background knowledge held by the investigator can strongly influence what is observed” (Mertens, 2010:15).

As with the positivist tradition, there is an ontological belief in one reality, which can be “studied, captured and understood” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011:8). The post-positivist viewpoint develops this idea further however, by suggesting that such reality can never be fully achieved or understood, as what can be studied and examined extends beyond the previous positivist limits of observable and measurable evidence (Mertens, 2010). Reality can therefore only be known within a “certain level of probability”, rather than completely (Mertens, 2003:140), as it is known incompletely due to a researcher’s human limitations. (Mertens, 2010). It is therefore impossible for research outcomes to be “totally objective nor unquestionably certain” (Crotty, 2003:40) as any meaning derived from data is a result of interpretation by the researcher (Denscombe, 2010), and is potentially no longer value free.

The Interpretive-Constructivist Paradigm

A central principle of this paradigm is to understand the subjective nature of human experience (Cohen et al., 2007). This can be achieved by focusing on the meanings that individuals apply to their experiences and situations in order to help them make sense of the world, as these interpretations are essential to

understanding behaviour (Schwandt, 2003; Punch, 2014). Meanings can be subjective, varied and multiple and lead the researcher to “look for the complexity of views rather than narrowing meanings into a few categories or ideas” (Creswell, 2009:8).

Interaction between a researcher and the participant is seen as essential as they co-create knowledge (Mertens, 2003). Emphasis is placed upon the participant's view of the situation, and explaining and understanding “the particular individual case rather than the general and the universal” (Cohen et al., 2007:8). Instead of beginning with a theory, Creswell (2009) identifies that researchers instead begin to develop a theory or pattern of meaning as the research progresses, in order to understand the lived experiences from the point of view of those involved (Mertens, 2010).

This paradigm assumes the ontological perspective that there are multiple socially constructed realities which “generate different meanings for different individuals and whose interpretations depend on the researcher's lens” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005:270). Realities are based on social interaction and experience, and as such, depend on the nature of the groups and individuals holding these beliefs (Punch, 2014). In contrast to the positivist paradigm, there can be no absolutes, as realities are no longer abstract; instead they are dependent on the relationships and interaction between people (Burgess et al., 2009). Evidence can be analysed in different ways, as people and situations differ, meaning that the research is value bound rather than value free. In contrast to the positivist paradigm, constructivism adheres to a

subjectivist epistemology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The researcher and participants co-create knowledge and understanding; their interaction is therefore seen as essential.

As previously identified, in order to complete this research, the views of a number of school staff will be gathered. The paradigm selected to underpin this research is the interpretive-constructivist viewpoint, as it considered that the perceptions of the participants will most effectively be understood by “sharing their frame of reference” (Cohen et al., 2007:19). The participants are actively involved in implementing policy and legislation into practice; meaning and understanding of their interpretations of the issue being investigated should then come “from the inside, not the outside” (ibid: 19). The perspectives provided will be individual and personal; the realities and knowledge conveyed will be varied, as they will be socially constructed and based on different experiences and interactions. The methodology that will be used as a framework for this research will be qualitative, as:

qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011:3).

The researcher is then immediately located within the particular worlds or contexts of the participants, and able to focus on the specifics of each individual situation.

Qualitative Methodology

Qualitative research can be defined as an approach to the study of the social world which “seeks to describe and analyse the culture and behaviour of

humans and their groups from the point of view of those being studied” (Bryman, 1988:46). Researchers therefore, as suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), require and seek answers to questions that emphasise how social experience is created and given meaning. Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007) expand upon this idea, commenting that meaning is an essential element of the qualitative approach, as researchers wish to see how individuals make sense of their lives. As a result of this emphasis, qualitative research can be identified as “naturalistic” as people and events are studied in their natural settings (Punch, 2014).

This direct involvement in specific settings is seen as essential, as “the world of lived experience...is where individual belief and action intersect with culture” and therefore provide answers that explain how social experience is created, enacted and given meaning (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003:12). The relationship that is established between researcher and participant is of vital importance, as this element, along with the multiple realities derived from social interaction, shapes the inquiry. The research that is completed is then value laden, rather than value free, as the interpretation of the resultant data analysis can be influenced by the “self” of the researcher (Denscombe, 2010:305).

To support this type of methodology, qualitative researchers use a “set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible” (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003:4), in order to gain a better understanding of the situation. Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007:4) identify five features of qualitative research. Firstly, it is naturalistic, as the setting and the individuals are the direct sources of the data;

the researcher is defined as the “key instrument”. Denscombe (2010:304) identifies this focus as one advantage of qualitative methodology as the data collected, and subsequently analysed, is “grounded” due to the use of specific and known contexts. Secondly, Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007) suggest that the data is descriptive, taking the form of words, rather than numbers; Denscombe (2010) states that this brings richness and detail to the data and its analysis. Thirdly, the qualitative approach is described as being concerned with the research process itself, rather than only with outcomes. This emphasis allows for the re-evaluation of original ideas and questions, as there is “tolerance of ambiguities and contradictions” and the understanding of the “prospect of alternative explanations” (Denscombe, 2010:304). This flexibility is possible due to what Bogdan and Knopp Biklen (2007) describe as the next feature, which is the inductive nature of qualitative methodology. The focus is to build a picture or understanding as the data is gathered and grouped together, rather than the intention to prove or disprove a previously held hypothesis (ibid). The final element identified is that of meaning, which enables the researcher to focus on the complexity of a situation (Creswell, 2009).

Qualitative research therefore supports iterative and inductive approaches to data analysis. Denscombe explains iterative analysis as an “evolving process”, where the phases of data collection and analysis take place alongside each other. He defines inductive analysis as working “from the particular to the general” as the analysis moves from a study of “localised data”, arriving at statements which are more generalised and abstract (2010:272). Although focused upon small research samples, the analysis can enable the development of more generalised comments about the issue in question. There

is the possibility however, that any analysis may result in the data being less representative or becoming decontextualised due to this process.

Punch and Oancea (2014) suggest that qualitative methodology encompasses a range of approaches to research, which involve methods for working with data that present it in non-numerical form. The intention of the qualitative researcher is to gain the participant's point of view; this can be obtained through the use of such methods as in-depth interviews and participant observations (Bryman, 1988). Qualitative methodology focuses upon what Denzin and Lincoln refer to as "an emic, idiographic, case based position", which directs a researcher to "the specifics of particular cases" (2003:16). The method of data collection that has been selected for this research is the semi-structured interview; such an approach will enable the direct collection of a range of knowledge and experience gained from a range of contexts, thus potentially identifying the differing realities and understandings held by the interviewees.

Semi-structured interview-data collection method

Interviews are used when a researcher wishes to access people's feelings, opinions, perceptions, constructions of reality and emotions (Denscombe, 2010: Punch, 2014). It is a very powerful means of understanding others and, according to Punch, is the most widely known qualitative data collection tool (2014). Participants are able to discuss their interpretations of the world they live in and provide explanations of their perceptions of the situations and events they have experienced. An interview can therefore identify "the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises the social

situatedness of research data". (Cohen et al., 2007:349.) Participants are selected as they have "some special contribution to make...have some unique insight or because of the position they hold" (Denscombe, 2010:181).

When using this method, the researcher becomes the "human instrument" in the research. The researcher is then able to adapt and respond to the situation, and can clarify or summarise any information required and "explore...analyse [and] examine atypical or idiosyncratic responses" (Cohen et al., 2007:170). As the aim of the research is to ascertain the views of stakeholders regarding any influences that may have impacted upon the development of policy and legislation, the use of the interview method is considered to be the most effective tool in acquiring this information. Participants will be able to explain and justify their opinions and ideas directly to the researcher.

The semi-structured interview approach will be used because this method will enable the researcher to engage directly with the participants in their school settings. Data will be collected from face to face interaction, rather than through the more detached and impersonal use of a questionnaire. The information provided in response to the questions can thus be immediately clarified or expanded upon, developing the detail of the data collected. This type of interview begins with a pre-determined set of questions (Freebody, 2003), which Gillham refers to as a "common structure" (2005:70), as the same questions are asked of all involved, and an approximately equal length of time for each interview is planned. There is however, the possibility of developing flexibility (Punch and Oancea, 2014) in order to be able to adapt to an individual

situation and pursue something which is relevant to the interviewee (Freebody, 2003), as additional, open and probing questions are also used if the interviewer judges “there is more to be disclosed” (Gillham, 2005:70). This approach results in what Denscombe (2010) identifies as discovery, as initial comments and ideas can be expanded upon, providing more in-depth information.

The data provided can be termed as “soft” as it is “rich in description of people, places and conversations, and not easily handled by statistical procedures” (Bogdan and Knopp Biklen, 2007:2). Such detailed information is also defined as “thick description”, which helps a reader to “understand how researchers reached their conclusions from the data available” (King and Horrocks, 2010:164). The authors expand upon this idea by stating that the process can be enhanced further if details of the development of the data analysis are included. These processes could involve the use of a thematic coding structure, which then provides an audit trail and can document how a researcher’s ideas have developed as their analysis has progressed. Data can then be coded or categorised according to the main themes or concepts that arise from the interview process (King and Horrocks, 2010).

To demonstrate the richness of such data, direct quotes from participants will be used in the data analysis for both “their evidentiary power and their aesthetic value” (Sandelowski, 2003:344). The use of quotes can clearly illustrate a particular point and “facilitate understanding of the thoughts and feelings of the persons studied” (ibid), enabling the reader to identify with the persons being

quoted. Although a range of contexts will be involved, resulting in the possibility of differing interpretations and viewpoints, in-depth information can be obtained regarding participants' priorities and understandings (Denscombe, 2010). As all of the schools involved are primary schools, it is envisaged that these priorities and concerns may be similar in nature, but influenced by their specific contexts.

There are clearly acknowledged advantages when using the semi-structured interview approach. Cohen et al., (2007) suggest it provides greater depth of information in comparison to other methods. The structure that is built into the process (as a result of the use of pre-determined questions), provides what Gillham refers to as a "balance between structure and openness" (2005:79). The use of additional prompts provides the potential for in-depth information to be exchanged, which will facilitate and support data analysis. Denscombe (2010) expands upon this idea, stating that valuable professional insights can be obtained. The flexibility of the approach also enables the participant to provide a more personal element to the research; Denscombe refers to this as being "therapeutic" for the participant, as he or she can share relevant personal and professional opinions (2010:192).

There are several limitations to using this approach. The various elements that constitute the interview process (question development, interviews, transcripts and analysis) can be time consuming (Gillham, 2005). There is also the potential for interview bias or subjectivity, which the researcher must be aware of and prepared to address (Cohen et al., 2007). With regard to this research project, these issues will be addressed through the use of a standardised set of

interview questions, which are open ended, to enable respondents to provide their own views and opinions. The five models of SEN will not be identified to the interviewees, so that the themes “pinpointed in the data, do, in fact arise out of the data and are not imposed on them” (Crotty, 2003:83). During the analysis of the data, consistent coding of responses will also be used to support and develop the credibility of the research.

There is also the possibility for what Denscombe defines as the “interviewer effect” (2010:193), as interviewees’ answers could be affected either by their perceptions of the position or role of the researcher, or the experiences he or she possesses in leading the interview process (Gillham, 2005). The participants who will be involved in the interviews are already aware of the researcher’s professional role and may have previously worked with her to support students during teaching practice. It is considered therefore, that mutual respect will be established, and that a professional detachment or neutrality (Cohen et al., 2007) will be able to be achieved. The researcher has also conducted many undergraduate admissions interviews and is therefore aware of the role of the interviewer. To further develop understanding of the research interview process, a pilot interview will be completed.

Qualitative data is produced as a result of completing a process of interpretation (Denscombe, 2010). As previously identified, this may have consequences for the “prospects of objectivity” (ibid: 299) as the researcher’s ‘self’ has been involved in interpreting the data. To counter the possibility of such bias or subjectivity, various criteria can be applied to qualitative research (in a similar

way to those applied to quantitative methods) to support the objectivity and analysis of the research.

Triangulation

One of the criteria that will be used to support research objectivity and analysis is triangulation. This approach seeks to enhance “validity or credibility” through convergence and corroboration (Greene, 2007:43). Denscombe (2010:347) identifies that by using what he refers to as “informant data” (gathered from a number of different participants) and “space data” (the use of more than one context), the validity of the research findings can be checked. This idea is supported by Mertens (2010:258) who identifies that detailed information can be provided “from multiple sources using the same method”. Although only one method has been selected for use (semi-structured interview), as the interviews will be held with a number of participants from a range of settings, it is considered that the data collected will be able to be considered as valid (credible) and reliable (dependable).

Credibility and Generalisability (internal and external validity)

Internal validity (credibility) refers to the extent to which the data, and the subsequent findings drawn from this information, “represent and reflect the reality which has been studied” (Punch, 2014:323). This explanation is continued by Denscombe (2010), who also refers to the importance of the data’s accuracy and precision, as well as the appropriateness of the data with regard to the research question under investigation. Cohen et al., (2007)

suggest that there is a variety of ways in which validity could be addressed when using qualitative data:

through the honesty, depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation and the disinterestedness or objectivity of the researcher (2007:133).

This list is extended by Punch (2014) who also refers to the use of a coding system and the necessity of being able to follow an 'audit trail' of the research process through the data analysis.

When using interviews as the data collection method, Gillham suggests that the validity or credibility of the report produced depends on how accurately the context and events are described. As it is necessary to undertake a process of data reduction in order to identify and code apparent themes, it will then "inevitably [mean] selection and interpretation, and the one is entailed in the other" (2005:127). An important device that can be used to persuade readers that a research study can be trusted (Sandelowski, 2003), is the use of direct quotes from the participants, as their voices are still clearly heard, thus retaining the essence of the information. Credibility is also assured as the research has to receive ethical approval (through the completion of the required university procedures), prior to the commencement of the study.

A particular feature of credibility that is an element demonstrated only in qualitative research is that of "member checking" (Punch, 2014:323) or "respondent validation" (Denscombe, 2010:299). This is completed to determine the accuracy of the findings, by returning to the participants with the data (e.g. interview transcript) and the findings (e.g. themes and analysis) in order to

check the accuracy of the information (Creswell, 2009; Denscombe, 2010) and how well the interpretation matches their experiences. It is proposed by King and Horrocks, that this process can be seen as both an ethical and a quality issue, as participants gain a “stronger voice in how they are presented than would otherwise be the case” (2010:163). These authors do also identify however, that potential problems may arise if participants either deny the accuracy of an interpretation, (if they do not wish others to see their views or opinions), or accept an inaccurate account because it is “flattering to them” (ibid:163). The participants in this research will be asked to check the transcript of their interview and agree its accuracy; analysis completed using this data will also be made available to them.

The findings that arise from the data analysis will have been interpreted through the use of all of the information gathered from the range of contexts involved (Denscombe, 2010). This can provide a firm foundation on which to base the conclusions that arise from the data, thus adding to its credibility. This data analysis should also include “any negative or discrepant information that runs counter to the themes” (Creswell, 2009: 191), as this will add to the credibility of the project as the research is demonstrating objectivity by acknowledging and commenting on all of the data, thus achieving an unbiased evaluation of the research.

External validity (generalisability), refers to whether the findings of a particular study can be applied to other subjects, settings and contexts (Denscombe, 2010: Bogdan and Knopp Biklen, 2007). According to Punch (2014), there are

three aspects involved when considering the generalisability of findings. The first element is whether the sampling involved is diverse enough; the sampling approach and selection of school staff used in this research will be explained and justified later in the chapter. The second aspect is whether the context(s) involved are described in detail, so as to enable a reader to judge the transferability of the findings. The final element is described as “concept abstraction”, as Punch (2014:324) identifies that concepts should be “sufficiently abstract” to enable them to be applied to other settings.

Creswell provides a counter argument to the notion of generalisability, as he considers that the value of qualitative research is to be found in the “peculiarity” of the specific context under investigation and that researchers should not attempt to generalise findings to “individuals, sites or places outside of those under study” (2009:192). Cohen et al., (2007:137) suggest instead that generalisability can be interpreted as “comparability and transferability”. It is then possible for readers of the research to assess the “typicality” of the situation and subjects, and make judgements on any similarities and differences when a comparison is made between the research context and their own. It is the responsibility of the researcher to provide relevant and sufficient detail to assist the reader in making such a judgement (Mertens, 2010). This can be achieved through the use of the thick description previously identified and will thus help to ensure that the research is warrantable. Gorard and Taylor (2004:169) explain that “a warrant is an argument that stands up to criticism”. With regard to qualitative research, Greene expands upon this idea by suggesting that knowledge claims are “warranted by the persuasive power of the account” (2007:38). It is imperative therefore, that the data collated from the

research, the various coding themes that evolve, and the detail of the analysis completed, enable the aspects of credibility, transferability and warrantability to be successfully applied.

Links can also be made to Bassey's idea of a "fuzzy generalisation". He suggests that this is a type of statement "which makes no absolute claim to knowledge, but hedges its claim with uncertainties" (1999:12). Such a statement arises from what he refers to as "studies of singularities" (ibid) and Bassey claims that the findings from this singularity may be possible, likely or unlikely to be found in other, similar situations. He continues by suggesting that the credibility of such a prediction "depends upon the trustworthiness of the research findings which underpin it and the likelihood of those findings being generalisable" (Bassey, 2001:19). This is supported by the researcher's account of the research contexts and the justification that is provided for the findings and their subsequent analysis (Bassey, 2001). With regard to this research project, the findings from the schools involved could potentially be interpreted to suggest that similar findings may be discovered in other primary schools.

Dependability (reliability)

The term reliability usually refers to "the degree to which the findings of a study are independent of accidental circumstances of their production" (Silverman, 2014:83). As such, reliability is concerned with the replicability of a project. When using the constructivist paradigm, Punch (2014:321) claims that the term dependability is used as a means to parallel reliability. Bogdan and Knopp

Biklen comment, that as qualitative researchers are concerned with the comprehensiveness and accuracy of data, they view reliability as:

a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the setting under study, rather than the literal consistency across different observations (2007:40).

To achieve such a “fit”, the research must contain detailed accounts of the method(s) used, the analysis completed and the decision making that was implemented (Denscombe, 2010). The latter may involve changes made to initial decisions at any time during the research process. Mertens identifies that such change should be expected, and therefore must be able to be tracked, identified and seen as “publicly inspectable” (2010:259) in order to confirm the reliability or dependability of the research. As qualitative research intends to record and provide explanations of the multiple interpretations and meanings individuals apply to their situations, it must be adaptable, as explanations may differ from one context to another, due to experience. Cohen et al., therefore state that reliability includes “fidelity to real life...specificity, authenticity, comprehensiveness...honesty [and] depth of response” (2007:149), dependent on what is meaningful to the participants.

The research will involve a number of participants from a range of settings to enable the researcher to develop depth and breadth to the findings. This will additionally support the “confirmability” or objectivity of the data and its interpretation, as the data will be able to be tracked to its source and the “logic that is used to interpret the data” will be clear to the reader (Mertens, 2010:260).

Reflexivity

Reflexivity recognises that researchers are a part of the social world they are investigating (Cohen et al., 2007). As this world is already interpreted by those living within it, Cohen et al., also argue that this undermines the idea of objective reality. They consider therefore, that researchers should “acknowledge and disclose their own selves in the research, seeking to understand their part in, or influence on the research” (2007:171). The application of reflexivity allows a critical stance to be used regarding the impact of both the researcher and the research context (King and Horrocks, 2010) where the research is taking place. Reflexive accounts therefore recognise “that the construction of knowledge takes place in the world and not apart from it” (Burgess et al., 2009:88).

The researcher must therefore personally and professionally consider how his or her beliefs, interests or experiences impact upon the research (King and Horrocks, 2010). A deep personal and professional interest in SEN has framed this research, supported by practical work with students. The notion of SEN can initiate a range of different emotions and opinions, which may vary for different participants. It is possible that the researcher’s personal opinions may differ to the ideas and viewpoints provided by the interviewees. It is vital therefore, for the researcher to remain neutral and unbiased during the development of the interview questions and the completion of the research. As a result, the researcher has engaged in regular discussion with thesis supervisors regarding the research focus, and has been supported by a SENCO in the pre-pilot and

piloting stages of the research, in order to receive objective comments regarding the process.

Interviewee selection

The focus of the research is to analyse the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision. It was therefore decided to involve a number of primary schools in the research. The researcher's professional experience has been gained in teaching in educational settings, both at primary school and university levels. The type of settings and roles of participants would therefore be similar to those experienced by the researcher whilst completing seventeen years of teaching in a number of primary schools. The decision was made to conduct the interviews with the Head teacher, SENCO and a class teacher in each school, as each member of staff interacts with policy and legislation on a daily basis when interpreting their principles into practice, although each participant's perspectives may differ in focus, depending on their particular role.

