

## 9 Preventing Drop-out: Developing Inclusive Teaching and Learning

*Leaving school too early is strongly linked with marginalisation. Young people with only a lower secondary education have limited opportunities to realise their potential and develop their learning skills. They face disadvantages in employment and are at greater risk of poverty and social exclusion.<sup>313</sup>*

The *Sri Lanka Country Report* (UNESCO, 2008b) highlighted:

*The drop-out rate is decreasing in general ... However, the drop-out rate of children with disabilities is still an observable issue. This may be due to the poor quality of the educational assistance given to them in schools and lack of resources, including availability of trained teachers or methods of teaching.*

Much of the effort directed towards Education for All is to get children enrolled in school. Much less attention is being paid to the quality of the teaching and learning that pupils experience. Only recently has the focus shifted to the quality of the education on offer and support for transition to secondary and tertiary education. As we have seen, disabled pupils have specific needs in relation to access, style and pace, support, communication and equipment. It is important that teachers provide the accommodations they need, as well as understanding the general need to be welcomed, accepted and befriended, and not be ignored, patronised, harassed or bullied.

In addition, there are social, economic and cultural pressures on all children and their families in less developed countries. These are multiplied for disabled children, and often lead to them dropping out of school. The *Global Monitoring Report* has identified many of these pressures and suggested strategies to address them for girls, children from poor families, orphaned, street, refugee, cultural and linguistic minority or remote area children and child soldiers. These all need addressing, but here the focus is on disabled children, the group most systematically not catered for in the education systems of the world.

In this chapter the factors that lead to the dropping out, lack of success and exclusion of disabled children will be examined; the chapter will suggest solutions in terms of both classroom pedagogy and teacher training, giving examples from the patchwork of burgeoning global inclusive education and supportive practices.

Drop-out and non-attendance at school arise from both external and internal factors. Some projects using informal education have been very effective in reducing drop-out, including among disabled children.

Countries seeking to raise school intake rapidly have to guard against increased drop-out rates in the early grades. There are some useful lessons to be drawn from recent experience.<sup>314</sup> The United Republic of Tanzania is one of a small group of countries that have successfully combined a rapid increase in primary school enrolment with low drop-out rates in the early grades.

Critical to this success has been the implementation of a carefully sequenced set of policies. Recognising that a surge of over-age children in Grade 1 could severely damage retention, the government accompanied the abolition of school fees for primary education in 2001 with a policy of putting a ceiling on entry and not admitting children over seven years of age.

### **Box 9.1 Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania**

The Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) project was developed to provide informal schooling for over-age children. Its curriculum, covering numeracy, literacy and life skills, allows pupils to enrol in the formal system at Grade 5.

By 2006, about 556,000 out-of-school students – around 8 per cent of the primary school age population – had been enrolled in COBET centres. Measures were also taken to strengthen teaching by posting more experienced teachers in the early grades.

Previously, many students had dropped out in Grade 4 as the result of a selective examination. This is now used as a diagnostic tool to identify learning difficulties and students needing remedial education. The number of out-of-school children fell from 3.2 million in 1999 to 33,000 in 2008. From 2000 to 2006, drop-out rates fell from 26 to 17 per cent. The steady reduction in drop-out can be tracked on an annual basis

In 2001, almost six out of ten children who entered Grade 1 had dropped out by Grade 3. When the reforms were first introduced, grade-specific enrolment rates followed a similar pattern to those in many other countries in the region – high initial enrolment followed by drop-out in subsequent grades. The picture worsened in 2002, immediately after fees were withdrawn.

By 2007, very few children were dropping out in the first three grades and enrolment rates were broadly stable across the first six grades. It should be emphasised that the creation of alternative pathways into education for older children is not an automatic route to lower drop-out rates. Non-formal education for over-age children is sometimes viewed as a low-cost alternative to formal schooling – but non-formal classes are unlikely to facilitate re-entry if they are poorly resourced and staffed. The COBET project has delivered positive results partly because it is part of an integrated national strategy.<sup>315</sup>

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From 1999 to 2007, the proportion of students reaching the last grade of primary education in Colombia increased by 21 per cent. Part of the improvement may be attributed to the Proyecto de Educación Rural (PER), which started in 2002 and by 2006 covered more than 435,000 students in about 6,500 rural schools. Working through municipal authorities, the programme assessed the needs of each school. Teachers were given specialised training in one of nine flexible educational models targeting disadvantaged students.

