

Institution: Nottingham Trent University
Unit of Assessment: C25 Education
Title of case study: Developing special and inclusive education practice
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research in the Unit impacts on the training and professional development of teachers and the inclusion of pupils vulnerable to underachievement, including those with special educational needs (SEN) or from disadvantaged areas; and in the Further Education (FE) sector with disengaged learners, or young Black men. It has developed specialised skills in new teachers for teaching diverse learners (a UK government priority) and informed reforms in the initial teacher-training curriculum. Research with experienced teachers has informed inclusive education guidance provided to international education agencies, LEAs, and schools; and to FE colleges nationally, thereby impacting upon the learning of children and young people.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>The Education research environment at NTU has a focus on special and inclusive education and the training of teachers. This focus has its roots in work by Richards on inclusion (key reference 1) and equity; by Emerson and Grayson on autism (key references 2 and 3); by Wallace on inclusive practice in FE (key reference 4); and by Peart on inclusion and ethnicity (key reference 5). This research has national and international reach and is ongoing at the University, the group having recently been augmented with work from Coates on SEN (key reference 6).</p> <p>Richards' research on inclusion has been developing for 15 years. During this time she has led on externally funded projects - for example an investigation into the impact of their 'Specialised SEN placement' pilot programme for trainee teachers funded by the TDA. She also led two national LSDA projects: "Responding to learners' views" (2003-4) in FE colleges and training providers, developing inclusive practice in response to learners' views; and "Count Me in FE" (2003-4) investigating students' experiences of inclusion in FE colleges. She led NTU involvement in the Canterbury Christ Church University project, "Strengthening Specialist SEN Expertise" for serving teachers (2005-2009); NQT professional development in SEN, disability and inclusion (2007-2008) research, led by NTU; and a longitudinal study for Nottinghamshire County Council into the aspirations of girls living in an area of significant disadvantage.</p> <p>Emerson's research is informed by her experience as a practitioner in speech and language therapy and her combined practice-led research. She is most associated with the technique of Facilitated Communication, used to aid people with severe communication difficulties. The research has led to invitations to international and national conferences and consultations, and provides direct support to individuals and schools. Nottingham City Council funding has supported collaborative work with educational psychologists at special schools. Emerson and colleagues provide training for teachers and parents in communication techniques they have developed and evaluate intervention effectiveness.</p> <p>Wallace's research, carried out over the past five years, has focused on discovering strategies to motivate and include disengaged young learners in FE colleges. This work has informed several books by Wallace for FE teachers (for example, Wallace, 2011 4th edition), widely used in the UK as key texts for FE teacher training. Wallace is currently leading a collaborative research project with Wollongong University, Australia, to compare the issues of engagement and inclusion of young adults in FE and the equivalent Australian sector, Technical and Further Education (TAFE).</p> <p>Peart's work over the past five years focused on the experiences of young Black men in FE, and on discovering strategies to build their sense of inclusion. Coates's research over the last five years has considered the personal experiences and perceptions of sport and physical education of children with SEN in special and mainstream schools with the aim of informing inclusive practice in these settings through pupil voice and empowerment.</p>

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

1. Richards, G. and Posnett, C. (2012) *Aspiring Girls: Great expectations or impossible dreams?* *Educational Studies Journal* Vol 38:3
2. Emerson, A. and Deaden, J. (2013) The effect of using 'full' language when working with a child with autism: Adopting the 'least dangerous assumption'. *Child Language Teaching and Therapy*, published online 24 March 2013. DOI: 10.1177/0265659012463370
3. Grant, C.M., Grayson, A. and Boucher, J., 2001. Using tests of false belief with children with autism: how valid and reliable are they? *Autism*, 5 (2), pp. 135-145.
4. Wallace, S. (2013) When you're smiling: exploring how teachers motivate and engage learners in the FE sector. *Journal of Further and Higher Education* (published online 6th September 2013)
5. Peart, S. (2012) *Making Education Work: How Black Men and Boys Navigate the Further Education Sector*. London: Trentham
6. Coates, J. and Vickerman, P (2010) Empowering Children with Special Educational Needs to Speak Up: Experiences of Inclusive Physical Education, *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 32 (18), 1517–1526

The quality of the research is evidenced by a range of indicators. Firstly, as a result of external peer reviewed funding, for example, the LSDA "Responding to learners views" (2003-4) in FE colleges and training providers, developing inclusive practice in response to learners' views (£130,000). Secondly, reviews and grading of the research outputs listed through peer review. Thirdly, Peart's national British Education Research Association's (BERA) Award (2012) for her research 'Black on Track'.

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

National/international teacher professional development policy and practice

Richards', Emerson's and Grayson's research is contextualised by the Government's 'Inclusion Development Programme' seeking to increase new teachers' skills in an area identified as a priority (OFSTED 2008). Richards' research has contributed to national changes in UK initial teacher education in that specialist SEN placements are now funded in all universities and available as an integral offer to courses; and to the more effective development of new teachers' skills to raise the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.