The use of focus groups, which would have been completed with teaching assistants from each school was also considered; however, this idea was discontinued, as teaching assistants are often primarily involved in working in a one to one situation with specific children to support their individual or additional needs, and may not have felt comfortable in providing comments on wider school policy implementation. They would however, have been able to provide relevant information on interventions and inclusive teaching and learning strategies. Ethical approval was also granted to approach relevant local

authority staff; however, the reorganisation of local authority provision led to difficulties in accessing the information required to approach relevant individuals. The decision was therefore made to conduct the research interviews solely within a number of school settings.

Sampling procedures

The researcher is a university education lecturer, working on an undergraduate degree programme which leads to the award of Qualified Teacher Status. As part of her role, the researcher works as a school experience tutor, supporting a number of trainees during their placement in partnership with relevant school staff. The decision was therefore made to undertake “opportunity” sampling (Mertens, 2010:323) by contacting a number of schools (where the researcher has acted as placement tutor on numerous occasions) to ascertain whether any settings may be able to assist with this research. This would mean that the researcher would be contacting known people and contexts, instead of approaching schools as an unknown individual. As the schools are familiar to the researcher, some knowledge already exists regarding a number of the staff and the school contexts. This knowledge however, relates only to the professional roles and responsibilities of all those concerned; the neutrality and objectivity required of all those involved is therefore deemed to be achievable. It must however, be taken into account that some schools may not be able to assist during the time frame due to influences beyond the researcher’s control, such as Ofsted inspections and Key Stage One and Two SATs.

Ethical procedures

A central ethical concern of any research must be to focus upon the well-being of the research participant (Gillham, 2005). The researcher must therefore attempt to anticipate and address any issues that could arise during the research (Creswell, 2009). The first issue to be considered was that of consent, both informed and voluntary. The head teacher of each school was sent an initial letter which contained detailed information regarding the researcher's role, identified the research aims and content, described how the data would be collected, analysed, presented and stored and invited staff to participate in the research. A similar letter was provided for staff who would be involved in the interviews and a copy of the questions was also included. Consent forms were also provided: these were an organisational consent form, to be signed by the head teacher and individual interviewee consent forms. These forms also contained information stating that the participants could withdraw from the research at any time.

The second issue to be addressed was that of confidentiality and anonymity. All of the staff were assured that no names (of individuals or schools) would be referred to in the research to ensure privacy (Cohen et al., 2007). Schools were therefore allocated a number for identification purposes and only the staff role was specified. Another issue that was considered was the verification of data; a transcript of their interview was therefore provided to each participant so that accuracy of information could be agreed. Each interviewee only had access to their individual transcript. All of this information was repeated at the beginning of each interview and the completed consent forms were collected at this time.

To ensure that any ethical issues had been fully considered, and that University requirements had been addressed, an ethics proforma was submitted to the Ethics Committee for approval. Additional documents were also provided (participant information letters, consent forms and the interview questions). This submission followed a tutorial with the thesis supervisor, where the final versions of the proposed documentation were discussed and agreed. Consent to undertake the research was subsequently granted by the Ethics Committee.

Question choice and development

During the process of framing the interview questions, four different versions of the interview schedule were developed. Amendments were made to achieve greater clarity and focus in the type of questions to be used and their specific content. The process was supported by a number of discussions with thesis supervisors; the subsequent editing of each version ended with version four, which was then both pre-piloted and piloted and version 5 was then devised. All of the versions, including the final (fifth) version are included in appendices 2-7. The decision has been made to include them all in order to clearly demonstrate the stages of development that occurred.

Version One

At this stage of the planning process (appendix 2), the individuals considered as potential participants in the interviews were head teachers, SENCOs, teachers and teaching assistants. Four different sets of questions were devised, prepared for the role of each individual member of staff. Each set contained

questions based on the five previously identified models of SEN (medical, social, human rights, state influenced market approach and financial crisis). A number of the questions were differentiated in content to specifically take into account the main role(s) of the interviewee, as some responsibilities were relevant to particular staff. Two questions were common across the four sets and some questions were used in two sets (e.g. Teacher/ Teaching Assistant and Head teacher/ SENCO).

When discussing and evaluating this version, it became apparent that it was unnecessary and potentially unhelpful to prepare different sets of questions. The development of a standard set of questions would mean that participants were able to answer all of the questions, rather than the researcher directing their answers by only allowing them to respond to certain questions. The use of one set of questions could also provide information about particular areas, such as those the participants know the most or least about, or wish to emphasise. In addition to this, one standardised set of questions would demonstrate that the roles and viewpoints of all participants would be equally considered within the research. All of these considerations would hopefully support the collation and analysis of detailed information in a more coherent and consistent manner. The questions were therefore revised.

Version Two

This version (appendix 3) contained one set of questions to be used for each participant, regardless of their roles and responsibilities. A greater clarity was developed with regard to reference to policy and any potential impact it may

have upon practice. This focus had been implied in version one, but required more explicit identification in order to address the sub research questions. Questions were still clearly linked to and identified with the five models of SEN, and the number of questions increased from ten or eleven to eighteen in this version. The use of open questions continued across this version and the previous one to enable participants to explain in detail those issues particularly pertinent to them and their setting.

An evaluation of this version suggested that the use of subheadings, indicating model types, may influence the interviewees into providing answers that they believed the researcher was hoping to gain, rather than the information that was relevant to them and their setting. The decision was therefore made to remove all sub headings when completing a further draft of the questions.

Version Three

This version contained eleven questions (appendix 4). Ten of these questions retained the same content from version two, but were rephrased to further develop the question's specific focus and content. Question 2 was new and asked participants to reflect on the success of government policies since Warnock in overcoming barriers to learning and progress.

The number of questions was reduced, as some of those listed in version three (e.g. questions 13, 17 and 18) could be used instead as prompt questions, to elicit additional information from the participants in order to extend their initial

comments for questions 12 and 16. The number of questions concerned with human rights reduced from three to one, with the focus of the question becoming more generalised to 'policies and practices', rather than specifically identifying UN policy. This amendment was made to enable interviewees to provide information about the involvement of parents and children in the learning process which was relevant to their settings.

When editing this set of questions, it was decided to remove 'since Warnock' from question 3. The decision was made so as to not impose a limit on policy knowledge and to encompass the different number of years of teaching experience the participants may have.

Version Four

This version (appendix 5) retained ten of the eleven questions from version 3. The question that was removed was question 11, which focused on the identification of any policies and practices that had placed emphasis on the rights of children and parents. It was considered that as the policies and legislation reviewed in chapters 1 and 2 contained minimal references to the rights of the individual, participants may refer more generally and more naturally to this issue within their answers to other questions. It was also considered that such a focus could also be relevant to use as an additional prompt question. The questions were also reordered to move from general and SEN policy discussion, to specific implementation issues, to potential changes that may occur to provision.

A number of new questions were also introduced. Six of these occur at the start of the interview schedule as a means for the interviewee to discuss their teaching experiences in general terms and to begin to introduce the policy focus. The two final questions enable the interviewee to reinforce their 'voice' in this process, as they will be asked if they would like to add further information or introduce new issues for discussion. On completion of version four, and with ethical approval having been received, the decision was made to pre-pilot and pilot the questions.

Pre-piloting the interview questions

The decision was made to pre-pilot the questions from version 4 of the interview schedule. Gillham (2005) refers to this process as being undertaken once a definitive form of the questions has been achieved, but not yet tested out. He suggests working with a small number of subjects, in order to gain comment and feedback on the questions, as well as observing participant responses. This information can then be used to further develop and refine the schedule content.

To assist with this process, a recently retired SENCO was approached, to ask if s/he would be willing to be involved in the piloting procedures. The individual agreed and a pre-pilot meeting was organised for 12th April 2016. At the start of this meeting, the aims of the research were explained in detail, as well as the role of the researcher and the documentation that would be used in the research process.

A copy of the version 4 questions (appendix 6) was provided for the SENCO and each question was discussed to obtain the SENCO's view of its focus; questions were subsequently amended if required to develop clarity and content. Changes were made to six questions. Questions 6 and 7 were amended to become more specific in terms of whether policy should be discussed at government or school level. Question 8 was expanded to include aspects of both teaching and learning. The focus on mainstream schools and classes was also more clearly defined. The content of question 13 was amended to focus more specifically on pupils with SEN. Question 14 was edited to enable personalisation of comments to the participants' own school settings; reference to personal budgets was removed, as only some of the interviewees would be directly involved with this aspect of the new SEN/D Code of Practice. The final amendment was made to question 16; the prompt question was changed to gain a more personal opinion on the issue, rather than focusing on more generalised school level comments. The interview schedule was subsequently revised to reflect the feedback from this meeting.

Pilot interview

A pilot interview with the same SENCO took place on 3rd May 2016. Gillham identifies this process as a "try out of a prototype of the real thing", where the researcher has "absorbed the lessons of development" (2005: 22). The version of the questions was the one agreed during the pre-pilot process. The SENCO gave permission for the interview to be recorded and the interview lasted for fifty minutes; a transcript was subsequently completed and checked and agreed by the interviewee.

The SENCO provided both very detailed general information as well as some specific examples for each of the questions. Following the completion of the interview, a discussion took place to consider the researcher's input, and what would be beneficial to consider and implement when undertaking the planned main interview schedule. The SENCO acknowledged that the researcher's interaction during the interview was both positive and useful and also drew the interviewee, if necessary, back to the focus of the question. It was suggested however, that a greater use of prompts could be developed to further support future interviewees. As a result of the piloting process and the subsequent discussion, the fifth and final version of the questions was produced (appendix 7); the questions are listed below, with a commentary providing information as to why these questions were presented in their current form.

Version Five

- 1. What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?*
- 2. What is the greatest dissatisfaction?*

Questions 1 and 2 were devised as open ended questions in order to obtain a wide range of personal opinion and comment.

- 3. What general education policies do you remember being in place when you started your career?*
- 4. Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?*

As the interviewees' amount of teaching experience varied considerably, Questions 3 and 4 were again open ended, in order to reflect this range.

- 5. How did you end up being interested/ involved in SEN?*

The SEN focus of the research had been specified in the letters sent to schools, and it was hoped that staff who took part had done so because of their own personal interest in this area, which could be expanded upon here.

- 6. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent government SEN policies?*

7. *What do you think should be the emphasis in school SEN policy?*

These questions were framed in order to gain the viewpoints of the interviewees regarding any impact of recent legislative changes on SEN and if there was any conflict with their practice.

8. *What do you think are the major barriers to teaching and learning which can affect pupils in a mainstream class?*

9. *How successful do you think government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress?*

Questions 8 and 9 were open ended to enable interviewees to identify issues specific to their context. This information could then be analysed across the whole sample for any similarities or developing themes.

10. *What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?*

11. *In your school, what types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?*

These questions were framed in order to gain the viewpoints of the interviewees regarding any impact of recent legislative changes on SEN, if there was any conflict with their practice and how they had overcome these difficulties.

12. *Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?*

Literature had identified that labelling of needs can have a negative impact; the question was therefore included to gain the opinions of those directly involved in supporting pupils.

13. *Do you think there is tension/pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards of attainment?*

Literature had identified the impact of recent legislative changes, particularly in the area of assessment; the question was therefore included to gain the opinions of those directly involved in using these procedures.

14. *How has the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans affected the nature of provision in your school?*

This is a new process, still being introduced, and was included to gain comments on any advantages or limitations of this approach.

15. *In this period of austerity, do you think that budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?*

Literature identified the global impact of the financial crisis; the question was included to gain information on how schools are managing their budgets at this time.

16. The government has retreated on making all schools academies, but it still clearly remains an aim. What do you think about such a change?

This question was included as such a change could impact upon provision for children with SEN.

17. Is there anything further that you would like to say or add to your previous comments?

18. Is there anything that I haven't asked that you think would add to this discussion?

These questions were included to provide the opportunity for interviewees to identify any other relevant issues for discussion.

Although question 16 was included in the interviews, the data provided was not included in the Results chapter. The information identified specific, contextual reasons as to why the schools involved would or would not convert to academy status; however, this data did not include any specific information regarding pupils with SEN.

The research process

Once ethical approval had been received in April 2016, nine mainstream primary schools and three special schools were contacted and invited to participate in the research. Unfortunately, no reply was received from six of the schools and one had to decline due to an Ofsted inspection. Five of the schools (four mainstream and one special) confirmed that they would be able to assist with the research and the fifteen interviews were completed between the 25th

May 2016 and 3rd November 2016. The interview schedule and duration of each interview is listed in the following table.

Interview schedule

Interview Date	School	Interviewee and role	Duration of interview
25/05/2016	1-mainstream	HS1-Headteacher/acting SENCO D1-Deputy Head C1-Class teacher	35 minutes 45 minutes 42 minutes
06/06/2016	2-mainstream	H2-Headteacher D2-Deputy Head CS2-Class teacher/ SENCO from September 2016	41 minutes 23 minutes 22 minutes
01/07/2016	3-mainstream	H3-Headteacher S3-SENCO C3-Class teacher	35 minutes 36 minutes 30 minutes
21/09/2016	4-special Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)	H4-Headteacher D4-Deputy Head C4-Class teacher	28 minutes 34 minutes 40 minutes
03/11/2016 06/10/2016 06/10/2016	5-mainstream	H5-Headteacher S5-SENCO C5-Class teacher	50 minutes 44 minutes 26 minutes
Total duration of interviews: 8 hours 51 minutes			

One issue that arose during the interview process was that all of the schools had to plan their interview schedules around the completion of Key Stage 1 and 2 SATS, or other school priorities; therefore, two schools were unable to assist with the research until after the summer holidays. This meant that the timescale for completion of the data collection was unavoidably increased.

A second issue that arose was the difference in the duration of each interview. The length was determined by the time available to the interviewee; a number of the interviews were completed at lunchtime, after school, or between other meetings, dependent on the role of the participant. On two occasions, the interview had to be paused, as the interviewee was called away to deal with an important school or class issue. Multiple interviews were also completed on one date, as requested by the school, to enable staff availability for the interviews; this also impacted on interview length.

Presentation of results

To enable the detailed presentation of the results, a coding process was undertaken. King and Horrocks (2010:153) refer to the first stage as 'descriptive coding' as relevant material is highlighted in each transcript, leading to a range of codes, which are refined as more data is examined. The second stage of 'interpretive coding' clusters these descriptive codes together, enabling the researcher to interpret their meaning in relation to the research questions. The results from the coding undertaken thus far in the process will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results

The main research question was:

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision.

This question will be answered by the following sub research questions:

1. What are the major models of SEN and disability and what are their underpinning values and influences?
2. What influence, if any, have they had on the development of SEN policy and the implementation of related legislation?
3. What is the most appropriate methodology (and methods) to investigate these questions?
4. What links can be identified between the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers and the major models of SEN and disability?
5. What do head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers think of the impact of recent legislative changes on SEN practice and provision?

The results reported in this chapter will answer sub research questions 4 and 5.

Five of the schools invited to participate in the research were able to be involved during the relevant time period and responded positively to the invitation. Three interviews were completed at each school and the participants involved were the head teacher, SENCO and a class teacher (three of the class teachers also held the position of Deputy Head in their school and a fourth teacher was due to take on the role of SENCO from September 2016). The fifteen interviews took place between 25th May and 3rd November 2016. The anonymised coding system applied to the schools and staff roles is presented in the following table.

School	Interviewee and role
1-mainstream	HS1-Headteacher/acting SENCO D1-Deputy Head C1-Class teacher
2-mainstream	H2-Headteacher D2-Deputy Head CS2-Class teacher/ SENCO from September 2016
3-mainstream	H3-Headteacher S3-SENCO C3-Class teacher
4-special Profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD)	H4-Headteacher D4-Deputy Head C4-Class teacher
5-mainstream	H5-Headteacher S5-SENCO C5-Class teacher

A table will be presented as an introduction to each question, which will outline: the answers provided, the number of replies given for each area, the respondent's role and the main categories of response that can be drawn from the data.

Question 1-What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?

Questions 1 and 2 were included to enable participants to reflect on their work with all children in their class/school, before focusing specifically on pupils with SEN.

Answers	Number of replies	Respondents	Response categories
Seeing happy children who enjoy learning and are supported by a positive ethos	3	H2; S5; C5	Enabling achievement
To see children making progress against personal targets	5	S3; D4; CS2; C3; C4	
To see achievement in all areas, not just academic	3	C1; D2; H3	
Equipping children with skills for lifelong learning	3	D1; H4; H5	Reaching potential
Seeing education as a means to improve outcomes and increase life chances	1	HS1	

The categories identified were those of **enabling achievement** and **reaching potential**.

Enabling achievement

The importance placed upon the necessity to consider and provide a positive school ethos to support children's learning was reported by three members of staff, who represented each type of staff role. H2 referred to a positive school ethos as one *'that enables all children to be comfortable in sharing whatever worries or concerns they have'*. The importance of developing children's confidence and self-belief was also recognised by this interviewee, as s/he stated *'unless a child is happy and in a comfortable place...then they can't accept learning because they can't access it (and) it creates a barrier'*. This idea was reiterated by S5, who commented upon the satisfaction that could be gained from watching a child achieve something when *'you thought they wouldn't be able to do it'* and seeing them enjoy their learning and success. C5 also described that *'the greatest buzz'* was *'having a child in your class that is well rounded, happy, secure, safe and that has enjoyed learning and being part of the class'*.

The positive experience staff gained from seeing children make progress and achieve their personal targets was also reported. Responses in this area were made by class teachers (D4 was also a class teacher), thus suggesting the importance of the teacher in recognising, recording and acknowledging individual progress. As identified by D4, such progress is rewarding as *'you never know what potential children have'*. CS2 expanded upon this idea, by commenting that although a child's personal targets may not be in line with the

'average' child, they could still '*achieve and blossom*'. This idea was reiterated by C4, who stated '*seeing how they thrive and flourish when they come into this environment, there's nothing like it*' and that '*these tiny little developmental steps...mean the absolute world to our pupils*'.

It was also acknowledged that progress should be celebrated in all areas of learning, not just those deemed to be academic. Comments were again made by three members of staff, who represented two types of staff role. H3 elaborated upon the range of activities and visits organised for all children to take part in at a whole school level, as the school placed an emphasis on providing the '*opportunity to experience many things first hand*' in order for pupils to expand their wider knowledge, skills and understanding. C1 referred only to children in his/her classroom, emphasising the importance of children having '*delight in moving from one part of the learning journey to another*' and gaining in confidence and self-belief due to their success in areas other than '*test results*'. D2 (who was also a class teacher) identified progress made in the classroom as '*having resilience*' and outside as '*relationships, [being] happy, safe, enjoying coming to school*'.

Reaching potential

The importance of providing pupils with skills for lifelong learning was reported on by one Deputy Head and two head teachers. D1 stated that '*watching the child do something they couldn't do before (that is going to equip them for lifelong learning), that is probably the best satisfaction*'. This idea was expanded upon by H4, who stated the importance of:

making sure that the things we teach here can be generalised and utilised in their life at home so they have more productive lives when they leave school, thereby achieving a positive quality of life.

S/he continued this idea by suggesting *'If we're not making a difference to...their future adult lives, then actually, we're not teaching them the right things'*. H5 also described *'finding out what [previous pupils] have done with their lives... [as being] incredibly rewarding'*.

The role of education in improving children's outcomes and increasing their life chances was identified by one head teacher. HS1 described education as both a *'tool'* to be used by children to be able to get out of their current situation and as the *'only key that will break the cycle of poverty'*. The importance of children being supported to achieve high standards in both academic and general areas of learning was implicit in all of the responses provided.

Two categories were identified from the answers provided to this question. These responses suggest links between the perceptions of the school staff and the social model of SEN and disability. Links can be made to the social model as the schools were focusing on removing barriers to learning to enable all children to make progress and achieve their potential. Staff in each school considered the implementation of inclusive practice and pedagogy as their responsibility (Runswick-Cole and Hodge, 2009). This focus can also be seen both in the importance that had been placed upon achievement in all areas of learning, rather than just academic subjects, as well as the development of an inclusive ethos. The staff considered they were making a difference to the

children's lives, with the notion that education could promote positive future outcomes for pupils.

The staff who provided answers to the first category of enabling achievement represented all three of the staff roles, as each member of staff interacts with and supports children on a daily basis, albeit in different ways. Contributions to the second category of reaching potential were provided by only three head teachers and one Deputy Head. This difference suggests the longer term goals that senior management teams must consider in comparison to the individual cohort that a class teacher or SENCO is involved with and the short term targets that are set for children.

Question 2-What are the greatest dissatisfactions?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondents	Response categories
Paperwork/red tape	3	D1; C1; H2	Government influences
Government targets	1	HS1	
Politicians' involvement	1	H5	
Barriers caused by legislation	1	C4	
Changing landscape/climate	2	D2; H4	
Narrowing of the curriculum	1	H3	
Guilt-not enough time	2	C3; C5	Teacher concerns
Barriers caused by teachers	1	S5	
School is the only safe place	1	CS2	Societal influences
School has a limited influence	1	S3	Government/societal
School building is not fit for purpose	1	D4	

The categories identified were: **government influences**, **teacher concerns**, **societal influences** and **government/societal influences**.