An evaluation carried out from 2000 to 2005 found that 14 per cent of rural schools had been covered by the project. While there was no significant impact on enrolment, improved language test scores and the share of students passing examinations were significantly larger in the schools covered. Drop-out also fell by 3.2 percentage points more than in schools that were not part of the programme.

While demand-side interventions such as conditional cash transfers have received much attention as a way of reducing school drop-out, the evaluation of PER is part of a growing body of evidence on the importance of supply-side strategies that make schools more efficient and attractive to students (UNESCO, 2010).

These reforms have produced impressive results. Similarly, in Bangladesh the non-

formal programme run by BRAC provides an effective route into the formal education system, through learning centres that operate over three to four years and cover the primary school curriculum. Drop-out rates during the programme have been much lower than the national average; over 90 per cent of BRAC school graduates move into the formal system (Nath, 2009).

Cutting the cost of school entry on its own does not increase enrolment, but when specific targeted grants are aimed at linguistic minorities, girls or those living in poverty there is evidence of increased enrolment and fewer pupils dropping out.

In Kenya, when school fees were abolished, there was little evidence of an increase in the enrolment of disabled children, particularly those with visual, physical and severe mental impairments who face obvious disadvantages in negotiating the journey to school and, in many cases, access to the classroom and other facilities, such as toilets. These disadvantages were reflected in the limited impact of school fee abolition on enrolment. On one estimate, only one in six Kenyan disabled children were attending school after the abolition of fees (Mulama, 2004). Recently, the Kenyan Government has overhauled its special needs strategy in favour of inclusion,<sup>316</sup> but the policy still concentrates on providing special schools and units for those with severe impairments – children who are visually or hearing impaired, have learning difficulties or physical impairment. Only around 28,000 children have been identified and receive support out of an estimated 1.8 million disabled children. Many do go to school, but they have to manage with inaccessible buildings, teachers without appropriate training and an inappropriate and inflexible curriculum.<sup>317</sup> This leads to high drop-out rates. The issue here is how to devise strategies, such as the successful ones in Tanzania, Columbia and Bangladesh, that retain disabled pupils. There are factors that are both external and internal to the school.

## Challenging and changing attitudes in the community

Foremost among the reasons why children drop out are negative attitudes arising from cultural and social stigma towards disabled people rooted in traditional views. These are being challenged by work in the community at house to house and village level by interventions such as community-based rehabilitation, especially in the newly reformulated approach by WHO.<sup>318</sup> The CBR guidelines:

- Provide guidance on how to develop and strengthen CBR programmes;
- Promote CBR as a strategy for community-based development involving people with disabilities;
- Support stakeholders in meeting the basic needs and enhancing the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families;
- Encourage the empowerment of people with disabilities and their families.

Child-to-child initiatives are also effective, such as those at Mpika, Zambia (see DVD1) and those used by Leonard Cheshire Disability in their inclusion pilot projects in Kenya, Uganda and India.

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### Box 9.2 Miet: Developing community-led inclusive education

The approach developed by Miet Africa in Kwazulu-Natal, Zambia and Swaziland, using schools as centres of social support,<sup>319</sup> is now being incorporated into the

development of inclusive education by the South African Government. Using school-based and district-based support groups,<sup>320</sup> teachers and other professionals such as health visitors and social workers are encouraged to work with parents and the local community to identify barriers and find solutions to enable children to attend school and thrive. The issues addressed are poverty, hunger, orphans, HIV/AIDS, street children and disability. Another programme initiated by Miet Africa in rural areas is to develop clusters of primary schools around local resource centres.

