

Inclusivity in schools study



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This study focuses on my placement school to find out how inclusive it is regarding the special educational needs (SEN) students. The study puts in scope how lessons are delivered in the school and how the school meets the needs of the special educational needs students. To find answers to the enquiries, a specific case study research design was selected to provide an understanding of the numerous perspectives of the topic, involving multiple interviews with the staff of the selected school. Four members of school staff were selected for interview including - The Special Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDSCO), one teacher and two teaching assistants. The interview questions have been based on the framework of the ten areas of inclusive education as presented at the report of National Council for Special Education (NCSE, 2010). Two students were selected in the study with similar special educational needs. One child had difficulties with spoken language and retaining information and the second one presented symptoms associated with dyslexia. The profile of these 2 students was mainly synthesized using information from the Child Provision Map found in the resources of the school and from my personal observations and experiences as their teacher.

Diagnosis of Dyslexia

Dyslexia is considered as one of the most common Special Learning Difficulties (SpLD) affecting roughly the 10% of the population, with 4% to be considered as severely disabled. Dyslexia is mainly transferred through hereditary mechanisms. A child that is considered dyslexic, might write letters in words or words in sentences, in wrong order. Also, they might be confused when they are forming sentences as they might find difficulties in

spelling the words correctly. The reversal of the letters in words is considered as one of the key indications of a child with dyslexia. Although, literacy issues would be considered as one of the most common and visible indications of dyslexia, there are multiple other issues that cannot be detected easily. Some of the issues include, how mind is processing the receiving information, how they are stored, organised and recalled when necessary. In addition, dyslexic children have difficulties with time perception, processing information quickly and navigation, as they get confused with physical (left, right) and compass directions (north, south, west, east) (British Dyslexia Association, 2016).

NHS provides a similar definition for Dyslexia stating that it is a very frequent type of learning difficulty affecting skills linked to reading, writing and spelling of words (NHS, 2015). The symptoms of dyslexia vary widely amongst every case. More specifically, a person with Dyslexia might have issues with his phonological awareness, ability to memorise and process words quickly. (NHS, 2015).

Thus, on the one hand, we have the medical definition provided by the NHS and on the other hand, we have a more broaden approach provided by the British Dyslexia Association (BDA), adding interesting parameters to the symptoms of Dyslexia. As it is clearly understood, one of the main issues of dyslexic people is the fact that they tend to have difficulties with processing texts whether its referring to reading or writing. However, as mentioned by BDA, the spectrum of symptoms is not limited here. It can be wider and more complicated. However, relevant literature states that it is very complicated to distinguish the symptoms of Dyslexia between poor readers and readers

diagnosed as Dyslexic. The fact that both are facing the same literacy issues, leads to the conclusion that the literacy support is going to have a positive impact not only for the one group but also for the other group (Elliott & Gibbs, 2009). There is evidence supporting the argument of Elliott & Gibbs, proposing that Dyslexia should be considered as a continuum ranging from mild to severe symptoms and it is not possible to categorise people into Dyslexic and not Dyslexic (Rose, 2009). This leads to the conclusion that interventions will have a positive impact not only for those considered as “Dyslexic” but also for those who are generally facing issues with literacy.

Context of Research

-National Context

Nowadays, Dyslexia is a recognised learning difficulty and is specifically mentioned in the Equality Act (HMSO, 2010). Under this Act, anyone that is characterised with such disadvantages, would be unlawful to be treated unfavourably. In addition, they should be offered adjustments and assistance whenever is needed so that they will not be disadvantaged comparing to non-disabled people (HMSO, 2010; GEO, 2010).

Dyslexia is also mentioned in the SEND Code of Practice as a part of specific learning difficulties (SpLD) which influences multiple elements of knowledge (DfES, 2015). Based on the Code of Practice, schools are required to ensure that SEN students are included in the school activities along with the non-SEN students (DfES, 2015). In addition, the schools are obliged to help SEN students reach their targets and remove any obstacles that can hinder their learning via special education provision (DfES, 2015).

It is evident in the Code of Practice, the willingness to place SEN children and parents at the centre of decisions. As it is being argued, local authorities are required to consider the views, wishes and feelings of the former. In addition, children and parents should always be informed and included in the decision-making process (DfES, 2015).

-School's Inclusive Policy

School's SEN policy is consistent to the SEND Code of Practice targets, ensuring that SEN students will be able to step from being dependent to be able to function independently; recognising the variety of special needs in the school and the necessity to meet their needs daily and developing the curriculum to ensure that all students are receiving enhanced and equal learning opportunities. In addition, it is the school's policy to recognise the achievements of the students which will improve their confidence and self-esteem, to encourage students be responsible for their learning and behaviour and introduce positivity amongst students. Thus, students will be focused on developing their strengths rather than their weaknesses. Finally, efforts to limit the gap between the SEN and the non-SEN students and maintain contact with parents, has always been a strict policy line (Appendix 2).

OFSTED inspected the researcher's placement school in 2014 (OFSTED, 2014). The report is showing that the proportion of SEN students receiving support in the school exceeds the national average. The report is showing that most of the SEN students are individuals with speech, language and communication difficulties. Even though the pastoral care for the students is outstanding, issues arise regarding the strategies followed by staff to

support students make progress. Therefore, OFSTED suggests that more focus should be given in the school-based data so that suitable adjustments can accelerate their progress (OFSTED, 2014).