Government influences

Three participants (representing two types of staff role) commented on the amount of paperwork that they felt had to be dealt with in their respective roles.

D1 identified the delay that could be caused by having to complete the paperwork necessary to obtain support for a child and the barrier that this could create as:

you have to go through a process to get support or to work with others, when actually, you need that intervention, you need that support straightaway,
thus delaying the required support and potentially causing distress and frustration for the child concerned and greater difficulties in their learning.

The amount of time taken up by paperwork and red tape was expanded upon by H2, who suggested that many things had to be undertaken that took up a lot of professional time, but that were not beneficial to children or their families. The interviewee therefore questioned why something should be done if it was not going to enable the child to progress or enhance his/her experiences, thus highlighting their frustration with the accountability placed upon their role in this respect:

you can feel uncomfortable at times that you're spending time on that when what you want to do is support the child and their family and you know that more time on that would be better outcomes for the children and their families.

C1 continued this discussion, stating that gathering the myriad of evidence required by Ofsted had a direct impact on *'the quality of my teaching and...my lessons, because the time I waste on that is time I don't have to prepare really good lessons'*.

Four members of staff explained that their schools were judged by data outcomes and not by the progress that the children had made and were also affected by the difficulties caused by politicians and the curriculum; three of these four interviewees were head teachers. HS1 expanded upon this initial idea by commenting that to Ofsted, *'outstanding looks like above average data'* and that those children not recognised in this data *'are often the ones you're the proudest of, but they're the ones that appear in the data as the ones that have failed'*.

H5 identified the difficulties caused by the *'constant meddling of politicians in the work that's done, without any real understanding of the impact that it has'*. S/he suggested that previously, there had been layers of bureaucracy between schools and politicians, but that now, *'they have a direct line into schools, and trying not to jump to every little thing...is probably one of the biggest distractions as well as dissatisfactions'*.

Reference was also made by H3 to the narrowing of the curriculum, due to the overloading of Maths and English at the expense of other subjects. S/he stated that *'we actively try to avoid that, but there's a conflict between us creating the*

best possible academic outcomes with celebrating achievements in the wider fields'. Such a focus can cause difficulties for children with additional needs and SEN, and C4 identified the growing number of children who were dropping out of mainstream schooling because schools are *'looking more statistically at things'*. S/he commented that when mainstream schools realise that some children will not achieve in SATs, *'they press the panic button and within a couple of months they end up here'*.

Two members of staff identified the changes currently being made to the educational system and the impact this was having on pupils. D2 highlighted the unrealistic expectations of the national standard, as *'one format is meant to suit all children... That's the worst thing I can see, children failing when they've tried so hard throughout the school year'*. S/he perceived that different policies were being *'pushed through'* with regard to such aspects as assessment. H4 explained that alongside the *'shifting landscape'*, resources were also diminishing. S/he considered that *'we could do much better with a little bit more freedom and a little bit more money'*.

Teacher concerns

Two members of staff described their frustration and guilt at wanting to do more, but not being able to achieve this. C5 suggested this was due to not having *'enough time in the day to make sure that you feel prepared for the next day'* and s/he referred to the difficulty of achieving a suitable work life balance. C3 also identified that any dissatisfaction was focused *'on wanting to do more and not having the time to do it'*. S5 expanded upon this concern by suggesting that

if s/he felt that s/he had caused a problem for a child's learning, there 'was a feeling...that potential sense of failure'.

Societal influences

One member of staff identified the significance that school may have for certain children who may be dealing with difficult or changing circumstances out of school. CS2 commented that '*they may come to school dirty or hungry...school is their only safe place*'; this school provides a breakfast club and the specialised support of a home-school liaison worker.

Government/societal influences

The comments from two of the interviewees could potentially be linked to both governmental and societal influences. S3 referred to the limited influence that school can have on children's lives, stating the '*dissatisfaction comes from when it feels like you're the only one going in the direction you're aiming for*'. This statement could be associated with a range of factors external to the school, such as general policy direction or family circumstances. D4 commented upon the frustration s/he felt as the school building '*wasn't fit for purpose*'. The school in question was a special school, where funding and school size were not matching the increased number of pupils on roll, which was leading to staff '*being resourceful in order to meet needs, although...students and families deserve better*'.

The dissatisfactions that the interviewees experienced seem to be linked to several of the models of SEN and disability. The completion of the process required to initiate support for a pupil can be associated with the medical model, as an identification of need is made and then subsequent assessment and diagnosis undertaken in order for any intervention to be implemented. This emphasises the rigidity of the process as defined by Evans (2007), as it focuses on difficulties rather than strengths. The references to such processes as taking professional time away from children and families, can be seen as reducing the focus on inclusion and can be linked to the social model. Specific reference was made to the effects that can occur due to the narrowing of the curriculum; such a focus could be seen to be conflicting with the tenets of the human rights model and the equal opportunities this model affords. The focus upon data, targets and the national standard can be associated with the state-influenced market approach as these elements have been introduced to improve educational standards; however, staff responses indicate that the required expectations are unrealistic and cannot support the needs and progress of all children.

All five of the head teachers and two of the three Deputy Heads contributed to the first category of government influences. This response rate suggests that members of the senior management teams were more concerned with these far ranging whole school issues than their class based colleagues, whose comments for the other three categories focused more specifically on the difficulties of limited time to complete tasks and particular barriers to learning.

Question 3-What general education policies do you remember being in place when you started your career?

Questions 3 and 4 were included to enable participants to reflect on both general education and specific SEN policy, before focusing specifically on their practice and provision for pupils with SEN.

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
None remembered	2	C1; C3	Do not remember/recall general education policies
No specific policies, but remember documents and strategies	6	D1; HS1; D2; CS2; S5; C5;	
Not at the forefront	2	H2; H5	Policies were not at the forefront
Little influence	1	S3	
Focus was on teaching	2	H3; C4	
Yes-specific policies	1	H4	Remember specific policies
Reference to inclusion	1	D4	

The categories identified were: **do not remember/recall general education policies, policies were not at the forefront** and **remember specific policies**.

Do not remember/recall general education policies

Responses were made by staff from each role type. C1 and C3 explained that they could not remember any specific policies that were in place when they began teaching. Although no specific policies were recalled by other staff members in Schools 1, 2 and 5, these interviewees did additionally refer to a large number of documents and strategies. S5 referred to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and was *'rather sceptical of that prescriptive view of how children learn'*. HS1, D2 and CS2 all mentioned the introduction of different versions of the National Curriculum and C5 referred to the 1994 SEN Code of

Practice. D1 also identified Excellence and Enjoyment and the SEAL materials; s/he believed that the agenda of these materials was *'developing the whole child...and emotional wellbeing'*. It is possible therefore, that interviewees' comments with regard to this question were dependent on their perceptions of what constitutes policy, as these materials could be seen as a means of disseminating policy principles into practice. In response to this question, S5 also suggested that the government in place when s/he began their career in 2000 had seen the need to address certain issues and so s/he believed that period was the time *'where control within schools became very much more overt than it had hitherto'*, leading therefore to such a range of documents and strategies.

Policies were not at the forefront

Each of the staff roles was again represented in response to this question. H5 and H2 both indicated that for them, policies had not been at the forefront of their thinking when they became teachers. S3 stated policies had provided little influence on their choice to become a teacher. Two other members of staff also commented specifically that at the start of their careers, they were more focused on their teaching. H3 stated s/he was *'in it to enjoy working with children and to create as many different experiences as I could'* and C4 repeated this focus, commenting *'I was trying to think about what happened when I shut my classroom door'*. Policy had been less important to them at that time.

Some staff in schools 2 and 3 also suggested that previously, there had appeared to have been less focus placed upon policy; the educational climate was instead deemed to have been more concerned with children's outcomes. H3 explained that s/he did not remember being held to account over policies in the same way as staff are now and D2 expanded upon this idea, stating *'it was not pushed down our throats or in the news and talked about as it is at the moment'*. It was also acknowledged however, by both C3 and S3, that as you progress as a professional, policies become more important and relevant and that accountability has increased for all staff as *'you can be asked a lot about any part of policy'* (C3). H5 considered however, that *'policies at school level'* had not changed at all over time; s/he believed it was *'the wording and the way people interpret them (that) have perhaps changed'*.

Remember specific policies

Inclusion was a major focus in the response from D4. S/he stated that following the Education Debate of the 1970s, the inclusion agenda became more prominent as all children were then, for the first time, seen to be educable and to have equal access to the curriculum. This idea was supported by H4, who referred in detail to the 1978 Warnock Report and the 1981 Education Act, stating that *'it was so refreshing to be looking at children's needs and also the role of parents and families... (they were) really new and changing times'*. Inclusion had previously enabled school 4 to work closely with a mainstream primary school, but due to changing priorities for that school, those links no longer existed. The loss of such a link was perceived to have reduced the opportunity for both schools to develop their practice.

Whilst no general education policies were remembered, the responses suggest that interviewee perceptions linked most legislation (when they began their careers) to either the social model or the state-influenced market approach. A number of the replies from staff with more experience appeared to emphasise the social model as they referred to policy (and the educational climate of the time), as being more concerned with children's outcomes, rather than the current emphasis on data and targets. Specific reference was again made to inclusion (an aspect associated with the social model).

A number of the replies from staff with less teaching experience appeared to link to aspects of the state-influenced market approach, as although no specific policies were identified, reference was made to the use of such documents as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which subsequently affected practice. These were designed to be implemented by all schools, thus providing the government with greater control of the curriculum and increased accountability for teachers, as certain standards or outcomes were to be achieved by each year group.

The curriculum is seen by the government to be a medium to raise standards and since the implementation of the first National Curriculum in 1988, has provided the incumbent government with direct control over teaching and learning. Although such control appears to be in direct contrast to the principles of the state-influenced market approach, Maclure (1989) identifies that any subsequent freedoms provided to schools, can only occur if greater central control is initially assured.

The staff who contributed to the first two categories represented all staff roles, suggesting that the development of successful professional practice and pedagogy had been their main aims when beginning their careers, rather than an awareness of policy. Only two staff contributed to the third category; these two respondents had been teaching for the longest periods of time, so their answers could also be based on greater professional knowledge and experience, rather than just their roles.

Question 4-Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
None remembered	6	HS1; H3; S3; D4; C4; H5	Do not remember/recall specific SEN policies
No specific policies, but remember documents and strategies	7	C1; D1; CS2; H2; D2; C3; C5	
Yes-specific policies	1	H4	Remember specific SEN policies
Reference to SENCO course/legislative knowledge gained from completing course	1	S5	Knowledge gained as a result of specialist SEN training.

The categories identified were: **do not remember/recall specific SEN policies, remember specific SEN policies** and **knowledge gained as a result of specialist SEN training**.

Do not remember/recall specific SEN policies

Each of the staff roles was again represented in response to this question.

HS1, H3, S3, D4, C4 and H5 did not remember any specific SEN policies that

were in place when they began their careers. As with the previous question however, reference was made to a number of SEN focused documents and approaches, again suggesting that answers were dependent on the interviewees' notions and understanding of policy.

Some of the SEN documents and approaches referred to, but not expanded on were: the 1994 Code of Practice (C5) and the 2001 SEN Code of Practice (D1). Three members of staff also recalled specific aspects of support identified in the 2001 version of the Code of Practice. These were: School Action and School Action Plus levels (C1) and individual education plans (C1; H2). Two other members of staff described additional support strategies; CS2 identified the P Scales as being used *'to assess children who were working below national expectations'* and (D2) referred to wave provision maps. D1, D2 and C3 also specifically identified that at that time, they felt that the SENCO had assumed the main responsibility for provision for children with SEN, rather than the class teachers and that for D1, this had not changed until two or three years into his/her career when *'there was a shift in responsibility in terms of understanding everything'*.

Remember specific SEN policies

One member of staff identified specific SEN legislation; H4 again identified the 1981 Education Act.

Knowledge gained as a result of specialist SEN training

S5 referred to the SENCO course s/he had completed when appointed to the role and *'how interesting it was to look back and see how SEN legislation has progressed, [including] the move from integration to inclusion'*.

Whilst only one head teacher remembered any particular SEN policies, seven of the respondents referred to particular documents and strategies associated with SEN. Six of these interviewees were class teachers and their replies suggest the impact that different SEN procedures had on their work in the classroom. These replies can be specifically linked with elements of the medical and social models, as these frameworks are associated more with the treatment of individuals, albeit in different ways. With reference to the former, responses identified two previous versions of the SEN Code of Practice, Individual Education Plans and the P Scales. These documents either categorise individuals according to their needs and deficits (Runswick-Cole, 2011), or provide individualised support and assessments for children who are unable to fully access teaching approaches or the National Curriculum (Scott-Hill, 2004). The identification of the SENCO as the 'specialist' disseminating information and arranging support, can also be linked to this model. With regard to the social model, reference is made to ensuring that inclusive practice does not exclude any individual, by focusing on pedagogy and curriculum. A responsive approach is therefore required by schools, to ensure such practice is implemented successfully (Lindsay, 2003).

The staff who contributed responses to the first category represented all staff roles, again suggesting that successful practice and pedagogy had been their main aim, rather than SEN policy knowledge, when beginning their careers. Only one member of staff each contributed to the second and third categories; their answers were specific to their professional experience and training.

Question 5-How did you end up being interested and/or involved in SEN?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
The role of the SENCO	4	HS1; CS2; S3; S5	In school experiences
The role of the class teacher	5	C1; H2; D2; C3; C5	
The importance of developing an inclusive ethos	1	H3	
Initial teacher training	2	D1; C4	Previous experiences
Additional work experience	3	D4; H4; H5	

The categories identified were: **in school experiences** and **previous experiences**.

In school experiences

The first response provided was that of taking on the role of SENCO. HS1 had been the SENCO in a number of previous schools, CS2 was due to take on the role from September 2016 and S5 was currently the SENCO at his/her school. S3 had assumed the role after having initially worked as the Pupil Premium Ambassador and s/he viewed these roles as being closely linked.

The importance of the role of the class teacher was also highlighted as a reason for becoming interested in SEN. D2 and C1 each stated specifically, that as class teachers, they assumed responsibility for all of the children in their classes and, that regardless of individual needs, children should be able to succeed as every pupil needs some type of support, regardless of whether any needs have been identified. C1 also emphasised that *'you can't be an effective teacher without being interested in SEN'* and H2 stressed how important it is *'that we mustn't have low expectations of SEND children'*. C3 described having regular conversations with the school SENCO and C5 stated that their initial interest had increased over time as *'I'm experiencing more children coming to this school with specific needs'*.

The final response proposed was that of the importance that should be placed upon developing an inclusive ethos that had due regard for equality. H3 expanded upon this belief by explaining that previously, s/he had seen that *'certain children had less fair access to the curriculum than others...through no fault of their own, but through their special educational needs'*. Measures that had been put into place to achieve an inclusive ethos included the appointments of a full time inclusion officer and a SENCO, highly trained teaching assistants and investment *'in those things we feel will support those children best'*, affirming H3's commitment to inclusion.

Previous experiences

D1 and C4 identified their initial teacher training placements as having developed their interest by exposing them to a range of different areas of need

and the importance of meeting those needs as quickly and effectively as possible. D1 commented on the need *'to develop your practice as a teacher to help them learn'*. C4 referred to a mainstream placement class which included pupils from a special school. This experience was the catalyst for his/her seeking a post in special education, as:

once I was in these four walls and I saw what the school stood for and the values and respect...the young people were treated with, I wanted to be part of it.

D4, H4 and H5 also referred to additional experience that they had gained which had developed their interest in SEN. D4 referred to the completion of an Open University Diploma in 'Education for All' and work in a residential school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. H4 explained that s/he had worked for a year as a nursing assistant in what was described at the time as a 'subnormality' hospital (following the completion of A levels), and realised that *'it would be much slower to change things in a hospital than maybe as a teacher'*, concluding that *'from the age of 16, I've never wanted to do anything different than work in this world'*. H5 identified the work experience s/he had completed at a children's home during Sixth Form College. This had developed an interest *'in the children who were from disadvantaged backgrounds and particularly those who were facing and overcoming barriers to learning'*. The knowledge and interest gained from such a variety of experiences appeared to have positively impacted upon the interviewees' professional practice and pedagogy.

The interviewees' interest and involvement in SEN work appears to be linked to both the social and human rights models (as previously identified in the answers

to question 1). The development of an inclusive ethos, which values equity, resonates with both models, as does the reference to different placements developing an understanding of the importance of meeting and supporting pupil needs. Importance was also placed on the roles of the SENCO and class teacher in meeting the needs of all pupils and providing effective support.

The staff who contributed to each category represented all types of staff role. The experience gained by individuals (whether external or internal to the school and regardless of role type) was seen to be the most important factor in developing personal and professional knowledge and understanding of how to support children with SEN in order for them to achieve their potential.

Question 6-What do you think have been the main emphases in recent government SEN policies?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
The roles and rights of parents	6	D1; CS2; D2; H3; S3; C5	Greater involvement of parents
Teacher responsibility and accountability	1	C1	Greater accountability placed on teachers
Education, Health and Care plans	4	HS1; H4; C3; C4; S5	Introduction of new processes
The concept of inclusion	1	D4	Policy creating barriers
Perception that the government wishes to reduce the number of children with SEND	1	H2	
Policy creating barriers	1	H5	

The categories identified were: **greater involvement of parents, greater accountability placed on teachers, introduction of new processes** and **policy creating barriers**.

Greater involvement of parents

Firstly, the recent focus on the involvement of parents was emphasised as having been brought to the forefront of policy; four of the six respondents were class teachers, indicating the importance of their role in liaising with parents. This idea was summarised by D1, who stated *'the thoughts and opinions of the parents are seen to matter an awful lot more'*. It was also identified by S3, D2 and CS2 that the policy approach appeared to be much more person centred, with a greater partnership between parents and schools. The SEND Code of Practice was seen to place the child at the centre, as well as providing parents with a stronger voice on what happened to their child and a greater involvement in considering the provision required. H3 stated that the school was trying to improve parental engagement *'because it's the most underused resource in any school'*.

It was also acknowledged by S3, that although the development of a more collaborative process was a positive step, the model *'has its flaws'*. This idea was elaborated on by D1, who suggested that there could be a conflict of opinion, either if parents and the school do not share the same vision for the way forward, or *'if the parent isn't willing to recognise there is a problem in the first place...how can we go forward if they're not willing to engage with that?'* C5 also considered that some schools may find this process challenging as *'they*

perhaps feel that they haven't got the resources, facilities, expertise or the training to support these needs'.

Greater accountability placed on teachers

The second category focused once again on the increasing accountability being placed upon class teachers. C1 considered that *'much, much more (is) being put onto teachers –almost in a diagnostic kind of way'* and that there *'seems to be an increasing need to label and identify, rather than looking at how we can support children'*.

Introduction of new processes

The third category identified the implementation of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), which are being introduced to both replace existing statutory statements and to eventually supersede this process. Some of the interviewees emphasised the positives of this new approach as they believed that the strategy of considering long term goals and aspirations and the extension of the ages involved (increasing from the end of schooling to 25) was *'a positive shift'* (HS1). The idea of the EHCP was described by S5 as *'laudable'* as the plan seeks to ensure the involvement of a range of services to produce effective joint agency working.

The current limitations of this process were also acknowledged. S5 was also not convinced that the way it is enacted *'works on every level'* and this idea was reiterated by H4 who commented upon both the pressure of the administrative

element of the process as creating a lot of work *'that hasn't necessarily impacted favourably upon children'* and his/her observations that joint working had *'fallen short'* of policy intentions. C4 also identified that *'it's not a straightforward easy process'*.

Policy creating barriers

D4 again identified the concept of inclusion. As a special school, staff had embraced this notion in their work with the nearby mainstream school and in the outreach service they provided to a number of pupils and schools across the county. Due to changes in policy and the vision of the local authority, it was considered by D4 that inclusion *'was the biggie, but it's dropped off their agenda now'*. S/he also pondered whether *'it's because of academisation or that everybody does their own thing now. There isn't this collectivity of thinking'*. According to Liasidou (2012), the aim of the social model is to support and extend the relationship between individual and society and inclusive practice underpins this idea. The reduced focus on inclusion may therefore impact negatively on any support that is available. H5 also commented upon potential barriers being placed upon staff who were interested in becoming SENCOs. S/he suggested that the mandatory training and the responsibility of the role falling solely on one person may *'put some [staff] off'*. This was seen to be detrimental as it is *'people that make the difference'*.