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Linked to stigma and negative attitudes is the idea that disabled children are not worth the sacrifice needed by poor families to send their children to school. This is often based on the view that school as experienced by the parents could not accommodate their disabled child. Sightsavers has been providing support for adjustments and for itinerant teachers to work in the community and in schools, so that blind children and those with low vision can be successfully included, for example in Bangladesh, India and Mali. Modern technology such as ICT means blindness should no longer be a barrier to work or higher education. The problem is getting sufficient Braille teachers out into rural areas to contact primary schools. Itinerant teachers provided with a motor bike, as in Kenya, can reach a much wider range of schools and children; this is much more socially and economically effective than taking children out of their community to attend special schools for the blind.

Another very effective strategy for challenging and changing attitudes is to develop disabled adults as advocates of inclusive education. They can act as mentors and role models for disabled children and provide disability equality training for parents, community leaders and educators to challenge their own negative thinking and instil the paradigm shift necessary to implement inclusive education and Article 24 of the UNCRPD. This is occurring in the UK, South Africa, Pakistan and some South Pacific island countries.

## Barriers to inclusion

The absence of transport effectively prevents many disabled children from reaching school. Parental responses to surveys underline the importance of transport. A survey in Bangladesh found that parents of disabled children saw the absence of a specialised transport system from home to school in rural areas and the lack of subsidised support for rickshaw transport as major constraints (Ackerman *et al.*, 2005). Rural communities seem more prepared to solve these problems than urban ones, for example in Vanuatu, Samoa and Mpika, Zambia. Small grants to rural communities can help provide solutions to transport problems.

Failure to understand the transformative nature of inclusive education leaves many educationists, administrators and politicians with the idea that inclusion is about integrating or mainstreaming disabled children into the mainstream as it is. Developing an inclusive pedagogy is not related to the economic circumstances or the resource level of the school. The child-centred and flexible approach of the UNESCO *Toolkit for Creating Inclusive, Learning-Friendly Environments* (Box 8.1), which has been adopted in schools in many parts of Asia and in Southern Africa, has demonstrated that with a change in educational philosophy and practice teachers can and will respond. Most teachers came into teaching to make a difference and with a sense of social justice. Large classes make little difference. Other tools, such as the *Index for Inclusion* (see Chapter 8), focus on changing attitudes, school cultures, policies and practices. Both



Students in North-West Frontier province of Pakistan.

CREDIT: TERJE, EENET

these resources show how to provide a means for bottom-up change to develop more inclusive environments.

The largest barrier for disabled children in the classroom is often the unfamiliarity of teachers with the specifics of supporting and accommodating children with particular impairments. This can lead to the disabled child effectively being internally excluded from learning and may often lead to the child dropping out. *This can be a particularly strong pressure where national curricula and assessment policies are too rigid, competitive and do not allow for flexibility and collaborative working.* The external requirements placed on schools by government should be addressed by curriculum and assessment reform. The BRAC informal schools in Bangladesh have recently demonstrated that where teachers are trained in child-friendly methods and in how to accommodate girls and disabled children there is a lower drop-out rate for both groups before transfer to lower secondary state school than in state primary schools.

The medical model response is deeply embedded in the special educational needs model and special school thinking. Those who drafted Article 24 of the Convention consciously sought not to mention special educational needs because of the explicit and implicit negative valuation of disabled children and students. The range of impairments and guidance on reasonable adjustments are addressed in the UNESCO booklet *Teaching Children with Disabilities in Inclusive Settings* (see Box 8.1).

## Removing barriers

Article 24 of the UNCRPD focuses on addressing and removing barriers, making reasonable accommodations and providing support. This includes individualised plans or programmes that ensure access to the learning of Braille, alternative script, augmentative and alternative modes, and means and formats of communication. The plans should also include orientation and mobility skills; facilitating peer support and mentoring; facilitating the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community; and disability awareness, with an increase in disabled teachers. Implementing these sounds daunting, but it does not require every teacher to learn Braille or sign language. What it does require is a shift in think-

ing, so that every teacher feels confident in working with disabled children with a wide range of impairments. Specialist, resource and itinerant teachers are needed to support the development of the necessary learning of specific skills, like sign language and Braille.