Dissemination of Richards' work has been through publications, international/national conference presentations, government national websites, local authority conferences and university course meetings. It has had a significant influence on the national initial teacher training course curriculum, the induction training for new teachers and national training for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators ("Dr Richards' work has been of a uniformly high quality and has directly informed national policy and professional practice." (Phil Snell, Programme Leader Special Educational Needs and Disability, TDA/Department for Education 2010: see 5. Source 2). It has influenced the TDA (now the National College) to make the 'SEN Specialist Placement' an integral offer to initial teacher education courses. Her text for new teachers is recommended for many primary and secondary teacher training courses. Her research was also shared with Japan's Education Minister and his department during her travel award visit to Japan and at the World Islamic Education Forum.

National FE teacher education

The context of Wallace's and Peart's research is the problem of disengagement and exclusion among learners in FE and the consequent issues relating to behaviour and motivation that are often rooted in experiences of social and/or cultural exclusion.

The research carried out by Peart into Black men and boys' experiences of FE has been widely

Impact case study (REF3b)

reported (see section 5), won a national British Education Research Association award in 2012, and has led to the setting up of *Black on Track* programmes in the East Midlands aimed at raising levels of inclusion and engagement for Black males. Peart's research has been disseminated through journal articles and her recent book (see section 3). Her award-winning research was given local and national press coverage and the resulting Black on Track project has been widely reported as well as having an internet presence.

The findings from Wallace's research reach a wide readership of teachers and trainee-teachers in texts which are essential or recommended reading on most teacher training programmes for the FE sector, thus maximising the impact on practice and learner engagement. These texts, along with her academic papers, have informed the national debate about the relative influences of policy and practice in shaping learner behaviour and motivation in FE. Wallace's work has been disseminated through publication in international journals, presentations at international conferences, keynote addresses at a range of events for education practitioners and key texts for trainee and experienced teachers in the sector.

School practice

The research by Emerson and Grayson has contributed to the *Facilitated Communication* controversy by providing evidence that the technique can be effective; and has informed the wider debate about measurement and assessment of people with severe intellectual impairment. Emerson's work in relation to individuals' competence has led to changes within special schools locally and further afield. For example, as a direct result of their research on autism, *Facilitated Communication* has been introduced in two special schools in Nottingham. Practice in teaching children with autism who have no or limited communication skills was changed at Rosehill School as a result of the project which was a collaboration between NTU and Nottingham City Children's Services. Videos from the project provided a clear picture of how each of the children had changed and progressed as a result of the new teaching methods. The videos were used in staff training and student's Annual Reviews.

Community impact

The impact of this research collectively has been twofold.

- It has influenced the practice trainee teachers, experienced teachers and teacher training tutors for the school and FE sectors, increasing knowledge, understanding and skill in meeting diverse learning needs and supporting achievement of those who are socially disadvantaged or excluded, thereby addressing an area of significant policy concern.
- It has influenced policy relating to the professional development of SEN teachers, in particular the development of national training for SEN Co-ordinators.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)**Source 1:**

Corroboration from Standards and Verification UK (SVUK) which regulated teacher training for the FE sector until 2011, of the impact of Wallace's work. The text to which this evidence makes specific reference (Wallace, S. (2007/2011) *Teaching, Tutoring and Training in the LLS*. Exeter: Learning Matters/Sage) is informed by, and makes reference to, research by Wallace referred to in section 2 of this case study.

"Your work on teaching in the lifelong learning sector has had a significant impact on the character and development of the courses.... This is particularly true of the book entitled 'Teaching, Tutoring and Training in the Lifelong Learning Sector', which is used as a basic text in the majority of these courses, and is on the recommended list of all the courses I have seen. I know that it has been a source of inspiration for many trainee teachers, and an invaluable resource for staff delivering ITT programmes." (Reviewer Standards Verification UK, SVUK 2009)

"Your research and your writing have had a significant influence on the ITT programmes" (Reviewer Standards Verification UK, SVUK 2009)

Source 2:

Corroboration from the Training and Development Agency for Schools/Department for Education of the impact of Richards' work:

“Dr Richards played a key role on a number of projects within the Training and Development Agency for Schools' Special Educational Needs and Disability Programme over the past 5 years. She was a member of the core team of five universities who developed and piloted a Masters Level Programme in Special Educational Needs for teachers... Dr Richards' work has been of a uniformly high quality and has directly informed national policy and professional practice.”

(Programme Leader Special Educational Needs and Disability, TDA/Department for Education 2010)

“She has made a significant personal contribution to the overall development of the TDA's SEN and Disability Programme” (Programme Leader Special Educational Needs and Disability, TDA/DoE 2010)

Source 3:

The impact of Peart's work is corroborated by the current success of a 'Black on Track' project in the East Midlands, set up as a result of her research, providing support for Black male students and raising awareness about inclusivity and student engagement. The ongoing impact of this work in terms of raising the motivation, engagement and achievement of young Black men in FE can be accessed online and in newspaper reports. See for example:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoPILcOy2hA

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