H2 believed that the government wishes to reduce the number of SEND children reported in school. This was perceived to be acceptable in some ways as s/he recognised that previously some children with behavioural difficulties

would have been registered as SEN, although *'they are children who need effective classroom management, they don't need SEND provision'*. In contrast to this, s/he emphasised that some children do have SEN and that *'we shouldn't be trying to deny it or reduce it to a percentage to make it what we want it to be'*. It was suggested that schools implement inclusive practice to ameliorate difficulties, but that *'not all barriers are SEN'* and that individual pupils should be considered and assessed as such, through the use of professional judgements.

The emphases in recent government SEN policy identified by the interviewees seem to be linked to elements of the social and human rights models and the state-influenced market approach. Aspects linked to the social and human rights models can be identified as a number of responses focused on parental roles and rights, with greater parental involvement seen as being vital in supporting children's progress. It should be noted however, as reported by D1, that the introduction of the EHCP personal budget could lead to conflict if parental ideas of the support required are very different to those of all of the agencies involved. Links can also be made here to the state-influenced market approach. Governments that have adopted a consumerist approach view parents as 'consumers' and teachers as 'producers', with the idea that parents will have the opportunity to select the best service. The responses provided suggest either that the interviewees did not appear to have made the link to this model, or that they had chosen to ignore it, focusing instead on the model that would benefit the children most. Their replies emphasised the importance of developing parental partnership and engagement, reflecting the ideas of Sime and Sheridan (2014) and Beveridge (2005), discussed on page 30, thus re-

emphasising the contradictions apparent in the role of parents as suggested by Pinkus (2003).

The staff who contributed responses to the categories of responsibility placed upon parents and introduction of new processes represented all types of staff role. When considering responses for the remaining categories, a number of differences can be identified. One class teacher referred to the greater accountability being placed upon their role to identify pupils' additional needs, rather than it being the responsibility of other relevant professionals. Two of the head teachers and one deputy head commented upon whole school issues as they referred to barriers caused by policy and the government's wish to reduce the number of pupils identified with SEND, thus indicating the overview they must maintain as part of their school's leadership team.

Question 7-What do you think should be the emphasis in school SEN policy?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Early Identification	3	D1; S3; S5	Importance of early identification
Emphasis should be on the whole child	6	C1; CS2; D2; C3; D4; C4	Meeting the needs of the child
Responsibility placed on teachers to include all children and ensure children with SEN thrive	2	H3; C5	Responsibility/accountability of the class teacher
Pressure placed on teachers to ensure children achieve required standards	2	HS1; H4	
School and parents working together	2	H2; H5	Home/school partnerships

The categories identified were: **the importance of early identification, meeting the needs of the child, the responsibility/ accountability of class teachers and home/school partnerships.**

The importance of early identification

The importance of early identification was noted by three members of staff (representing two role types). D1 expanded upon this by explaining that greater clarity was required regarding exactly how to identify children and support them. S/he suggested having a pre-SEN policy that would record any concerns about a child that may not have *'reached the level of external involvement, but still needs to be looked at'*. This was because s/he considered that some children had the potential to be missed and therefore never added to the SEN register. Any policy implemented should also consider pupils on an individual basis, thus developing a *'bespoke'* provision. S5 emphasised the importance of assessment to support early identification, as this would involve *'looking at the barriers, [seeing] what provision needs to be put in place'*. S3 also acknowledged that the new processes introduced by the local authority *'speeds things up'*.

Meeting the needs of the child

The importance of policy placing the emphasis upon the child and considering him or her holistically was identified by six staff members, all of whom were class teachers. This approach was summarised by C1 as *'our policy has to be about the child and what we're going to do on a daily basis...so they can achieve, feel success (and) feel progress'*. The need to provide provision and support tailored to the specific needs of the child was stated by D2, C3 and C4

and CS2 advocated that a child should be individually assessed against their own targets in order to provide a detailed picture of the child's achievements.

The 'bottom up' approach was emphasised by D4 as *'looking at what a child needs, not what we think children need'*. This interviewee worked in the special school, which taught children with profound and multiple learning difficulties. S/he stated the school had *'to be mindful'* of the children they were working with, as many had no spoken language and therefore staff had to be cautious that they were representing the children and not *'interpreting what they are saying'*. D4 also commented, that although the Code of Practice places the child first, the interpretation of that ideal into practice is *'challenging to schools'*.

Responsibility/responsibility of the class teacher

The importance of the role of the class teacher in making sure that children with SEN are provided for and can succeed in their learning was identified by three head teachers and one class teacher. C5 explained that his/her role was to meet the needs of every child and to provide appropriate targets for them to achieve at their own level. H3 also explained that *'we don't want the teachers to absolve responsibility for those children-quite the opposite'*. It was also stated however, by HS1, that problems currently existed as levels ascribed to children's attainment have changed. This was seen by the interviewee as placing even greater pressure on teachers (and children with SEND) as the former already have *'enough pressure trying to get the rest of the class to where they need to be, let alone those children who are really struggling at the bottom'*. This idea was expanded upon by H4, who confirmed the need for

accountability, but suggested *'it's a shame when it does overshadow and drive everything'*.

Home/school partnerships

Two head teachers emphasised the importance of working with families. H2 identified that some parents were afraid of the new responsibilities they could assume if they so wished and *'they really are frightened and they're afraid of letting their children down'*. It was stated that the role the school adopted had changed as a result of the new processes as *'we are more comfortable about saying these are the range of options, because that's what we feel we should do'* and that only when specifically asked *'we might say, would you like us to make some suggestions?'* as parents could then independently seek further guidance and support. H5 also stressed the importance of regular meetings with parents to discuss their children's learning and support requirements.

Reference was made to early identification, which can be linked to the medical model process of identification, assessment, categorisation and intervention. However, when considered alongside the other responses, such as the necessity for a holistic focus upon the child and use of the 'bottom up' approach, there are additional links to the social model. Emphasis is then placed upon identification to assure equity in learning through the provision of effective pedagogy and support. This idea is echoed in the repeated reference to the importance of the role of the class teacher in providing effective support for all pupils and also emphasised by Hodkinson (2016).

When considering the responses to the stated categories, comments were made by specific groups. Two SENCOs expressed the importance of early identification, which can be associated with their role in school. The Deputy Head who also identified this aspect, focused upon the requirement for greater policy clarity, linking to his/her role as part of the senior leadership team. All of the respondents who commented on meeting the needs of the child were class teachers, emphasising their commitment to effectively planning to meet the needs of all children. The majority of responses to the third and fourth categories (accountability of the class teacher and home/school partnerships) were made by head teachers, perhaps reflecting the whole school overview they must have as a major part of their role.

Question 8-What do you think are the major barriers to teaching and learning which can affect pupils in a mainstream class?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
National Standard	4	D1; CS2; D2; H3	Government assessment requirements
Expected pace of lessons	2	HS1; C3	
Children are taught to the test	1	C4	
Importance placed on data	1	H4	
Inadequate teaching	1	S3	Importance of the ability of the teacher
The need for creative teachers	1	D4	
Teachers can create barriers	2	C1; H5	
Mental Health/ emotional support	2	H2; C5	Children's wellbeing
External factors	1	S5	

The categories identified were: **government assessment requirements, the importance of the ability of the teacher and children's wellbeing.**

Government assessment requirements

The importance the government places upon assessment and the resulting data was identified in response to this question. D2 described the restrictions placed upon teachers and children because of the introduction of the national standard that has to be achieved by pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 *'regardless of their ability or the background or the emotional needs that they come through on a daily basis'*. It was also stated by CS2 that the fact that all children are assessed against the average was a major limitation as, despite having made individual progress, children with SEND could be recorded as not having achieved. Specific reference was made to the 2016 Key Stage 2 SATs by D1 and H3 as impacting negatively upon children with SEND, especially with regard to spelling, handwriting and reading, as the national standard only recorded 'achieved' or 'not achieved'. It was stated by the latter, that *'the interim framework is a real problem and is a barrier to those pupils enjoying and showing success in their education'*.

The importance that the government appeared to place on getting the data right was commented upon by H4 who suggested *'we're really talking about politicians proving effectiveness, or whatever they wish to prove with data...I think that's a massive barrier'* Such issues were seen by C4 to be exacerbated by the pressure on teachers to teach to the tests, resulting in what s/he

described as '*no room for inspiring these young people...no room for play, interventions, social skills*'.

Reference was also made to the impact of the content of the curriculum and the pace at which it was expected to be delivered. HS1 expressed concern that the pace of delivery meant that some groups were getting left behind. This issue was then expanded by C3 who considered that the pace required was too fast to embed learning effectively and that '*you can sometimes feel yourself reeling at the end of the day, so you think about the children as well*'. The curriculum was also seen to be prescriptive, focusing on end results rather than teaching and learning, and expecting so much from children at such a young age.

Importance of the ability of the teacher

The importance of the ability of the class teacher was emphasised by four interviewees, representing each of the staff roles. S3 recognised that inadequate teaching was the main barrier as this would result in unsuccessful learning. C1 suggested that teachers can also place barriers around a child, due to the expectations they have of them and how these may then be transmitted to the children regarding what they can and cannot achieve. H5 also commented that '*the adults actually generate the barriers*' and that '*children learn not to go where they've been scalded in the past*'. The need for creative, inquiring and resourceful teachers was also emphasised by D4, who expressed the concern that '*we have teachers who are so expert in their subject, that they don't know how to transmit it to children*' and so the opportunity for effective learning may be lost.

Children's wellbeing

The issues of children's mental health and emotional wellbeing were expressed by C5 and H2 as potential barriers to learning, as children may require support in these areas as well as in their motivation to learn, all of which could be potentially impacted upon by a range of factors. H2 also reflected upon the capacity of staff in being able to deal with such issues as *'do we really understand how that child feels and do we 100% know how to react to it?'* The necessity to deal with and respond to the changing environments that children may experience out of school was also acknowledged by S5, who emphasised the key requirement of information in this process.

Responses identified a number of barriers to teaching and learning that can affect pupils. The majority of responses referred to issues that appeared to originate as a result of the state-influenced market approach, which can be linked with the introduction of new structures and procedures. Staff also indicated the negative effects that could then impact upon the ability of children with SEN to achieve equity in their learning. The emphasis that was reported on the importance of assessment results, data and the restrictions of the new national standard, suggest that they have had a major impact on SEN practice, supporting Mittler's suggestion (2008, referred to on page 24) that people with disabilities (and difficulties) are often not considered when national policy ideas are planned and introduced. Children are assessed against the average child; any small steps of individual progress they have made are discounted. The pressures placed upon teachers to increase the pace of their teaching and to narrow the curriculum, run contrary to the tenets of the social and human rights

models, as it is likely that pupils with SEND will struggle in these areas much more than their peers. The identification of the issues of mental health and emotional wellbeing, and the perceived need to remove the barriers that may exacerbate difficulties, can also be linked to the social model.

The staff who contributed responses to the first category represented all types of staff role, suggesting that government assessment requirements affect the whole school in its approach to teaching and learning. Although a much smaller number of staff contributed to the other two categories, staff from each of the role types were also represented in the responses, indicating the importance of children's wellbeing and a teacher's ability in delivering effective professional practice.

Question 9-How successful do you think government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
SEND Code of Practice-indicating steps forward	1	D1	Positive impact of policy
Specific reference to positive elements of policy	3	S3; D4; H4	
Policy is outcome driven	1	C3	Negative impact of policy
Impact of national assessment policy	1	H3	
Specific reference to negative elements of policy	2	CS2; D2; H5	
Not successful	3	C1; C4	Policy is unsuccessful
Concern regarding children's Mental Health/wellbeing	4	HS1; H2; S5; C5	Children's wellbeing

The categories identified were: **positive impact of policy, negative impact of policy, policy is unsuccessful** and **children's wellbeing**.

Positive impact of policy

It was recognised by four members of staff, (representing each of the staff roles), that there had been some positive policy developments. H4 referred to the implementation of equality legislation as important as equity *'has to start with the law because then you can enforce it'*. D4 commented on the introduction of the EHCP as being *'positive in theory'* as everything was now contained in one document. This interviewee's comments were mitigated however, as s/he also made reference to the fact that the EHCP was not rewritten every year as it should be and that whether the law *'always drills down to what each child and family experience, I'm not sure'*. D1 also referred to the SEND Code of Practice as containing some strengths, especially as parents and other agencies are now more involved in discussions. S3 identified that the removal of behaviour as a separate area of need within the Code of Practice was positive, as various factors and conditions can impact upon and exacerbate such issues.

Negative impact of policy

Comments were made by two head teachers and three class teachers.

Reference was again made to the national standard and this year's Key Stage 2 SATs. The spelling test was of particular concern to H3. S/he identified that the test was unfair for children with dyslexia, as the framework did not take into

account that children with this specific learning difficulty (SpLD) may have particular areas of weakness in spelling and may therefore not achieve the required standard. D2 referred to the lack of support for specific children, as s/he perceived that although children achieve in a variety of different ways, the government appeared to prefer one system without consideration of all those involved and any difficult circumstances they may be experiencing such as '*a horrendous home situation*'.

CS2 explained that due to national policy moving to assessment without levels, schools are now '*left to their own devices*', and have to create their own systems as government level policies are unhelpful in supporting pupils with SEND. C3 commented that, as a result of recent policy, systems have become '*outcome driven*' and schools are judged on these results. This negative impact was expanded upon by H5, who stated '*I can't see many benefits to many government policies on the ground*'

Policy is unsuccessful

Two class teachers identified that policy was unsuccessful. C1 referred to the fact that '*goalposts are always moving*', resulting in constant changes, leading to difficulties in maintaining a consistent approach. C4 identified a '*general lack of understanding*' from the government regarding education. Any criticisms raised by the government could then '*make families lose confidence in teachers as well*'.

Children's wellbeing

Four members of staff, (representing each of the staff roles), also revisited issues concerning children's mental health and emotional wellbeing. H2 expressed concern that when, at a conference, 2,000 head teachers had informed the Education Secretary that children's mental health was of concern to them, she stated that she had not considered it to be such an issue, but would take it back to Parliament. S5 expanded upon this, by commenting that *'children's mental health, speech and language...are issues that are growing nationally, but becoming increasingly difficult to support in a school'*, linking to comments made previously for question 8. C5 added to this comment by suggesting that more resources and support were required in this area. The notion of children's difficulties, but also their resilience, was also highlighted by HS1, who acknowledged that many children have extremely complicated lives, but come to school every day, although *'adults who had those same pressures, wouldn't be going to work'*; however, for the children *'it's too hard sometimes'*.

This question focused on interviewee perceptions of how successful they thought government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress. Particular issues raised were the implementation of the national standard and the lack of consideration given to pupils with dyslexia when assessing progress using the KS2 SAT results. This emphasis can be seen to link to both the state-influenced market approach and the medical model. The drive to raise standards has led to this new framework; the 'failure' of any child to achieve the required level focuses then on their own

difficulties and deficits, rather than the lack of provision for their specific learning difficulty.

Some limited policy success was acknowledged and this focused on the identification of the development of equality legislation which can be associated with the human rights model, as individual rights have been assured at a national level. Social model influences are again apparent, as interviewees identified the importance of a range of professionals working together with parents to support children and the need to focus on issues of mental health and wellbeing. The perceptions of the impact of legislation upon practice (achieved from the responses to this question) can be used to address SRQ 5.

Seven responses identified recent policy as either being unsuccessful or having a negative impact in supporting pupils with SEND; such perceptions were identified by two of the head teachers and five class teachers and suggest differing levels of frustration at not being able to maintain consistency in approaches due to changing requirements and a lack of governmental understanding. No particular differences were identified across staff roles when considering the remaining categories of positive impact of policy and children's wellbeing.

Question 10-What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Difficulty in remaining inclusive	1	HS1	Standards agenda impacting on inclusive practice
Impact of the standards agenda	4	H4; D4; C4; H5	
Impact of behaviour issues in the classroom	1	S3	Inadequate teacher expertise
Teacher knowledge of scaffolding	1	D1	
No provision for families on low incomes	1	H2	Reductions in support and/or funding
Funding issues due to a positive reputation for inclusion	1	H3	
Increasing class sizes	1	C3	
Reduced support- local authority or in-school provision	2	C1; D2	
Children's Mental Health issues	1	S5	
Work with other agencies	1	C5	
Parental engagement	1	CS2	Working with parents

The categories identified were: **standards agenda impacting on inclusive practice, inadequate teacher expertise, reductions in support and/or funding and working with parents.**

Standards agenda impacting on inclusive practice

Three head teachers and two class teachers provided responses to this question. H5 identified that the standards agenda was *'the biggest barrier to inclusion'* and that a dilemma exists between inclusion and *'giving everybody the best start'* and an accountability framework *'that doesn't acknowledge that'*.

HS1 also suggested that great pressure can be exerted on small schools, who may take a '*data hit*' if a child with SEN joined their Year 6 class, meaning the school then achieved the minimum number of 10 with regard to formal recording of SAT results. It was also suggested that it was possible that such schools may then discuss with parents that the school was not right for the child; the government was thus identified as making it much harder to remain inclusive as '*it seems to get harder every year to hold that position (inclusion), but where do these children go if not?*'

All three members of staff from school 4 stated that their ability to work inclusively with mainstream colleagues and pupils had become much more problematic due to the drive in standards, as '*government policy forced us out...[from] developing really good inclusive practice*' (H4). The nearby primary mainstream school had also become an academy '*because they were a failing school*' (D4) and therefore had new priorities, and secondary colleagues '*haven't got time*' to work with them any more (C4).

Inadequate teacher expertise

D1 described that school 1 had identified that additional work needed to be done regarding teacher knowledge and understanding of scaffolding methods, as children '*were either doing the work with so much support from the teachers that it wasn't their work, or there was nothing and therefore it was so poor, you couldn't unpick what it was*'. It was stated that the pressure placed on teachers for children to meet standards could have inadvertently impacted on this issue as '*very innocently, our teachers have made children reach that standard, but*

children couldn't do it independently'. S3 identified that some teachers hold negative perceptions towards behavioural issues, and that as a result, rather than finding out the causes and putting in support procedures, 'there will always be a number who just want the disruptive child removed...without actually helping'.

Reductions in support and/or funding

Responses to this category were provided by staff from all role types. D2 described that support from the local authority was not always effectively provided, due to *'a lack of experience of the people that have been in post'* or knowledge of *'current initiatives that work'*. S5 again emphasised issues due to the reduced input provided by speech and language specialists, and this was reiterated by C5, who stated that outside agencies did not always keep pace with them in respect of support as *'we wait weeks for a follow up from the speech and language therapist after referral'*. This lack of support was also suggested by C1 and C3 at an in-school level, as they identified that class sizes were increasing, although there was often less support available from additional adults.

H3 described that because the school manages SEN and inclusion very positively, it has a good reputation. As a result, it receives a number of children who have specific difficulties, but the funding the school receives does not cover the costs incurred, meaning that this issue could significantly impact upon wider school funding and support. H2 specifically described his/her concern over the lack of provision for parents in low income jobs who are just above the threshold

for free school meals. S/he considered this group of children should be focused upon more at a national level, as they have a greater need, but less support and funding is available to them and *'nobody seems interested in these families'*.

Working with parents

CS2 referred to the parental engagement scheme introduced by the school and its importance in supporting parents' confidence in working with their children at home.

Responses identified a number of difficulties or issues that had affected the development of inclusive practice. The majority of replies can be associated with the state-influenced market approach and the emphasis placed upon schools to achieve the required standards. The subsequent impact upon practice was identified, as staff commented upon the barriers that existed to developing inclusive approaches, the dilemma that can face small schools and teacher concerns in ensuring that their pupils meet the required levels, as there could potentially be negative consequences regarding the inclusion of pupils with SEN (Bajwa-Patel and Devecchi, 2014). Links can also be made to the financial crisis model, as a school's positive reputation for inclusion may mean demand for places exceeds the funding available to support pupils. The inequality of funding available for low income families also emphasised the difficulties many parents are currently facing. The restructuring of local authorities to meet austerity budgeting may also have impacted upon levels of support available to schools.

The head teachers and class teachers who contributed responses to the first category had particular concerns about the effects of the standards agenda on inclusive practice. They each focused upon these effects at school level, with staff from school 4 specifically emphasising the limitations placed upon their work with mainstream colleagues. Issues regarding support and funding were identified by staff from all role types and linked to areas that either directly affected their teaching or could be associated with their school management role. The categories of inadequate teacher expertise and working with parents involved comments from one deputy head, a SENCO and one class teacher; their responses can again be linked to their particular roles in school.

Question 11-In your school, what types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Use of interventions	5	D1; H3; S3; C3; S5	Use of interventions
Parental engagement programme	4	HS1; H2; D2; CS2	Parental engagement
School Inclusion team	1	H5	Individual school approaches
Provision of in-service training	1	C4	
Unconditional positive regard	1	H4	
Changes to types of pupil groupings	1	D4	
Additional classroom support	1	C1	Support procedures
Importance of identification	1	C5	

The categories identified were: **use of interventions, parental engagement, individual school approaches** and **support procedures**.

Use of interventions

Responses to this category were provided by staff from all role types.