Currently, too much effort and too many resources are going into training teachers about the large range of impairments and their medical causes and presentation, for example SSA training in India. Too little time and effort goes into working on an inclusive pedagogy that will reduce the number of individual adjustments necessary for children with various impairments.

Bunch (1999), in his groundbreaking *How to Book of Inclusion*, identifies four key areas teachers need to think about in planning an inclusive lesson.

1. As you are planning any lesson for pupils ask yourself: What are the essential knowledge, skills or understanding I want all students to get from the lesson?
2. Ask yourself – how do my pupils learn best? Take account of learning styles. Most pupils can learn in visual, auditory or kinaesthetic ways, though most have a preference and it is good to know these.
3. Ask – what modifications to the lesson plan would permit more pupils to learn more effectively in my classroom? All teachers are used to modifying their lessons to enhance their pupils learning.
4. How will my pupils show what they have learned? Ask the pupils to respond in ways they can handle. Assess pupils through their strengths, not their weaknesses.

Hart *et al.* (2004) examine the notion of transformability and the choices teachers can make to develop an inclusive classroom, drawing on the work of nine teachers in British schools, who successfully applied these methods very much against the general climate of increasing competition in schools.

Using the three principles of co-agency or collaboration, including everyone and trust, some interesting teaching and learning develops, which all children benefit from (Table 9.1).

Perner and Porter (2008) put forward a number of key points to develop differentiated or multi-level instruction when assuming inclusion of all students. The process helps teachers to plan and implement one lesson to accommodate all students and encourages each student to participate at his or her own level.

- The teacher plans for all students within one lesson.
- The teacher is able to weave individual goals into the classroom curriculum and through instructional strategies.
- The necessity for separate programmes is decreased.

Having put forward the same four steps in planning as Bunch (1999), Porter and Perner suggest four key concepts to help teachers:

1. Zone of Proximal Learning (Vygotsky):<sup>321</sup> Everyone needs to be challenged in their learning by being placed just outside their comfort zone, so they use all their faculties to resolve a problem and learn.
2. The 'partial participation diminishes readiness' concept, i.e. 'this student is not ready for my class'. Doing part of the task has value: we know this is true for each of us. Emphasise a sense of community – being included matters to all of us. One lesson for all because teachers can only do so much in one time period.

**Table 9.1. Applying the concept of transformability to classroom practice**
*Acting on the principle of co-agency*

Don't	Do
Manage classroom activities through imposition of authority. Respond to individuals on the basis of categories of perceived ability.  Write off anybody.  Work on the basis of passing knowledge from teacher to learner.	Actively encourage and enable young people to share responsibility for achieving a productive, purposeful and harmonious working atmosphere. Respond to individuals by trying to understand classroom experience through their eyes, by using that understanding to ensure meaningful diversity and openness in learning opportunities. Draw on all the information available to understand what is blocking learning. Construct classroom interactions on the basis of a meeting of ĩ minds, valuing as much what the young people bring as teachers.

*Acting on the principle of everybody in*

Don't	Do
Overtly differentiate between young people in tasks and activities. Routinely use ability-based grouping or grouping by similar attainment. Keep peer interaction to a minimum to avoid interference with learning.	Construct learning activities as a common endeavour in which everybody can take part on an equal footing. Encourage diverse grouping and negotiate patterns of grouping and seating with young people. Work to develop the peer group as a community of learners who support and increase one another's learning capacity.

*Acting on the principle of trust*

Don't	Do
Match tasks to perceived attainment/ability.  Attribute the problem to the learners when they are unresponsive to the task and experiences provided to them. Take for granted the value, relevance and worthwhileness of curriculum content.	Construct a range of attractive opportunities accessible to everybody, with space for learner input to shape experiences and outcomes. Constantly seek for better kinds of opportunities through which initially unresponsive learners might be encouraged to engage effectively with classroom activities. Choose content and devise tasks that encourage young people to draw on diverse experiences and make connections with what is worthwhile and important to them.