Reference was made to the use of specific interventions, such as Read Write Inc. and reading and dyslexia support. The use of interventions was explained in more detail by D1, H3 and S5, who each described that they create a *'bespoke'* element within their respective interventions, which focuses upon exactly what type of support is needed for individuals, thereby leading to the tailoring of the response to meet these needs instead of delivering the 'set' intervention. In this way, according to S5, it takes *'account of what the child is exhibiting, what the child's needs are and responding to these'*. D1, C3 and H3 also identified the important role played by teaching assistants in delivering these interventions. S3 emphasised the importance of constantly reviewing the use of such interventions and planning training for staff.

Parental engagement

All of the staff members at School 2 referred to their parent engagement programme, which had involved parents being invited into class to work alongside their child as well as participating in school clubs. It was felt by H2 that the programme had been extremely successful as it had *'raised the profile of teachers and the school ethos'* and brought parents up to date with current educational practices. The process was succinctly summarised by D2, who stated *'it's a two-way street. They are their first teacher, so the more we can do with them, the better'*. In response to this question, HS1 also mentioned a member of staff who is employed to work two days a week with parents on ways to develop parenting skills, because *'if we can influence parents, that's the*

way to influence children...improving their parenting skills has then improved their children's behaviour in school'.

Individual school approaches

H5 referred to the inclusion team set up at the school. This was a dedicated team of staff who work with S5 to support children as *'the SENCO alone definitely couldn't do that'*, due to the number of needs and the bureaucracy associated with the role. H4 also commented upon his/her school's focus on the individual, using the 'Every Child Matters' outcomes to reflect on what each child required and then investigating strategies that would support their continued development. C4 referred to in service training events that the school had previously organised but were now unable to continue, as *'budget restraints mean that we can't afford to buy ...people in'*.

Support procedures

C5 commented upon the importance of rapid identification supported by a range of evidence such as: observation, communication with parents, monitoring and target setting. S/he suggested that *'it's that open dialogue...having the consistency with members of staff, so they all know the needs of that child'*. C1 reflected upon the benefits support can provide, especially with regard to language use (e.g. rephrasing, repeating), scaffolding learning and maintaining lesson pace *'as if it's only you there, that's very, very hard to do'*

When reflecting upon the types of provision that have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning, interviewees identified several approaches. A number of responses focused upon identification and intervention for pupils with SEND. This emphasis can be linked with the medical model as importance is placed on the diagnosis of difficulty or deficit and a treatment approach to mediate problems. Interviewees also referred to creating a 'bespoke' element to such interventions, in order to tailor support; however, according to the tenets of the social model, this approach would still be considered to be medically focused, as modifications are still at an individual, rather than a societal level. Staff replies also identified links with the social model as they commented upon the importance of working closely with parents to support children's learning. The impact felt by budgetary restrictions (financial crisis model) was also acknowledged, as previously successful inset training could no longer be afforded.

The staff who contributed responses to the category of use of interventions represented all types of staff role, suggesting the importance of these aspects across the whole school. When considering responses according to the remaining categories, a number of differences can be identified. Two head teachers and two class teachers each referred to parental engagement and individual school approaches, linking to procedures relevant to those schools. Two class teachers commented upon support procedures. These latter responses link specifically to the individual roles and responsibilities of staff.

Question 12-Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Can result in the wrong label and support	1	D1	Negative developments
A focus on one need-can lead to intervention affecting other needs	3	H2; H3; S3	
Labels are helpful for schools in order to gain support and information on individual needs	2	CS2; H4	Positive developments
Labels are helpful for parents	1	C3	
Positive change to the area of behaviour	3	HS1; S5; C5	
Labels make no difference	3	C1; D2; H5	Neutral with respect to developments
Labels need to be fluid	2	D4; C4	Categories need to be fluid

Responses indicated that the use of categories or types of need was not straightforward. The four areas described in the SEND Code of Practice are: communication and interaction, social, emotional and mental health, cognition and learning and physical or sensory needs; it was noted however, that most children actually have more than one need.

The categories identified were: **negative developments, positive developments, neutral with regard to developments** and **categories/types need to be fluid**.

Negative developments

It was identified that ascribing labels to children can have negative ramifications. D1 suggested that during the process, the wrong label may be allocated, as *'when you ask for support, it's passed to a department which might not be the right one...therefore the support that comes from that doesn't match the need...and for that reason would hinder them'*

A perceived level of frustration was acknowledged regarding the general nature of the SEN information and definitions provided to staff by the local authority. It seemed that the emphasis for other professionals involved in the process was primarily to diagnose and identify the specific need of the child. For the teachers involved, little was provided to them on how to help the child. D1 further explained that difficulties could arise when contacting the local authority for support, as the specific agency required had to be identified, which initially, *'might not be the right one'*, so gaining the correct level of support could take some time.

H2, H3 and S3 also emphasised the need to maintain a vision of the whole child, rather than an individual label, as most children have multiple needs. The three members of staff identified that working to resolve one need may then *'knock onto another area of need'* (S3), as *'anxieties and emotions can create barriers in front of the one you're trying to get at'* (H2). As a result, the focus should be on the individual child, *'rather than trying to put them in a box'* (H3).

Positive developments

HS1, S5 and C5 agreed that the removal of behaviour as an area of need was very positive. In the 2001 Code of Practice, behaviour had been combined with emotional and social difficulties; in the current Code, it has not been ascribed to any one area of need. This was seen by HS1 to be helpful as *it's always very easy to say that a child has a behaviour problem and not look underneath...is it parenting, is it learning, is it social skills?*

Although previously identified as problematic, three interviewees also commented upon the positive effects that labels or categories can have. C3 suggested that an identification of need can support parents as they may then have finally achieved a diagnosis of the child's needs, enabling them to move forward in seeking relevant advice and support. CS2 and H4 also commented that at school level, defined ideas of areas of need can also support teachers in organising targeted support as well as researching appropriate strategies and approaches.

Neutral with regard to developments

C1 considered that labelling was '*irrelevant*' as the child had the same difficulties, regardless of a description and that more was needed on '*how to support them*'. D2 and H5 each stated that labels do not make any difference.

Categories/types need to be fluid

D4 stressed the need for categories or types to be considered as fluid, as *'there's no description that really caters for everything'*. C4 warned against the danger of *'overgeneralising'* as the tendency then can lead to every person with a specific additional need being identified as having exactly the same issues, instead of being considered as individuals.

Interviewees were asked to consider whether the development of categories of particular learning difficulties had been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils. Responses to this question were varied and focused on both the advantages and limitations that such categories or labels provided. Some replies suggested that although labelling could have positive consequences, it was possible for inaccurate labels or needs to be assigned, or over generalisations to be made, thus reducing the effectiveness of such support. This potential issue can be linked to aspects of the medical model, where identification, diagnosis and the subsequent allocation of a 'label' of need are of paramount importance; comments suggest that a continuous process of assessment is required to ensure that the classification of need and subsequent support remains the most appropriate (Hodkinson, 2016). In contrast, a social model perspective was also evident, as staff identified that any labels used should be fluid, ensure the provision of support where it was needed, consider the whole child and identify potential barriers and how to overcome them.

The staff who contributed responses to the categories of negative developments and positive developments represented all types of staff role,

suggesting the importance of these aspects across the whole school. Three staff (across two role types) were neutral with regard to their response. When considering responses for the fourth category, both members of staff taught at the special school, where the children made small but significant steps of progress; for these pupils, fluidity of expectations and success were of paramount importance.

Question 13-Do you think there is a tension or a pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards of attainment?

There was a consensus of agreement across all of the staff that an incredible pressure currently existed for all children, but especially those with SEN.

Answers	Number of replies	Respondents	Response categories
Yes-due to the use of the national standard	7	D1; C1; H2; D2; CS2; H3; S3	Pressure- national standard
Yes-general pressure in different aspects of education	6	HS1; C3;H4; H5; S5;C5	Pressure-general
Yes-lateral progress is not valued	2	D4; C4	Pressure-lateral progress is not valued

The categories identified were: **Pressure-national standard, Pressure-general** and **Pressure-lateral progress is not valued**.

Pressure-national standard

Responses were provided by staff representing all role types. H2 suggested that tension arises from the expectation that all children will be at the national standard at *'this time and place'* in their development and s/he believed that

such an expectation was *'just not reasonable'*. S/he continued this discussion by stating that if children were unable to achieve the national standard, something was deemed to be *'wrong'* with the children, rather than the system, such as *'they haven't had good teaching, the right provision, got a barrier to learning, got something'*.

This viewpoint was expanded upon by C1, who stated that *'policy makers don't understand children's needs'* and that this has a *'detrimental effect'* on children with SEN, as *'their progress is not rewarded or celebrated in the way it should be'*. D2 also supported this notion as s/he believed that such policy does not take into account the starting points of the children involved. S/he believed instead that it was vital to look at the holistic view of the child and the progress made over a longer period of time. CS2 stated that children with SEN were judged against the *'average'* child and that instead they should be assessed against their own individual targets. S3 built upon this idea, by commenting that *'some children will not make the expected progress'*, which would mean that they are then *'assessed as not achieving, when they have'* (CS2).

D1 and H3 noted that additional pressure was being placed upon certain children as special needs were no longer acknowledged or taken into account when recording the results achieved in Key Stage 2 SATS. This can result in children being seen to have *'failed'* as no consideration of individual difficulties or reasonable adjustments have been made to the process. It was also suggested by C1, that children identified as those who would not achieve the standard in SATs, may be *'pushed aside'* as support may be provided to middle

ability children instead as *'if we can just get them an extra couple of points...we'll be above floor and those children will get their SAT'*. The possibility of the potential pressure that could be placed upon head teachers was put forward by H3, who suggested some head teachers may not want children with particular needs in their schools, as schools had to achieve a prescribed standard and would not *'want those chances hindered by children who have no chance of getting that'*.

Pressure-general

Responses were again provided by staff representing all role types. A particular issue raised by HS1, was that the number of children placed on the special needs register has shrunk to what s/he referred to as *'the outliers'*. This term was defined, not as lower ability pupils who require some extra help, but those children who are *'really outlying from the rest of the class for whatever reason'*. It was further explained that they were children who, following the requirements of the previous 2001 SEN Code of Practice, would have been categorised at School Action Plus level, and therefore received additional support from outside agencies. It was also noted by the interviewee that schools had been told to make their SEN registers smaller.

H4 voiced concern that mainstream schools may inflate scores *'because they can't believe their hard work and the children's progress doesn't mean they're gone from P4 to P5...this can take several years'*. H5 suggested that there is no time to celebrate achievements and C3 and C5 both commented upon the pressure that exists for all children in every part of education.

Pressure-lateral progress is not valued

D4 emphasised the importance for their (special) school of recording lateral progress for their pupils, as the children would not be able to achieve the expected terms of progression (across year groups and key stages) required for their peers in mainstream schools. S/he noted however, that *'the government, the DfE, don't really recognise that as progress*, and this view was reiterated by C4, as although all of the children had made great progress, it was all lateral and therefore *'none of it was measurable in terms of the data we were given to use'*.

When asked whether they thought there was a tension or pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the national standards of attainment, all of the interviewees responded 'yes'. This overwhelming response seems to indicate a clash between the models upheld by the interviewees and the government (demonstrated through policy) and the views held by all involved. The state-influenced market approach is currently one of the drivers underpinning policy, as the government is focused on raising educational standards through the introduction of a new curriculum and more rigorous assessment. This clash is evident in the aspects previously referred to, which are creating difficulties for the interviewees in providing effective support for pupils with SEN. Staff particularly referred to the problems caused by: judging all children against the average child and the national standard, that children are seen to have 'failed' if they do not achieve the standard, (even though SENs are no longer taken into account) and that some schools may not

admit pupils with SEN as they may impact negatively on school data (Pring, 1989).

Although staff agreed with having high expectations of all pupils, and the importance of assessment as a means of setting appropriately challenging targets, their responses indicated that they had concerns about the current policy approach. Previous interviewee responses have indicated an affinity with the concepts of the social model; such a focus is again evident here, as replies indicate their frustration that individual differences are not considered or valued. This frustration can be seen in their comments that policymakers do not understand children's needs and give no credit to those who make immense individual progress, but still do not achieve national requirements.

It is also possible to suggest the influence of the financial crisis model on the reduction of numbers of pupils on the SEN register. The children that remain on the register are those who require significant additional support. With the exception of these children and those with statements or EHCPs, all other pupils are initially supported through the use of high quality teaching, prior to the possibility of any assessment of need taking place. Reductions in funding and budgets may then occur as less support is seen to be required.

The staff who contributed responses to the categories of pressure-national standard and pressure-general represented all types of staff role as each member of staff is directly affected by these pressures in some way. When

considering responses for the third category, both members of staff taught at the special school, which places great importance on the children's quality of life and celebrates all of their successes and achievements.

Question 14-Has the introduction of Education, Health and care plans affected the nature of provision in your school?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Yes, and change is seen as positive	4	D1; D2; S3; C5	Change is positive
Yes, and change is seen as negative	3	D4; C4; H5	Change is negative
No change	7	HS1; C1; H2; CS2; H3; H4; S5	No change to provision
Process is not known to the individual	1	C3	N/A

The categories identified were: **change is positive**, **change is negative** and **no change to provision**.

Change is positive

A number of positive outcomes of the new EHCPs were identified. These included the extension of the age range covered by the plan to 25, as you were then *'really planning someone's future'* (D1). The document was also recognised as looking beyond only the current year, considering instead longer term goals and aspirations. These goals are specifically reviewed at transition points between age phases, with the receiving and previous schools and other professionals assisting children and families with more detailed planning. The EHCP was seen by D2 to enable schools to be more focused on *'the needs of*

children’ and to *‘get the views of all involved’* in supporting the child’s progress and development. It was also acknowledged by this interviewee that it provides *‘an overview’* for parents and an opportunity for the child to *‘voice their opinions’*. The shared knowledge and expertise this could provide was seen as beneficial by C5, who commented that it is *‘a good idea that all agencies get together to create it’*. S3 identified that the plan *‘gives a clearer picture of how we’re going to achieve what we’re aiming for’*.

Change is negative

Interviewees noted a number of limitations regarding the plans. Reference was made to the time required for preparing a plan; it was identified as being a longer process which was both time and staff intensive. D4 also suggested that difficulties could arise when planning and writing outcomes that would also meet the local authority’s view of an outcome and could therefore be included in an EHCP; this issue was described as *‘a bone of contention’*. Although a focus is placed upon multi-agency interaction, C4 commented that it is *‘a struggle to get input from health or social care professionals’* when compiling a plan. H5 considered that the EHCP placed an increased burden on the education setting and that s/he *‘can’t see how the document itself generates anything other than pointing out the deficits in services available’* and is more about *‘what can’t be done, than what can’*.

No change to provision

H2 and H3 both stated that the provision required to support a child would be enacted whether or not the child had an EHCP; H3 expanded upon this further by stating '*although if they do have one, it's far easier to provide for those children than it would be otherwise*'. H4 reported that no change had occurred as s/he hoped the school had previously been meeting needs very effectively. HS1, CS2 and S5 each identified that provision in their school had not been affected and C1 commented that the EHCP process had not yet been implemented in the school.

When asked whether the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans had affected the nature of provision in their school, the replies provided indicated contrasting views. Comments made regarding no changes were required to provision suggest that links can be made to inclusive practice and the social model, as any potential barriers to learning were already being removed for all pupils. Positive changes were identified that again linked to the social model, as longer term, more holistic goals could be set through this process, supported by a range of professionals. It was also noted however, that there were several negative aspects of the new process.

The staff who contributed responses to the categories of change is positive and change is negative represented all types of staff role. Seven members of staff commented that the introduction of EHCPs had not caused any changes to their provision, as support was already enacted regardless of any specific process or funding. Four of these interviewees were head teachers and one was a

SENCO, suggesting the importance of their roles in planning for and implementing effective SEND provision and that they also considered their existing practice was compatible with the new process.

Question 15-In this period of austerity, do you think budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?

Answers	Number of replies	Respondent	Response categories
Yes-less support available from the local authority	7	D1; C1; D2; H3; C3; D4; H5	Local authority support reduced
Yes-school provision restructured due to reduced budgets	5	H2; S3; H4; C4; S5	Reduction in school budgets
No current effect	2	CS2; C5	No current effect
Not asked of interviewee (interviewer's omission)	1	HS1	N/A

The categories identified were: **Local Authority support reduced, reduction in school budgets and no current effect.**

Local Authority support reduced

D1 and C3 reported that children at their schools had been directly affected by changes made to local authority services. They identified in particular that the restructuring of speech and language therapy provision had resulted in weekly support visits being reduced to just one visit, which incorporated both assessment and diagnosis. A programme was then provided for school staff to implement. D1 suggested that the specialist quality of this support had therefore been lost, as although school staff are experienced professionals *‘they are not*

experts in that field' and that the reduced budget '*has prevented expertise being shared and used how it should*'.

D2 explained that schools no longer receive funding for children who had previously been at School Action level. S/he highlighted that this '*will make a difference to their provision and the progress those children are making long term*'. D4 commented upon the local authority outreach work that the special school had been able to provide to primary and secondary mainstream schools. S/he identified that '*it will be halved next year and cut the year after...who is going to provide for the children [then]?*'

The impact that external funding reductions have had on schools was also stated by C1, who commented that training previously provided by the local authority had been free of charge, and that now it had moved away from the authority any training had to be funded directly by the schools themselves. As an example, s/he stated '*you are balancing constantly a budget that says, are we going to buy those books or put a TA in there? We can't do both*'. H3 confirmed that the support and quality improvement services previously provided by the local authority had '*been stripped away*'.

One reference was also made by H3 to new national funding formulas which are due to be implemented and the uncertainty as to whether existing provision will be able to be maintained when the formula is enacted. In contrast to this concern however, H5 stated that the funding formula would positively address

the reduced budget they receive from their local authority, (due to its size and rural nature) in comparison to schools of a similar size and context elsewhere in the country.

Reduction in school budgets

H4 and C4 explained that the special school has had to become more focused on attracting funds, fundraising and completing bids in order to provide interventions, which was identified by H4 as *'taking an awful lot of time'* and a process which cannot guarantee that they will be able to offer the required support if the required funds are not forthcoming. C4 suggested that *'it's only going to get worse-the picture is bleak'*.

The schools involved also described restructuring that has taken place or is currently being implemented, due to budget reductions, in order to ensure that what is needed is provided. H2 explained that *'we've restructured to make sure that what we need is what we have'*. It was felt by H4 that the school was *'constantly trying to achieve more on less'* and S5 noted that this year had been difficult, as *'budgets haven't kept pace with the level of need'*. S3 also commented that the school was creating a bespoke reading intervention, using existing resources as they needed *'to make the budget go as far as possible'*.

No current effect

Two members of staff perceived that currently, there had been no changes made to school provision. CS2 and C5 both considered that their schools still

had the same amount of resources and number of staff.

When asked whether they thought budget cuts had affected the nature of provision, the majority of replies suggested that they had; the impact of such budget restrictions can be linked to the financial crisis model. Staff identified the reduction in local authority funding and services and the impact this has had upon school provision, linking to Gamble (2010). H3 and H5 also commented upon the new funding formulas and how they may adversely or positively affect their budgets.

The staff who contributed responses to the first and second categories represented all types of staff role, suggesting that all of the staff in all of the schools had felt the impact of budget cuts and had either already amended their provision as a result, or were making plans to do so, in order to maintain their levels of inclusive practice. When considering responses for the third category, the two interviewees were both class teachers, so it is possible that decisions made by the school leadership teams had mitigated the necessity at this time for in-class provision to be radically revised.

Summary tables of identified response categories according to staff

role/type

All staff roles represented

Response categories	Respondents	Staff type-specific group or general distribution
Q1-Enabling achievement	H2; S5; C5; S3; D4; CS2; C3; C4; C1; D2; H3	All staff roles represented
Q3-Do not remember/recall general education policies	C1; C3; D1; HS1; D2; CS2; S5; C5	All staff roles represented
Q3-Policy not at the forefront	H2; H5; S3; H3; C4	All staff roles represented
Q4-Do not remember/recall specific SEN policies	HS1; H3; S3; D4; C4; H5; C1; D1; CS2; H2; D2; C3; C5	All staff roles represented
Q5-In school experiences	HS1; CS2; S3; S5; C1; H2; D2; C3; C5; H3	All staff roles represented
Q6-Greater involvement of parents	D1; CS2; D2; H3; S3; C5	All staff roles represented
Q6-Introduction of new processes	HS1; H4; C4; C4; S5	All staff roles represented
Q8-Government assessment requirements	D1; CS2; D2; H3; HS1; C3; H4; C4	All staff roles represented
Q8-Importance of the ability of the teacher	C1; H5; S3; D4	All staff roles represented
Q8-Children's wellbeing	H2; C5; S5	All staff roles represented
Q9-Positive impact of policy	D1; S3; D4; H4	All staff roles represented
Q9-Children's wellbeing	HS1; H2; S5; C5	All staff roles represented
Q10-Reductions in support and/or funding	H2; H3; C1; D2; C3; S5; C5	All staff roles represented
Q11- Use of interventions	D1; H3; S3; C3; S5	All staff roles represented
Q12- Negative developments	D1; H2; H3; S3	All staff roles represented
Q12-Positive developments	C3; CS2; H4; HS1; S5; C5	All staff roles represented
Q13-Pressure-national standard	D1; C1; H2; D2; CS2; H3; S3	All staff roles represented
Q13-Pressure-general	HS1; C3; H4; H5; S5; C5	All staff roles represented
Q14-Change is positive	D1; D2; S3; C5	All staff roles represented across the two themes
Q14-Change is negative	D4; C4; H5	
Q14-No change to provision	HS1; C1; H2; CS2; H3; H4; S5	All staff roles represented
Q15-Local authority support	D1; C1; D2; H3; C3; D4; H5	All staff roles represented
Q15-Reduction in school budgets	H2; S3; H4; C4; S5	All staff roles represented

Many of the responses to the identified categories were made by staff from all of the role types. Some of the issues involved focused on inclusive practice, engagement with parents, high expectations of children, effectively and successfully supporting their achievements and emotional wellbeing (responses arising from questions 1, 6, 8, 9 and 11). All staff were therefore directly involved in enabling children to reach their potential, albeit in different ways.

The responses identified within questions 10, 12, 13 and 15 were again

represented by all staff roles, and emphasised the range of different pressures staff are experiencing in order to provide effectively for pupils with SEN.

Two staff roles represented

Response categories	Respondents	Staff type-specific group or general distribution
Q1-Reaching potential	D1; H4; H5; HS1	3 Head teachers and 1 Deputy Head- members of senior leadership teams
Q2-Government influences	D1; C1; H2; HS1; H5; C4; D2; H4; H3	5 Head teachers, 2 Deputy Heads and 2 class teachers- staff mostly members of senior leadership teams
Q2-Government/societal influences	S3; D4	Class teacher/ SENCO
Q3-Remember specific policies	H4; D4	Head teacher/ Deputy Head- members of senior leadership teams
Q5-Previous experiences	D1; C4; D4; H4; H5	Head teachers/class teachers
Q6-Policy creating barriers	D4; H2; H5	2 Head teachers and 1 Deputy Head- members of senior leadership teams
Q7-Importance of early identification	D1; S3; S5	2 SENCOs, 1 Deputy Head- members of senior leadership teams
Q7-Responsibility/accountability of the class teacher	H3; C5; HS1; H4	3 Head teachers and 1 class teacher
Q9-Negative impact of policy	H3; C3; CS2; D2; H5	2 Head teachers and 3 class teachers
Q10-Inadequate teacher expertise	D1; S3	Deputy Head/ SENCO- members of senior leadership teams
Q10-Standards agenda impacting on inclusive practice	HS1; H4; D4; C4; H5	Head teachers and class teachers
Q11-Parental engagement	HS1; H2; D2; CS2	Head teachers, class teachers
Q11- Individual school approaches	H5; C4; H4; D4	Head teachers, class teachers
Q12- Neutral with regard to developments	C1; D2; H5	Head teacher, class teachers

Specific responses to certain categories were also only made by particular staff roles. Within certain elements of questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 10 listed above, the two staff roles represented were members of their school's senior leadership team. Their responses can therefore be linked to the whole school overview that they must maintain. Responses to questions 2, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 12 were generally made by head teachers and class teachers, suggesting the impact these issues have had across the whole school.

One staff role represented

Response categories	Respondents	Staff type-specific group or general distribution
Q2-Teacher concerns	C3; C5; S5	Class teachers
Q2-Societal influences	CS2	Class teachers
Q4-Remember specific SEN policies	H4	Head teacher
Q4-Knowledge gained as a result of specialist SEN training	S5	SENCO
Q6-Accountability placed on teachers	C1	Class teacher
Q7-Meeting the needs of the children	C1; CS2; D2; C3; D4; C4	Class teachers
Q7-Home/school partnerships	H2; H5	Head teachers
Q9-Policy is unsuccessful	C1; C4	Class teachers
Q10-Working with parents	CS2	Class teacher
Q11- Support procedures	C1; C5	Class teachers
Q12-Categories need to be fluid	D4; C4	Class teachers
Q13-Pressure-lateral progress is not valued	D4; C4	Class teachers
Q15-No current effect	CS2; C5	Class teachers

Responses to some categories were provided by only one staff role type. Within certain elements of questions 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 15 listed above, comments were provided only by class teachers. The focus of these responses can be identified as primarily classroom based, as they are concerned with meeting children's needs, teacher accountability and liaison with parents.

Conclusion

Sub-research questions 4 and 5 will be examined further and analysed in greater detail in the next chapter. Any apparent links between the data, relevant literature and the potential influences of particular models on policy, will be identified and discussed in order to develop specific research conclusions.

Chapter 5: Analysis

The topic of this thesis was selected as a number of significant changes have been made to the SEN framework since the implementation of the Children and Families Act (HMSO, 2014). Chapter Six (Part 3) of this legislation provided for the introduction of a new SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015a). This document set out details of the new processes for the identification of, and provision for, pupils with SEN. During this same time period, a new National Curriculum was also introduced, which included revised assessment procedures and the National Standard benchmark for attainment. When considering these legislative changes as a whole, it was perceived by the researcher that, as a result of their implementation, there could be a subsequent major impact on SEN provision and practice. The research was therefore planned to ascertain whether any such impact was considered to be occurring and if so, what the nature of this impact was perceived to be. The research also aimed to examine five models of SEN and disability, in order to identify whether their use could be seen as having influenced the direction of both previous legislation and also this new framework.

The main question that framed this research was:

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision.

Sub-research questions 4 and 5 contribute to shedding light on this question and will therefore be examined and analysed in this chapter. The fourth SRQ focused upon identifying any links between staff perceptions and the models of

SEN and disability identified in the first literature review. The models that were identified and evaluated (medical, social, human rights, state-influenced market approach and financial crisis) connect to the main research question as it was theorised in the design of the research that they would be likely to influence the content and direction of policy. Sub-research question 4 was therefore planned to gather the perceptions of staff regarding these legislative changes and to ascertain whether their views were different according to staff role. Responses to these questions will assist in determining whether the staff interviewed considered if the current educational climate cohered with their views about the purposes of SEN.

Sub-research question 4 asked ***“What links can be identified between the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers and the major models of SEN and disability?”*** In order to address this question, it is necessary to identify any links between the perceptions of staff and the models of SEN and disability identified in the first literature review. These perceptions are presented in the following grid, which also indicates the level of emphasis the responses appeared to place upon these links.

Identified links between the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers and the major models of SEN and disability

	Head teachers	SENCOs	Class teachers	Linked Concerns
Medical model	Specific links	Specific links	Specific links	Intervention Early identification
Social model	Strong links (positive)	Strong links (positive)	Strong links (positive)	Inclusion and inclusive practice
Human Rights model	Extremely limited links	No direct comments provided	Extremely limited links	Reflects the lack of reference to this model in the reviewed documents
State influenced market approach	Strong links (negative)	Strong links (negative)	Strong links (negative)	Standards Agenda Assessment National Standard Pressures placed upon staff that hinder inclusive practice
Financial crisis model	Limited links	Limited links	Limited links	Budget reductions and subsequent changes to practice and provision

Specific links can be made to aspects of the medical model, as staff from each of the defined groups referred to both early identification and the use of interventions as successful ways of addressing the needs of pupils with SEN. Early identification provides accurate assessment and diagnosis of need, therefore enabling appropriate treatment to be initiated. However, as Hodkinson (2016) suggests, such identification can also lead to a segregated system of education, as interventions often result in children being withdrawn from the classroom. They are then excluded from their peers and the educational opportunities available. The interviewees had however, modified their approach to the use of interventions, as they had either created their own 'bespoke' programmes, or tailored commercial schemes to specifically meet the needs of individuals. Children following these programmes also remained in the classroom and groups often included those with needs other than SEN.

Reference was also made to the use of labelling, or the allocation of individual difficulties to particular categories of need. The use of such terminology and areas of need are primary aspects of the medical model. Once a category of need is assigned to a child's difficulties, it is often seen as a fixed and unchanging label (Evans, 2007), as emphasis remains on addressing the individual's deficits through the provision of appropriate treatment. H2 considered however, that such labels were useful, as schools could then acquire and provide the most relevant support for pupils. H4 explained that labels also supported parents in achieving support and advice that may otherwise not have been available. Staff perceptions however, appeared to be cautious about the wholesale adoption of such an idea, as they also suggested that labels should remain fluid, rather than fixed, as this was the most beneficial way to provide for the needs of pupils. Emphasis therefore remains upon the original tenets of the medical model (to identify, assess diagnose and treat deficits), but the element of removing barriers (the main principle of the social model) can also be identified in the perceptions of the participants.

During the research, it became apparent that the interviewees were committed to the principles of inclusive practice. As inclusion is an integral aspect of the social model, it formed a central link to their perceptions. Lindsay (2003) suggests that the removal of barriers in order to improve outcomes is a central principle of the social model. Staff identified that the greatest levels of satisfaction they gained from teaching were when they could support children to both achieve their potential and improve their outcomes, as education was seen as a key process in this development. When considering what should be the emphasis in a school's SEN policy, staff placed the child at the centre,

supported by both the class teacher and inclusive practice; this reflected the importance of collective responsibility as defined by Runswick-Cole and Hodge (2009).

Weedon (2012) suggests that barriers to learning can occur due to a range of factors, which include environmental and social aspects. One identified barrier (which was not initially considered by the researcher and was commented upon by staff prior to the government press release of January 2017) was that of children's mental health and wellbeing. Staff comments suggested that children's mental health was perceived to be a growing national issue, and one, that as yet, did not seem to be fully recognised by the government, even though the impact of such difficulties can remain with children into adolescence and adulthood. Weare (2007:245) describes mental health as a "basic human right"; however, research conducted by Patalay et al., identifies that "less than a third of children who need mental health support receive help and usually only after problems have reached a certain level of severity" (2016:140). This emphasis appeared to resonate with the concerns raised by staff and links to the social model as they were working to support pupils' needs as effectively as possible. Lavis (2014) notes that most teachers have had little or no training in this area. Staff capacity has therefore been identified as one of the largest barriers to the provision of support for mental health (Patalay et al., 2016); a concern also voiced by H2.

The parental engagement programmes led by three of the schools can also be linked to the social model. Although the most recent policy direction has been to

focus upon parents as 'consumers', (an element which is linked to the state influenced market approach) who are seen to be vying to choose and achieve the most effective outcomes for their children (Le Grand et al., 2008), none of the schools, as yet, had directly encountered this possibility. Instead, the focus was placed on removing institutional barriers (Terzi, 2005), by developing the relationship between parents and schools. Beveridge (2005) identifies that positive links between home and school have been seen to improve pupils' outcomes, reinforcing the role of education as the key factor in supporting and promoting aspirations.

Very limited direct reference was made to link staff perceptions with the human rights model. H4 referred generally to the fact that all children had only been deemed to be educable since the Education Act of 1972 and more specifically to the recent introduction of equality legislation. The lack of direct comments made by staff in this area reflects the very limited reference to such legislation that appeared in the documents examined in the second literature review. As the staff involved were committed to implementing inclusive approaches within their professional practice, it is possible that greater focus was placed upon the social model to remove barriers, as they were working to eliminate those most immediately faced by their pupils, which were inhibiting their learning and attainment. The human rights model is an approach emphasised mostly at policy level, which may not engage teachers in the same way and to the same extent.

Strong but negative links were evident between the perceptions of staff and the state influenced market approach. Responses to question 13 (which asked whether staff felt there was a tension or pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards of attainment) had resulted in a consensus of opinion that such a tension existed. This negative response was attributed to a number of different factors. The main issue referred to was that of the standards agenda (Ainscow et al., 2006). The emphasis placed by the government upon achieving the national standard, whilst removing any consideration of SEN, was perceived as promoting inequity, as any child who did not achieve the standard was seen to have failed, even though significant individual progress may have been made. HS1 and H4 specifically referred to the importance placed upon data and targets, to the detriment of valuing individual successes. This difficulty was seen to be exacerbated by the “shifting landscape” (H4) and the “constantly changing national goalposts” (HS1) currently experienced by schools.

Staff comments also identified that the increased accountability placed upon them to complete the paperwork that would secure provision, deflected time and attention away from supporting the pupils’ learning. Although some tasks were considered unnecessary (C1), they had to be completed, even though the teachers felt that time would be better spent on the children (H2). The importance of working with other agencies was acknowledged as vital in supporting the child holistically; however, as a result of the reduction in local authority services and budget restrictions, such multi-agency work was proving to be problematic. When asked if budget cuts had affected provision, seven members of staff identified that there had been significant reductions in local

authority sourced provision, such as speech and language therapy and five members of staff also commented that school based provision had been negatively affected. Their perceptions here link to the financial crisis model, as comprehensive social and economic reform has taken place since the 2008 financial crisis (Gamble, 2010), and additional funding that could have been invested by the government in education and other public services has had to be directed elsewhere to support the banking system.

In summary, sub-research question 4 can be seen to assist in addressing the main research question as it achieves its focus of linking the perceptions of staff to the models of SEN and disability examined in the first literature review. The references made to early identification and the use of interventions link to the medical model, as a focus is maintained on mediating difficulties. The importance placed by staff on inclusive practice and removing barriers to teaching and learning can be associated with the social model. Only limited links were made to the human rights model, reference was made to equality legislation and equal opportunities for all pupils. The influence of the state-influenced market approach was linked to current barriers such as assessment and curriculum approaches and target setting which are impacting upon practice and provision for pupils with SEN. This impact is increased by budget restrictions that link directly to the financial crisis model.

Despite the adherence of head teachers and staff to the social model, as a result of recent policy direction, the strongest influence that was apparent from analysing the data was that of the state influenced market approach. The

influence of this framework had impacted upon the professional practice of the staff involved in the research, as it conflicted with staff commitment to promoting inclusion and the principles of the social model. Additional barriers (such as the implementation of the national standard and budget restrictions) were also being introduced instead of being eradicated, which created further difficulties.

Sub-research question 5 asked “***What do Head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers think of the impact of recent legislative changes on SEN practice and provision?***” In order to address sub-research question 5, it is first necessary to assess whether there were any major differences in the responses between the three staff roles selected. Responses will then be compared, with concluding comments provided regarding whether they all share the same perceptions. The responses that were provided for each question and the summaries included of replies by type have been reproduced in the grid to present an overview of the data.

Interviewee responses according to staff role

	Head teachers	SENCOs	Class teachers	Differences in response
1. What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?	Education is a tool that can help children increase their life chances Happy children/positive ethos Skills for lifelong learning Achievement in all areas, not just academic	Helping children and seeing the progress they make Watching someone achieve and enjoy learning	Seeing the progress children make Watching children enjoy learning Achievement in all areas, not just academic Skills for lifelong learning	No major differences although some head teacher responses indicated a longer term view than their colleagues
2. What are the greatest dissatisfactions?	Red tape Targets Narrowing of curriculum Shifting landscape Meddling of politicians	Involvement of social services due to neglect Can only have so much influence When you feel you got it wrong	Paperwork Guilt-not enough time Focus on statistics Building not fit for purpose Shifting landscape	HT-whole school and government influences SENCOs and CT-barriers of time and teacher knowledge
3. What general education policies do you remember being in place...?	Not at forefront Do not remember any policy, but remember documents Focus on teaching Specific policy	Little influence Do not remember any policy, but remember documents	Do not remember any Focus was on teaching Do not remember any policy, but remember documents Specific policy	No major differences

4. Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?	Do not remember any Specific policy Do not remember any policy, but remember documents	Do not remember any SENCO course Do not remember any policy, but remember documents	Do not remember any Specific policy Do not remember any policy, but remember documents	No major differences
5. How did you end up being interested or involved in SEN?	Head teacher role-SEN is a legal requirement Integral part of provision Additional experience	Asked to apply to be SENCO Move from Pupil Premium Ambassador to SENCO Took over from head teacher SENCO in previous schools	Teaching practice Not an effective teacher unless interested Class teacher role Additional experience	No major differences
6. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent government SEN policies?	To reduce the number of children with SEN Parents EHCPs Policy creates barriers	Person centred Greater partnership To join things up EHCPs	Parents EHCPs Teacher's role-diagnosis Inclusion	A number of differences were identified which related to the specific role of the interviewee
7. What do you think should be the emphasis in school SEN policy?	Emphasis on the child Teacher responsibility Freedom to be creative Parents	Own targets-assess individually Early identification Additional to /different from	Early identification Support where needed Whole child Inclusion	A number of differences were identified which related to the specific role of the interviewee
8. What do you think are the major barriers to teaching and learning which can affect pupils?	Mental Health National Standard Data driven Teachers can cause barriers Pace	All children assessed the same Quality first teaching can be a barrier Out of school factors	National Standard Pace Taught to the test Assessment Mental Health/wellbeing Teachers can cause barriers	A number of differences were identified which related to the specific role of the interviewee
9. How successful have government policies been in overcoming the barriers...?	Limited success Assessment-not successful Some-equality legislation Can't see any benefits Mental Health	Assessment-not successful Removal of behaviour-positive Wish for Ofsted to look more holistically	Not successful Outcome driven Some small steps Mental Health Limited success	No major differences
10. What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice?	No support for some families Lack of funding Standards agenda	Parent engagement Behaviour/teacher perceptions Mental Health Pressure on small schools	Teacher scaffolding issues Class sizes Loss of support Loss of inclusive practice	Different responses according to role HT-whole school SENCO-Mental Health, parental engagement, behaviour CT-Class level
11. What types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers?	Parent engagement Interventions Positive attitude Inclusion team	High quality teaching Interventions-review and staff training Interventions-bespoke Parent engagement	Interventions In service training Support Parent engagement Pupil groupings Identification	No major differences
12. Has the development of categories of learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help?	Can get targeted support Arbitrary-needs cross over Helpful-where to pitch support No difference	Problems with assessment Primary need can change Debate-what category? No difference	Support can be wrong type Parents like a label Can help, need to be fluid More on how to support No difference	No major differences
13. Is there a tension or pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards...?	Expectation on children is national SEN discounted at end of KS2 Mainstream inflate scores Need a balance	Judged against average child and national expectations Targets to achieve Number on SEN register has shrunk	National standard Pressure in all areas Lateral progress discounted Must achieve age expectations Raising the bar	Consensus of opinion

14. How has the introduction of EHCPs affected the nature of provision in your school?	Doesn't affect provision-would provide it anyway EHCP-nightmare	Feels provision is the same No effect Much the same Not really	Positive-longer term view Lack of knowledge about it No/ not implemented Negative-outcomes Multi-agency	The leadership team in each school appeared more knowledgeable about the process than other staff
15. Do you think that budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?	School-yes LA-yes Fundraising and bids Less money due to nature of the local authority	Not at the moment Well managed school Budgets are very tight	Reduced agency support Fundraising Yes-no money for training Yes-no School Action funding anymore Outreach halved	No major differences

When evaluating the data, there were some considerable similarities in the responses provided to a number of the questions.

In response to question 9, (which required staff to consider how successful government policies have been in overcoming barriers to teaching and learning), comments across all staff types indicated perceptions of either limited policy success or no success at all (identified in the categories of positive impact of policy, negative impact of policy and policy is unsuccessful). All staff members, regardless of role, were directly affected by the impact of policy and its focus upon outcomes and achievement and the responsibility they had in working towards achieving teaching and learning requirements.

When asked if there was a tension or pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards of attainment (question 13 and identified in the categories of pressure-national standard, pressure-general and pressure-lateral progress is not valued), a consensus of opinion was provided indicating there was such a difficulty. Staff referred to the impact of assessment and the national standard and the lack of consideration provided for pupils' SENs. These responses indicate, once again, the pressures

placed upon staff and the impact of the standards agenda and the state-influenced market approach upon their practice.

Several questions did, however, indicate a wider variety of responses, which could be more closely linked to the specific responsibilities of the participant's role in school; for example, question 2 asked staff, what for them, were the greatest dissatisfactions of teaching. All five of the head teachers and two of the Deputy Heads identified difficulties caused by national target setting, the curriculum constraints placed upon them, the importance of data and statistics and increased paperwork (category of government influences). Each member of staff was part of their school's leadership team and therefore directly involved in implementing and managing such whole school issues.

Question 6 asked participants to consider what had been the main emphases in recent government policies. Two head teachers focused upon issues from a whole school perspective (identified in the category of policy creating barriers). H2 suggested that the government wished to reduce the number of children with SEND. As a head teacher, s/he had a legal responsibility to ensure that pupils with SEND received effective support and provision. H5 commented that policy could create barriers and cited the training that staff must complete before becoming a SENCO, as this could be a problem for someone wishing to take on this role, as time restraints, roles and responsibilities were already at capacity for many staff. In both instances, potential barriers were being identified that could negatively affect provision for pupils with SEND and the role of head teachers in ensuring they are effectively supported.