3. Use of Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domains:<sup>322</sup> Move from the simple and basic to the more complex, ensuring all feel comfortable and have their needs met, i.e. for knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and finally evaluation.
4. Use of Gardner's Model of Multiple Intelligences<sup>323</sup> to identify children's learning styles, and which intelligences are their strengths, and design ways of presenting the curriculum to maximise these:
  - Logical/mathematical intelligence
  - Verbal/linguistic intelligence
  - Musical/rhythmic intelligence
  - Body/kinaesthetic intelligence
  - Visual/spatial intelligence
  - Interpersonal intelligence
  - Intrapersonal intelligence
  - Naturalistic intelligence

Porter and Smith (2011) suggest other important strategies to deliver inclusive education for all in the classroom:

- Collaborative learning
- Individualised learning modules
- Activity-based learning
- Peer tutoring for all students
- Child-friendly layout of classrooms
- A wide range and level of learning resources
- Alternative assessments
- Resource teacher and team teaching

Desired outcomes of this approach include:

- Every child is welcome at the neighbourhood school;
- Every child benefits from the social and academic stimulation of education with his or her peers;
- Every school will develop strategies of support to make this approach successful.

Clearly, all these approaches have been developed in classrooms in the North, but many of the ideas readily transfer to a low- or medium-resource environment. Examples of how to adapt lessons for African classrooms are suggested in the video clip 'Differentiated Teaching' (DVD 2).

Another group of barriers relate to acceptance by non-disabled peers. Strategies to be used here fall into three groups. The first is developing peer support as a reasonable accommodation through buddy rotas, collaborative learning and co-operation on completing tasks. This is highly effective. A second group surrounds challenging name-calling, abuse and violence by building intentional relationship structures such as circles of friends with techniques such as buddy systems and playground friends.<sup>324</sup> The child-to-child methods exemplified in Kenya, Swaziland and Zambia include these techniques. A third group of strategies to challenge stigma and negative attitudes, and develop empathy by examining disability and social reactions to it in the curriculum, also fulfils the requirement in Article 8 of the Convention of awareness-raising in all schools.

### Bringing disability into the curriculum

A UK survey of young people aged 14–16 found that over 50 per cent had not learned about people with disability in the last year in their school curriculum (Children's Society, 2008).

World of Inclusion<sup>325</sup> carried out a project for the UK Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, following a report from the Secretary of State for Education in 2008 that showed little had been done to include issues surrounding disability in the curriculum. In 2009/2010, World of Inclusion was commissioned to work with schools in England to bring disability equality into the curriculum from a social model point of view. A report of the project, involving 25 schools, is on the worldwide web, as are nine short films showing promising practices (three of these are on DVD 2). Pupils and students were reported to be highly engaged in these activities and behaviour towards disabled peers improved. The work was carried out with pupils in Years 1–13



*Inclusive drama at South Camden Community School.*

CREDIT: CARLOS REYES MANZO



and covered all curriculum areas. It started by naming all the disabled people who have made a difference to the world and cited a study by Leeds University, based on primary school focus groups, which showed that many children thought disabled people sat at home and did nothing.

Many comments were recorded to show real attitudinal shift such as:

*'It's not like they are different just because they are disabled'* – Year 1 pupil, Hackney, London

*'It's the mental impairments we need to concentrate upon, they are really hidden'* – Year 13 pupil, Derbyshire

*'You could say a word every day that disabled people find offensive and not know. Now I don't say them'* – Year 10 pupil, Derbyshire

*'This work is really interesting and changes the way I think about disabled people'* – Year 4 pupil, Tower Hamlets, London

Another disability curriculum project was carried out by Playback in Scotland in 2002/2004.<sup>326</sup> An activity on access and barriers was carried out and a film was shown of disabled young people recounting their experiences. A series of activities for citizenship and personal health and social education were developed and trialed in eight Scottish education authority areas over a two-year period from 2002 to 2004, involving 1,780 pupils and 175 teachers.