Question 8 asked what staff perceived to be the major barriers to teaching and learning that could affect pupils. Nine distinct responses were provided for this question, identified in the categories of government assessment requirements, the importance of the ability of the teacher and children's wellbeing. H4 commented upon the importance placed upon the data and the "massive barrier" that this creates, as politicians use it to prove effectiveness and progress.

The importance placed upon high quality teaching was seen as a potential barrier by S3. Concern was raised by the SENCO that if standards of teaching were poor, the children's learning and progress would be affected; as such, inadequate teaching was acknowledged to be the "greatest barrier". Emphasis is therefore placed upon the importance of the teacher's ability to differentiate appropriately for all pupils in order to provide effective challenge and support. D4 stressed the requirement for teachers to be creative and inquiring, but was concerned that even if they were experts in their subject, they may not 'know how to transmit it to children'.

S5 acknowledged that factors external to the school could impact upon children's learning. The school welcomed a varied intake of pupils and worked to support any individual need through the use of their inclusion team and by forging close links with parents. This emphasis appears to be in contrast to Farrell's (2001) suggestion that when allocating categories of need to a child, little focus is given to external factors that may be impacting upon the child.

School 5 attempted to collect key information on pupils and to work with relevant agencies in order to support children and their families.

One response identified the perception that children were being taught to the tests, as substantial pressure existed for schools due to the central targets being imposed by government. C4 commented that “there’s no room for play, interactions, social skills”; of necessity, the emphasis for class teachers is placed upon children’s academic attainment and progress. This progress is currently only recognised through SATs results and the national standard and therefore creates a major barrier for pupils with SEN if they do not achieve these requirements.

Question 10 asked interviewees to consider what difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice; their responses can be identified in the categories of inadequate teacher expertise, reductions in support and/or funding, standards agenda impacting on inclusive practice and working with parents.

Certain issues were considered only by the head teachers and at a whole school level. H4 and H5 referred to the impact of the standards agenda and that difficulty that existed in maintaining inclusive practice. H3 also highlighted funding issues. As the school was well known for its success in supporting pupils with SEN, there were children currently on roll with specific needs for

whom the funding they received did not meet all costs incurred. H2 also referred to the lack of general support available for families on low incomes.

The SENCOs emphasised issues that directly impacted upon their role and work with children and families. S5 returned to the issue of children's mental health and that schools are finding it increasingly difficult to support pupils (Lavis, 2014). S3 identified how teacher perceptions of behavioural difficulties can affect inclusive practice, as there are some teachers "who just want the disruptive child removed, without wanting to find out causes, or actually helping". Parental engagement was again referred to by CS2 as an important approach to developing home-school links (Beveridge, 2005) and as a means of promoting positive educational outcomes.

The class teachers referred to a number of different issues that impacted directly upon their work in the classroom. D1 identified that greater training was required for staff with regard to scaffolding pupils' learning. S/he commented that the focus on high quality teaching could lead to staff either excessively supporting pupils' learning in order for them to meet the prescribed targets, or providing insufficient challenge or support due to a lack of existing pedagogical knowledge. The pressure of working towards and achieving targets again links to the state-influenced market approach and the standards agenda (Ainscow et al., 2006). C2 and C3 referred respectively to the loss of in-class support and larger class sizes. The reduction in budgets can be seen to be impacting upon these issues, as schools are having to audit and reallocate funding in order to

achieve maximum benefits for pupils and staff. It is at the class level where these changes may be most apparent.

Summary

Following the analysis of the data for sub-research questions 4 and 5, a number of key issues can be identified.

The responses received from the staff involved in the research consistently indicated their commitment to inclusive practice and were strongly linked to the principles of the social model, as they wished to provide equity for all pupils and remove barriers to learning. This emphasis contrasts significantly with the current focus of government policy that demonstrates the use and importance of the state-influenced market approach. Greater priority was perceived to have been given to assessment and data as a means of raising educational standards, with little regard for the effects of SEN upon a pupil's achievement.

There were a number of similarities in the thoughts of the different staff groups on the impact of recent changes to policy and legislation. It can be noted that many of the responses again focused on the difficulties caused by the emphasis placed on the state-influenced market approach and the limited success of policy in addressing the difficulties that exist for pupils with SEN in demonstrating individual success and attainment within the current assessment procedures. Even when responses varied by staff role, many of the replies still focused upon these main issues.

An interesting and emerging issue that was not specifically anticipated at the start of the research was the emphasis staff placed upon the growing issue of supporting children's mental health difficulties. Responses indicated that although staff worked extremely hard to support children, they lacked specialist training in this area as well as the capacity to engage with them as effectively as they would have wished.

Since the completion of the data collection for this research, the government has increased its emphasis upon the issue of mental health. A press release, published on the 9th January 2017, announced the government's intention to introduce "a comprehensive package of measures to transform mental health support in our schools, workplaces and communities" (Gov.UK, 2017). In her speech, the Prime Minister explained that it was the government's intention to "ensure that children and young people get the help and support they need and deserve-because we know that mental illness too often starts in childhood" (Gov. UK, 2017).

The press release also provided more information regarding these proposed measures. They include a greater focus upon support for schools and a major review of the Children's and Adolescents' Mental Health Services (CAMHS). A green paper is also planned that will focus on children and young people's mental health, and will identify ways to "transform services in schools, universities and for families" (Gov. UK, 2017). However, it is specifically stated that only secondary schools will be offered mental health first aid training. The schools involved in this research that specifically raised their concerns about

children's mental health (schools 1, 2 and 5) were all mainstream primary schools. It appears that their concerns about their young pupils' needs are not yet fully recognised or supported by the government and so needs to be a major area for further research.

The next chapter will revisit both the main research question and the sub-research questions; the latter will be analysed in order to evaluate how effectively they have addressed the initial question, as a result of the data and information they have provided.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This concluding chapter consists of four sections. First, there will be an identification and discussion of the four main themes that have been devised following an analysis of the response categories. Second, there will be a focus on how the data generated from the sub-research questions and the ideas discussed in the literature review chapters have combined to answer the main research question. Next, there will be a discussion about the implications of the impact of legislative changes on current SEN practice and provision and the future policy direction of SEN in schools in England. The final section will consider the author's reflections on the research process, recommendations and ideas for further research.

Response categories and overarching themes

As a result of analysing the answers to the fifteen interview questions, a number of response categories were identified and are listed in the tables on pages 177-179. Many of these categories linked specifically to just one question; however, several were repeated across different questions, as respondents identified issues or concerns that were of great importance to them and which affected various aspects of their professional practice. Many of the large number of categories were interrelated, and successfully supported the focus of the research. Further analysis of these categories indicated that four overarching themes could be identified from the data and these are listed in the table below and are linked to relevant questions and response categories.

Themes derived from the data

Themes	Corresponding questions and categories
Government influences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pressure (Q13) and targets (Q2) - Policy creating barriers (Q6); paperwork (Q2); policy impact (Q9) - Standards agenda: impact on inclusion (Q10); narrow curriculum (Q2) - Assessment requirements (Q8) - Reductions in funding: local authority support (Q10); school budgets (Q15)
The school environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Early identification/meeting the needs of the child (Q7) -Children's wellbeing (Q8 and Q9) -Use of interventions/school approaches/support procedures (Q11) -Enabling achievement and reaching potential (Q1) -Use of labels-positive and/or negative impact; need to be fluid (Q12) -New processes (EHCP) (Q14)
Role of the teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Importance of teacher ability-expertise and creativity (Q2, Q8, Q10) -Importance of experience in developing knowledge of SEN (Q5) -Accountability of teachers to support SEN (Q6) -Responsibility to ensure children with SEN thrive (Q7) -Pressure to ensure children achieve required standards (Q7)
Parental involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Home-school partnerships (Q7) -Involvement of parents in their children's education (Q6) -Importance of working with parents (Q10) -Encouraging parental engagement in their children's learning (Q11)

Government influences

A number of interrelated categories focused upon the wide ranging effects and impact of policy and can be combined within the theme of government influences. Interviewees had acknowledged that at the start of their careers they had been more concerned with developing successful professional practice and less focused on aspects of policy. They identified however, that currently there was much greater emphasis placed upon policy which subsequently affected their practice and the provision that could be put in place to support pupils with SEND. The introduction and impact of new assessment procedures, policy direction, the continued emphasis on raising standards and funding restrictions were seen to be significantly impacting on the schools' commitment to inclusive practice. It was also considered that there was government intransigence with regard to its insistence that one system was suitable for all children, regardless of any SEND. Interviewee responses reinforced the differences observed in the

perceptions of staff and the government regarding the success of these procedures.

The school environment

Staff were committed to supporting all children to reach their potential and to enable them to achieve positive outcomes, despite the policy and legislative barriers being placed before them. To enable these aspirations to be met, staff were focused on meeting needs through the use of early identification and relevant interventions. Although current policy direction was generally impacting negatively upon their practice, staff also acknowledged some positive policy outcomes, such as the increased age range of the SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years) and the personalised learning pathway for post-16 adolescents. The category of children's mental health and wellbeing was also reported twice and emphasised the concerns of staff that personal, social and environmental factors were impacting upon children and that greater pupil support and staff guidance was required to develop effective provision in this area.

Role of the teacher

The importance of the role of the teacher and the responsibilities placed upon them were emphasised in a number of response categories. The skills and abilities required to support pupils with SEN were highlighted, with concerns raised as to the potential effects of inadequate teaching upon pupils' learning. Professional experience and relevant training were seen as essential in developing knowledge and understanding of SEN, thus supporting children to

reach their potential. The continued pressure of government policy, demonstrated through the introduction of the national standard, was again highlighted as a barrier to achieving these goals.

Parental involvement

This theme recognised the importance of promoting greater parental engagement in their children's education. This development was seen as vital in effectively supporting a child's learning and achievement. Parental involvement was perceived by the interviewees to be a continually developing positive relationship between school and home for the benefit of the child, rather than the market led producer-consumer relationship identified by government policy.

Sub-research questions

The first sub-research question was ***“What are the major models of SEN and disability and what are their underpinning values and influences?”***

Researchers in the field of SEN have previously identified the potential influences of the medical and social models on policy and legislation. The medical model has been identified as promoting a deficit approach, where the 'problem' is seen to lie within the individual (Glazzard, 2011) and that a 'cure' is therefore required to support and resolve the difficulty (Harpur, 2012). In comparison, the social model emphasises the needs of an individual, and that it is society's beliefs and attitudes, not individual impairment, that place barriers in the way of equity (Hodkinson, 2016). Staff in all of the five schools were committed to the principle of inclusion (an element of the social model) and

different approaches and strategies had been put into place to achieve equity for all pupils and to enable them to make progress (reported in responses to questions 5, 7 and 11 and identified in the themes of the school environment and the role of the teacher). It was evident however, that legislative changes and financial restrictions, particularly at local authority level, had negatively impacted on schools' aspirations in this respect (reported in replies to question 6 and identified in the theme of government influences).

Although these are the two main models already established in the relevant literature, it was considered necessary to expand the potential range of models. A human rights model was therefore investigated as this incorporated social model influences, but also ensured that recognition was given to equal rights and enshrined at an international level. This model was used to enable the researcher to determine if international commitments were reflected in national documents and whether the school practitioners adopted the thinking behind it.

In contrast to these models, the focus of recent governments has been to introduce a raft of measures to drive up educational standards and attainment. This emphasis has increased state centralisation of education through the use of a National Curriculum and its related assessment and inspection procedures (Le Grand et al., 2008). It has also emphasised the development of the rights of parents as consumers and the standards agenda. This agenda brings together all of these influences to promote national economic success. A model was therefore introduced to incorporate all of these elements and identified as the state-influenced market approach. A final financial crisis model was proposed

as a result of the financial crisis of 2008 as subsequent economic reforms created additional pressure and budget restrictions in all areas of government activity, including education.

When reviewing the literature, it was evident that the medical and social models were considered to be significant frameworks for the conceptualisation of SEN. Some reference was also made to the importance of human rights as a means of gaining equity in all aspects of society. Although the standards agenda and the limitations imposed by financial restrictions were reported as potential influences upon government policy, the impact that they may have upon SEN policy and practice was not always explicit. They were therefore included in this research as models of SEN (and incorporated within the state-influenced market approach and financial crisis model) because evaluation of the bigger picture of education suggested that they might also be influences upon policy content and direction.

The implications of funding cuts implemented by the local authority were evident in many of the responses provided and reported to be affecting schools in a number of ways. These included potential staffing reductions in schools, and a reduced level of support provided by other agencies. The government's recent emphasis on reducing budget deficits was a response to global financial difficulties and has been a contributing factor to the issues identified by the interviewees (reported in replies to questions 10 and 15 and located within the theme of government influences).

The second sub-research question was ***“What influence, if any, have they (the major models) had on the development of SEN policy and the implementation of related legislation?”*** To address this question, three seminal documents and two pieces of legislation were analysed. The documents and legislation covered a timeline of 37 years (1978-2015) in order to ascertain whether different societal or government priorities could affect the model influences apparent within them. It was also the intention to identify whether policy was reliant upon only one model, or if several may interact to influence policy content.

During the 1970s, disability rights groups increasingly called for changes to policy to ensure equal opportunities for disabled individuals in all areas of society. This call was initiated in response to the perceived limitations of the medical model, which focused upon a deficit approach to disability, underpinned by the use of diagnosis, assessment and treatment of an individual's needs. This movement led to the introduction of the social model; this model emphasised the involvement of government and society in removing any barriers to education, access and equity that may exist for disabled people. The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) was the first commissioned to review the education of handicapped children and the major influences within it can be associated with the medical and social models, reflecting the societal changes occurring at this time. Even though the report abolished outdated terminology, a focus remained on the medical model's use of categories of need and intervention as a means to identify appropriate provision. The principles of the social model can also be seen within the Warnock Report, as consideration was given to the influence of factors external to the child.

During the 1980s, countries were still working to overcome the effects of the 1970s economic crisis. One idea that was introduced to assist economic growth and development was that of the creation of a more qualified workforce. This was to be achieved through increased centralisation of education and the introduction of a national curriculum and assessment procedures that would improve standards and therefore the number of individuals who would be able to contribute to economic success. Emphasis was also placed upon introducing market type activities into the education system and links can be made here to the state-influenced market approach. This model assisted in prompting the introduction of the 1988 Education Reform Act, which introduced a number of changes that could potentially impact on children with SEN, as the emphasis placed upon assessment results and the narrow academic focus of the National Curriculum could disadvantage them in relation to their peers.

The continued emphasis upon the medical and social models and the state influenced market approach is evident within the final two documents. During the time period of the Labour government (1997-2010), policy focused upon the development of social and educational inclusion. It was seen as imperative to address the former to enable the latter to be successful and this emphasis can be seen in *Removing Barriers to Achievement* (DfES, 2004). The policy contains both medical and social model influences. Reference continues to be made to the use of identification and intervention to remediate problems as well as the use of reasonable adjustments to enable equity of opportunity (Lloyd, 2008). The most recent SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2015a) also retains a primary focus on the medical model, as the document's new procedures will result in fewer children receiving SEN provision; this may increase pressures for

children to be assessed in order to receive support. The state-influenced market approach is also evident, as the notion of personal budgets is introduced, enabling parents to request specific provision.

As a result of the examination of these documents and legislations, it can be seen that the main influences apparent in this analysis were the medical model and the state-influenced market approach; however, when reviewing the data alongside the reviewed documents, differences in priorities can be established. The medical model retains a consistent emphasis within the documentation, but more limited reference is made to this approach by staff. Their responses can be aligned much more to the social model, demonstrated by their commitment to inclusive practice and the removal of any barriers to pupils' learning. This emphasis could be aligned to the fact that the medical model only provides them with the necessary information regarding diagnosis and treatment, but the social model provides both the reasons as to why such proactive support is required and knowledge of the strategies they can employ.

The emphasis placed on the state-influenced market approach was also reflected in the interview responses, as staff repeatedly referred to the negative impact on their practice and provision as a result of the use of the national standard, target setting and the importance placed upon data to demonstrate attainment.

The third sub-research question asked ***“What is the most appropriate methodology (and methods) to investigate these questions?”*** The decision was made at the conception of the research to use a qualitative methodology; this was because such an approach focuses on studying the social world and so immerses the researcher directly into the contexts being examined and the experiences of the participants. As the research was planned to gather the perceptions of a number of school staff on issues regarding SEN it was essential to interact with the individuals, using the semi-structured interview method, instead of maintaining a distant non-participant viewpoint. The methodology and method used can be seen to have effectively supported the main research question, as the data that was collected was descriptively rich and inductive, providing a vivid picture of the perceptions of the interviewees.

The fourth sub-research question was ***“What links can be identified between the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers and the major models of SEN and disability?”*** The major models of SEN and disability examined within the research were the medical, social and human rights models, the state-influenced market approach and the financial crisis model. As a result of analysing the data obtained from the interviews, it is evident that the perceptions of the participants linked to each of these models, but to a lesser or greater degree.

Specific reference was made by each of the staff groups to early identification and intervention; these elements can be linked to the medical model and its focus upon diagnosis and treatment. The importance and implementation of

inclusive practice was emphasised by all of the respondents and this aspect can be associated with the social model and the concept of the rights of all individuals to educational equity. Extremely limited links were made to the human rights model, which reflects the lack of reference within the reviewed documents to international legislation.

All of the staff groups commented that the main difficulties impacting upon practice and provision for pupils with SEN were: the negative impact of national assessments, the narrow focus of the curriculum, the standards agenda and budget restrictions. It was expressed that there was no longer any recognition of the impact of a pupil's SEN when reporting SAT results. This was seen to impact considerably on pupils with SEN as, if they did not achieve the 100 expected, they were considered to have 'failed' this phase of schooling (reported in replies to questions 8, 9 and 13 and identified in the theme of government influences). It was therefore seen to be necessary for schools to devise their own tracking systems in order to provide detailed assessment of all pupils, but especially those with SEN (reported in response to question 9 and again identified in the theme of government influences). This was seen as an important measure to counteract the lack of specific SEN assessment provided at a national level. These difficulties can be linked to the emphasis of the state-influenced market approach within current education policy and the effects of the financial crisis upon the level of funding that is allocated to schools.

The fifth sub-research question was ***“What do Head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers think of the impact of recent legislative changes on SEN***

practice and provision?” As the staff involved in the research fulfilled very different types of role, one of the areas of research was to ascertain whether any distinct differences could be identified in their responses to the interview questions.

A large number of initial response categories were identified and can be linked to all staff groups. These were: enabling achievement, parental engagement, assessment requirements, funding restrictions, children’s wellbeing and the ability of the teacher. These categories emphasise the importance of all staff, (regardless of their role or responsibility), in working effectively to meet and support the needs of pupils as well as also identifying certain issues that may impact on their ability to do so.

Categories that can be linked to two staff types identified either members of the senior leadership team (SLT) or head teachers and class teachers. The SLT themes focus on government influences, policy at a whole school level, the necessity for early identification and teacher expertise. All of these areas must be initially considered and planned for by these members of staff and then disseminated to their colleagues to be successfully integrated into practice. The latter categories focus on the importance of class teacher responsibility and the impact of the standards agenda on inclusive practice. These categories emphasise the responsibility of the head teacher in ensuring classroom practices are effective and supportive.

The majority of categories linked to one staff type illustrate the immediate concerns and perceptions of the class teachers with regard to any changes that have impacted on their classroom practice, the increased accountability placed upon them and being able to continue to effectively meet the needs of their pupils.

Analysis of the data identified that although many issues were raised by all staff types, as they were pertinent to the whole school, it is also evident that certain concerns can be linked more specifically to particular role types, dependent on their individual responsibilities.

Is SEN working? The impact of legislative changes on current SEN practice and provision and the future policy direction of SEN in schools in England.

This research was undertaken at a time when considerable legislative changes were being implemented to the national framework for SEN. Implications were becoming apparent for schools regarding how they could continue to provide effective support for children with SEN. The decision was therefore made to examine these framework changes and their potential impact. The main research question selected was:

“Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of the views of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers on the impact of legislative changes on SEN practice and provision”.

Each of the previous sub-research questions has combined to answer this question. From the analysis completed, it can be seen that although the perceptions of head teachers, SENCOs and class teachers were largely in agreement regarding the impact of recent legislative changes on SEN practice and provision, these perceptions were very different to those of the government.

The current government is committed to raising standards of academic achievement through the use of the state-influenced market approach in its policy. The introduction of the new National Curriculum and its assessment procedures, use of national targets and the emphasis on data as a means to identify progress, are seen as the appropriate positive measures to achieve improved results for all pupils and schools. Alongside these procedures, major changes have taken place with regard to special educational needs that are likely to have significant effects for pupils with SEN and those staff that work with them. There is less support provided now for pupils with SEN as the previous levels of School Action (in-school support) and School Action Plus (support from outside agencies) have been abolished, being replaced with only one level. Additional support is only to be put into place when, even after the implementation of high quality teaching, a child does not make sufficient progress.

There has also been a reduction in the number of pupils on the SEN register. The children who no longer have additional support and have been removed from the special needs register (Attwood, 2013), could be left without any formal identification to indicate an additional need. Glazzard questions whether

children who struggle to make the required progress may then “be singled out and labelled as underachievers with no reasonable defence for their ‘failure’” (2013:185). Although their needs will not have disappeared (Robertson, 2012), Glazzard (ibid:185) suggests that the new system will lead to “greater intervention and remediation”, again indicating the potential influence of elements of the medical model on recent legislative and policy changes. Despite these major changes to SEN provision, the government still expects all pupils to make the required levels of progress. The national standard benchmark applies to all children completing SATs, although individual SENs are no longer considered in the data. This reduction in support appears to reflect the 2010 Conservative manifesto promise to reduce the bias towards inclusion and the over-identification of SEN.

In comparison to the government’s stance outlined above, the research indicated that all of the staff involved had very different ideas regarding the impact of recent policy and legislation on SEN practice and provision. The changing requirements placed upon them were felt to be working against their commitment to inclusive practice. Concern was also raised about the changes to the assessment process, as there was now a perceived lack of consideration of children’s SENs when completing assessments and that their comparison against the ‘average’ child detracted from any individual progress they had made, as it would not be reflected in the data.

In answer to the question “***Is SEN working?***” it can be seen that despite the difficulties placed upon them due to recent policy and legislative changes, staff

were continuing to make SEN work at a school level, as they were constantly adapting their professional practice and reviewing school procedures and funding, in order to provide effective support for pupils with SEN. A range of strategies was being employed, such as the use of an inclusion team, bespoke interventions and various resources, to allow staff to work effectively with pupils with SEN and to enable them to make progress.

At a governmental level, the policy content and direction currently in place appear to be placing barriers in the way of enabling SEN to continue to work, as there is reduced support available for pupils (as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice) and an emphasis on high quality teaching as the first method of provision. It can therefore be seen that there are vast differences of perception between schools and government on the effects of policy and legislation on SEN practice and provision.

This thesis has demonstrated that whether SEN is working is not just a matter of individuals or a government holding different points of view. The evidence gathered from this thesis (and reported in the four themes derived from the initial response categories) suggests that recent legislation and framework changes are having potentially negative effects upon the quality of provision, staff morale and the sustainability of the procedures that schools are currently putting into place. This current situation requires further review and evaluation.

Reflections

Producing this doctoral study has been an extremely positive learning experience as I believe that I have both acquired and developed a number of skills that have enabled me to enhance my overall capabilities as a researcher. As well as having gained in-depth experience of planning and conducting a research project, I have also been able to demonstrate the qualities of resilience, commitment and organisation, as this research study has been undertaken alongside my full-time role as an education lecturer.

The focus of the research has provided me with the opportunity to study the area of SEN policy in greater depth, which has further developed my knowledge and understanding and has also enabled me to analyse and critically evaluate the potential influence of models of SEN and disability upon policy content and direction. As a result, I have been able to apply this knowledge to the changes that are currently taking place within provision for SEN and reflect on how these are directly affecting teachers, children and parents.

Prior to starting this doctoral study, I held an assumption regarding one particular area that the research would focus upon. This area was the use of labels, or categories of need, as a means of identification and support for individual needs. I believed that the staff involved in the research would perceive these to be negative and restricting; this was based on my knowledge of the schools' commitment to inclusive practice. I was therefore surprised that responses were more mixed; a number of staff commented that labels either made no difference to the support available for children, or positively assisted

schools and parents in accessing provision. The responses I received (in contrast to my previously held assumption) emphasised to me the importance of the co-creation of knowledge (Mertens, 2003) through the use of discussion and sharing of knowledge, as my initial perceptions were subsequently re-evaluated through interaction with the interviewees and the contexts in which they worked. I had also not considered that the issue of children's mental health would be identified by staff as such a significant issue and one that they perceived required much greater support than is presently available.

Recommendations

Two of the areas that arose from the research suggest further investigation in order to address the issues identified by the participants. The first area was that of the impact of the national standard, introduced in the 2015-16 academic year as part of the interim assessment framework. This standard established a level of 100 that children had to achieve in order to have met the requirements of the Key Stage assessments. Staff perceived that consideration was no longer given to pupils' SENs or any lateral progress that children may make. As there is such a difference between the responses of staff and government to these changes, as the latter considers that such changes are continuing to drive up standards and attainment, it would be pertinent to suggest that action needs to be taken to address this. Although such action is important, it might be difficult to realise; nevertheless, more acknowledgement is required of the impact of a child's SEN as well as the implementation of a wider range of assessment types to enable all pupils to demonstrate progress, however small those steps may be.

The second area that requires further attention is the lack of provision for helping children with mental health issues. Although the government has recently stated that greater emphasis will be given to this area, the information provided thus far has only focused upon supporting secondary schools. No reference has been made to providing mental health training to primary school staff, which is an area the interviewees identified as requiring much greater support and training.

Further research

In my future career as a researcher, I would like to conduct further qualitative studies to investigate the two areas discussed in the preceding Recommendations section. It would be pertinent to see whether staff in a larger number of primary school settings also considered children's mental health issues to be of concern and to gain their views on current and proposed levels of support and provision.

With regard to assessment and the implementation of the national standard, the staff involved in the research referred to a number of constraints placed upon their SEN practice and provision due to these processes. This concern is echoed in Glazzard's observation (2011), that the government's view is that the same standards and pedagogical processes can be applied to all pupils, regardless of individual need. It would therefore be relevant to complete research which focuses on the perceptions of staff from a larger number of schools and to gather their views of the changes to assessment that they would perceive to be necessary to enable the progress of all learners to be equally

recognised. Glazzard (2011) identifies that change at the level of practice also requires accompanying change at the level of policy. Further research in either of these areas would emphasise the revisions to policy that staff perceive to be necessary at a national level to continue to effectively support pupils with SEN.

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APPENDIX ONE

STAFF AND STUDENTS BEGINNING A RESEARCH PROJECT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Research Proposer(s): Susan Rolfe

Programme of Study: EdD in Educational Policy and Values

Student No: 200409537

Research (Working Dissertation/Thesis) Title:

Is SEN working? An in-depth analysis of models of SEN/disability and the views of stakeholders on their effectiveness and success.

Description of research (please include (a) aims of the research; (b) principal research question(s) (c) methodology or methodologies to be used (d) who are the participants in this research, and how are they to be selected.

a). The aims of the research are to investigate the major models of SEN and disability and to examine any influence they have had on the development of SEN policy and legislation. The perceptions of stakeholders will also be gathered regarding the influence of these models on practice.

b). - What are the major models of SEN and disability and what are their underpinning values and influences?

- What influence, if any, have they had on the development of SEN policy and the implementation of related legislation?

-What are the perceptions of stakeholders on the influence of these models on legislation and practice?

-What is the most appropriate methodology (and methods) to investigate these questions?

c). A qualitative methodological approach will be used to conduct the research. The method selected is the semi-structured interview, as this approach will enable the collection and evaluation of the perceptions and views of the participants.

d). The participants will be: Head teachers, SENCOs, teachers and Local Authority staff. These individuals are directly involved with the implementation and management of policy and should therefore be able to identify and comment upon the influence of these models on policy and practice.

Schools will be selected from those known to the researcher in her role as an Education

Lecturer; local authority staff will be identified from local council website information.

Proforma Completion Date:

.....

Researcher contact details: S.Rolfe@hull.ac.uk

This proforma should be read in conjunction with the Faculty of Education research principles, and the Faculty of Education flow chart of ethical considerations. It should be completed by the researchers. If it raises problems, it should be sent on completion, together with a brief (maximum one page) summary of the problems in the research, or in the module preparation, for approval to the Chair of the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee prior to the beginning of any research.

Part A

1. Does your research/teaching involve animal experimentation? NO
If the answer is 'YES' then the research/teaching proposal should be sent direct to the University Ethics Committee to be assessed.

2. Does your teaching/research use confidential sources of information (e.g. medical records)? NO

3. Does your research involve human participants? YES

If your answers to 2 and 3 is 'NO', there is no need to proceed further with this proforma,

and research may proceed now. If the answer is 'YES' to either of questions 2 or 3 please answer all further relevant questions in part B.

Part B

4. Is the research population under 18 years of age? NO
If yes, will you taking the following or similar measures to deal with this issue?
 - (i) Informed the participants of the research? N/A
 - (ii) Ensured their understanding? N/A
 - (iii) Gained the non-coerced consent of their parents/guardians? N/A

5. Will you obtain written informed consent from all participants? YES
If yes, please include a copy of the information letters and forms requesting consent
If no, what measures will you take to deal with obtaining consent/ not gaining consent?

6. Has there been any withholding of disclosure of information regarding the research to the participants? NO
If yes, please describe the measures you have taken to deal with this.

7. Issues for participants. *Please answer the following and state how you will manage perceived risks:*

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------------|
| a) Do any aspects of the study pose a possible risk to participants' physical well-being (e.g. use of substances such as alcohol or extreme situations such as sleep deprivation)? | YES | <u>NO</u> |
| b) Are there any aspects of the study that participants might find humiliating, embarrassing, ego-threatening, in conflict with their values, or be otherwise emotionally upsetting?* | YES | <u>NO</u> |
| c) Are there any aspects of the study that might threaten participants' privacy (e.g. questions of a very personal nature; observation of individuals in situations which are not obviously 'public')?* | YES | <u>NO</u> |
| d) Could the intended participants for the study be expected to be more than usually emotionally vulnerable (e.g. medical patients, bereaved individuals)? | YES | <u>NO</u> |
| e) Will the study take place in a setting other than the University campus or residential buildings? | <u>YES</u> | NO |
| f) Will the intended participants of the study be individuals who are not members of the University community? | <u>YES</u> | NO |

*Note: if the intended participants are of a different social, racial, cultural, age or sex group to the researcher(s) and there is **any** doubt about the possible impact of the planned procedures, then opinion should be sought from members of the relevant group.

- | | |
|--|----|
| 8. Might conducting the study expose the researcher to any risks (e.g. collecting data in potentially dangerous environments)? | NO |
| 9. Is the research being conducted on a group culturally different from the researcher/student/supervisors? | NO |

If yes, are sensitivities and problems likely to arise? N/A

If yes, please describe how you have addressed/will address them.

10. Does the research/teaching conflict with any of the Faculty of Education's research principles?(please see attached list). NO

If yes, describe what action you have taken to address this?

11. Are you conducting research in the organisation within which you work? NO

- a) If yes, are there any issues arising from this .e.g. ones of confidentiality, anonymity or power, because of your role in the organisation

N/A

- b) If there are, what actions have you taken to address these?

12. If the research/teaching requires the consent of any organisation, will you be obtaining it? YES

If no, describe what action you have taken to overcome this problem.

13. Have you needed to discuss the likelihood of ethical problems with this research, with an informed colleague? NO

If yes, please name the colleague, and provide the date and results of the discussion.

If you have now completed the proforma, before sending it in, just check:

- a. Have I included a letter to participants for gaining informed consent? Yes

- b. If I needed any organisational consent for this research, have I included evidence of this with the proforma? Yes

- c. If I needed consent from the participants, have I included evidence for the different kinds that were required? Yes

d. If I am taking images, have I completed the Image Permission Form N/A

Lack of proof of consent attached to proformas has been the major reason why proformas have been returned to their authors.

This form must be signed by your supervisor and the Faculty of Education Ethics Committee representative for your area. Once signed, copies of this form, and your proposal must be sent to the programme administrator for your degree course (see page 35), including examples of letters describing the purposes and implications of the research, and any Consent Forms (see appendices).

Name of Researcher: Sue Rolfe

Signature: S. Rolfe

Date 24th March 2016

Name of Supervisor/Colleague

Signature Date

Name of Ethics Committee member

Signature Date

APPENDIX 2

Version 1

Head teacher		
Model	Question number	
Medical	1.	Do you think the use of a label/category of a child's need is helpful when planning support for him or her?
Social	2.	How does your school implement the ideas of inclusion and inclusive practice?
Policy	3.	The government has stated that SEN has previously been over-identified. Do you agree or disagree with this statement?
Market	4.	How does an inclusive school balance the tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?
Market	5.	What information does your school have to provide as part of the Local Offer?
Market/finance	6.	Has there been any impact for your school with regard to Education, Health and Care Plans and allocation of personal budgets?
Finance	7.	Have any budgets cuts (due to current government austerity measures) impacted upon school provision?
Policy	8.	Have the changes to the curriculum and assessment without levels impacted on the planning of support for pupils with SEN?
Policy/Rights	9.	Do you think relevant policy and legislation enables all pupils to equally access mainstream education?
Parents	10.	How can schools and parents work together most effectively?

Version 1

SENCO		
Model	Question number	
Medical	1.	Do you think the use of a label/category of a child's need is helpful when planning support for him or her?
Medical	2.	Has there been any impact on provision due to the re-categorisation of 'behaviour' in the Code of Practice?
Social	3.	How does the school deploy Teaching Assistants to support pupils with SEN?
Market	4.	How does an inclusive school balance the tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?
Market/policy	5.	Has the introduction of the single SEN level impacted upon/ changed school procedures for assessment and provision?
Market	6.	Has the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans and personal budgets changed any school planning and/or provision?
Finance	7.	Have there been any changes in provision of resources, involvement of other agencies, due to budget cuts to schools?
Policy/Rights	8.	Do you think relevant policy and legislation enables all pupils to equally access mainstream education?
Policy	9.	Has there been any impact on school planning and support for pupils with SEN due to changes to the curriculum and assessment without levels?
Parents	10.	How can schools and parents work together most effectively?

Version 1

Teacher		
Model	Question number	
Social/Rights	1.	What is your understanding of/how would you define the term “inclusion”?
Social	2.	How do Teaching Assistants support pupils with SEN in your class?
Medical	3.	Do you think the use of a label/category of a child’s need is helpful when planning support for him or her?
Medical	4.	What is the most common need of the children with SEN you work with?
Medical/Social	5.	Do you find the use of the term “SEN” positive or negative?
Finance	6.	Have you experienced any difficulties (e.g. resources) when planning and implementing support? Has there been any impact due to budget cuts to schools?
Finance	7.	Is there any further training/support you would find useful? Has there been any impact on providing this due to budget cuts to schools?
Policy	8.	Has there been any impact on planning to support pupils with SEN due to changes to the curriculum and assessment without levels?
Social/Medical	9.	Can you share any examples from practice where provision/inclusive practice has been successful or unsuccessful?
Market	10.	Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and schools achieving required standards of attainment?
Parents	11.	How can schools and parents work together most effectively?

Version 1

Teaching Assistant		
Model	Question number	
Social/Rights	1.	What is your understanding of/how would you define the term “inclusion”?
Social	2.	In what ways do you support pupils with SEN?
Medical	3.	Do you think the use of a label/category of a child’s need is helpful when planning support for him or her?
Medical	4.	What is the most common need of the children with SEN you work with?
Medical/Social	5.	Do you find the use of the term “SEN” positive or negative?
Finance	6.	What resources are available for you to use in school? Has there been any impact on provision due to budget cuts to schools?
Finance	7.	Is there any further training/support you would find useful? Has there been any impact on providing this due to budget cuts to schools?
Social/Medical	8.	Can you share any examples from practice where provision/inclusive practice has been successful or unsuccessful?
Market	9.	Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and schools achieving required standards of attainment?
Parents	10.	How can schools and parents work together most effectively?

APPENDIX 3

Version 2

Medical

1. Do you think that when we look at recent SEN policy, there has been a lot of labelling and/or categorising of children as having specific problems?
2. Do you think this has been the main emphasis in recent SEN policy?
3. Could such an emphasis identify the issue with the child, instead of considering other factors?
4. Could the use of such a label or category impact upon expectations of that child's achievements and attainment?

Social

5. Do you consider that there are other potential barriers to learning that occur, which are not caused by 'within-child' factors?
6. Do you think that recent policy has identified the need to overcome these barriers to help support a child's learning and progress?
7. Have any difficulties or issues affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?
8. What types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?

Human Rights

9. [The UK has signed up to UN policy that focuses upon the equal human rights of all individuals to access a range of services, including education]. In your role, can you identify any focus in recent UK policy that has emphasised a child's rights in their learning process?
10. Are there any potential difficulties that could impact upon access to these rights?
11. Do you think there should be a greater policy focus on increasing children's rights?

Market-led

12. Has the introduction of Education, Health and care Plans and personal budgets greatly affected the nature of provision?
13. Has the introduction of the single SEN level changed the nature of provision?
14. Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?

15. The government has recently announced its intention to make further changes to the education system (all schools to become academies). How could this change affect the nature of provision made to schools?

Financial

16. Have budget cuts greatly affected the nature of provision?
17. Will you have to consider any additional measures if budget cuts continue?
18. Do you think the focus of recent SEN policy has changed due to the government's focus on deficit reduction?

APPENDIX 4

Version 3

1. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent SEN policies?
2. What do you think are the major barriers to learning, which produce the need for SEN policies and procedures?
3. How successful do you think government policies since Warnock have been in overcoming the barriers which prevent a child's learning and progress?
4. Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?
5. What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?
6. What types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?
7. How has the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans and personal budgets affected the nature of provision?
8. Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?
9. The government has recently announced its intention to make further changes to the education system (all schools to become academies). How could this change affect the nature of provision made to schools?
10. In this period of austerity, do you think that budget cuts have significantly affected the nature of provision?
11. In your role, can you identify policies and practices that have placed emphasis on a child's or parent's rights in the learning process?

APPENDIX 5

Version 4

1. What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?
2. What is the greatest dissatisfaction?
3. What general education policies do you remember being in place when you started your career?
4. Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?
5. How did you end up being interested/ involved in SEN?
6. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent SEN policies?
7. What do **you** think should be the emphasis in SEN policy?
8. What do you think are the major barriers to learning which produce the need for SEN policies and procedures?
9. How successful do you think government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress?
10. What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?
11. In your school, what types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?
12. Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?
13. Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?
14. How has the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans and personal budgets affected the nature of provision?
15. In this period of austerity, do you think that budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?
16. The government has recently announced its intention to make further changes to the education system (all schools to become academies). Do you think this proposed change will affect the nature of provision made to schools?
17. Is there anything further that you would like to say or add to your previous comments?
18. Is there anything that I haven't asked that you think would add to this discussion?

APPENDIX 6

Version 4-pre-piloted 12/4/2016

1. What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?
2. What is the greatest dissatisfaction?
3. What general education policies do you remember being in place when you started your career?
4. Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?
5. How did you end up being interested/ involved in SEN?
6. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent SEN policies?
7. What do **you** think should be the emphasis in SEN policy?
8. What do you think are the major barriers to learning which produce the need for SEN policies and procedures?
9. How successful do you think government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress?
10. What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?
11. In your school, what types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?
12. Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?
13. Do you think there is a tension between providing support for pupils with SEN and achieving the required standards of attainment?
14. How has the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans and personal budgets affected the nature of provision?
15. In this period of austerity, do you think that budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?
16. The government has recently announced its intention to make further changes to the education system (all schools to become academies). Do you think this proposed change will affect the nature of provision made to schools?
17. Is there anything further that you would like to say or add to your previous comments?
18. Is there anything that I haven't asked that you think would add to this discussion?

APPENDIX 7

Version 5-Final post pilot version

1. What for you is the greatest satisfaction that teaching provides?
2. What is the greatest dissatisfaction?
3. What general education policies do you remember being in place when you started your career?
4. Can you recall any specific SEN policies that were in place at that time?
5. How did you end up being interested/ involved in SEN?
6. What do you think have been the main emphases in recent government SEN policies?
7. What do **you** think should be the emphasis in school SEN policy?
8. What do you think are the major barriers to teaching and learning which can affect pupils in a mainstream class?
9. How successful do you think government policies have been in overcoming the barriers that prevent a child's learning and progress?
10. What difficulties or issues have affected the development of inclusive practice in your school?
11. In your school, what types of provision have been particularly successful in overcoming barriers to learning?
12. Has the development of categories of particular learning difficulties been a hindrance or a help in supporting pupils?
13. Do you think there is tension/pressure between providing support for pupils with SEN and them achieving the required standards of attainment?
14. How has the introduction of Education, Health and Care plans affected the nature of provision in your school?
15. In this period of austerity, do you think that budget cuts have affected the nature of provision?
16. The government has retreated on making all schools academies, but it still clearly remains an aim. What do you think about such a change?
17. Is there anything further that you would like to say or add to your previous comments?
18. Is there anything that I haven't asked that you think would add to this discussion?