Data were collated and analysed by an independent agency, Jura Consultants. Its report highlighted that:

- Training sessions raised teachers' competence and confidence in discussing inclusion, disability and equality issues with pupils;
- Class teachers noticed a significant difference in pupils' understanding and perceptions of diversity and difference;
- Class teachers found that the resource activities fully engaged and encouraged pupils to think positively about, and become active in, changing their school environment and community;
- Participating pupils were able to clarify more fully the meaning of disability, reject the 'not normal' tag and recognise that everyone is unique;
- Children began to see disability in a real way and their attitudes shifted from sympathy to empathy;
- Teachers were able to stress the similarities, rather than differences, between children and resources could be widened to encompass all kinds of discrimination, exclusion and marginalisation.



*The winning drawing in a children's competition in Niger shows how able pupils can help their non-disabled peers.*

CREDIT: UNICEF

Inclusion International (2009) carried out a survey of teachers' attitudes to inclusion and of teacher training in 60 countries. The majority of teachers supported inclusion, but did not feel they had sufficient training. This is an improvement on previous teacher surveys, which showed considerable hostility to inclusion. Over 750 teachers took part in the survey. One of its main findings was that it is generally teachers who have received training in teaching disabled children who are teaching them, whether in separate special education institutions or in regular classrooms.

Those who have not received this training are much less likely to have disabled children in their classrooms. Teacher training for inclusion still remains on the margins of teacher education. The training that teachers do receive is often based on a medical model of disability, rather than focusing on learning styles and teaching strategies for inclusion. It is often NGOs working in the field of rehabilitation that train teachers and there is a tendency toward a medical perspective and special education paradigms.

Teachers told the survey:

- They are not satisfied with the programmes disabled children follow in their schools;
- There is only limited support from school administrators;
- They need more support from assistants in the classroom.
- They do not have proper training and so are not prepared to have disabled students in their classes, but they would agree to this if they were given support;
- Lack of training, administrative barriers and negative stereotypes of disabled children are the main reasons why these children are prevented from attending school;

Over 70 per cent of teachers said they would recommend inclusive education to parents and students. Teachers feel strongly that inclusive education promotes relationships with peers and fosters a sense of community.

Most of the available training is in awareness and sensitisation, but there is not much that addresses challenges at the classroom level and the strategies needed by teachers. The training that regular teachers receive does not include the tools needed to deal with the broad diversity of students that they will face in their classrooms. The consequence is that children with disabilities may be in a regular classroom, but do not receive an education.

## Assessment

In 2005, the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education studied forms of assessment that support inclusion in mainstream settings.<sup>327</sup> Involving 50 assessment experts in 23 countries, the study addressed how to move from a deficit – mainly medically-based – approach to an educational or interactive approach. The following principles were proposed:

- Assessment procedures should promote learning for all students;
- All students should be entitled to be part of all assessment procedures;
- The needs of students with disabilities should be considered within all general assessment policies, as well as within policies on disability-specific aspects;
- The assessment procedures should complement each other;

- The assessment procedures should aim to promote diversity by identifying and valuing the progress and achievements of each student;
- Inclusive assessment procedures should explicitly aim to prevent segregation by avoiding, as far as possible, forms of labelling. Instead, assessments should focus on learning and teaching practices that lead to more inclusion in a mainstream setting.

Mitchell (2008) analyses the various pedagogies and methods that have been proved successful by good quality research. There is sound evidence that teaching strategies such as the following are effective for learners with special educational needs: co-operative group teaching; peer tutoring; a supportive classroom climate; social skills training; cognitive strategy instruction; self-regulated learning; memory strategies; phonological awareness and processing; behavioural approaches; functional behavioural assessment; direct instruction, review and practice; formative assessment and feedback; assistive technology; augmentative and alternative communication. Indeed, most of these strategies have been shown to be effective for all learners (Mitchell, 2009).

## Teacher training and professional development

The shift required to accommodate the above changes to a pedagogy of inclusion require big structural and organisational changes in the way teachers are trained and professionally develop.

Florian *et al.* (2010) and Rouse (2010) have examined this issue in the context of teacher training. They worked with student teachers to develop a new framework for inclusion which has now been adopted by the Scottish Government and all the universities that train teachers in Scotland.<sup>328</sup>

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### Box 9.3 Scotland: Initial Practice Project – developing teacher training for all teachers for inclusive education

The aims of the Initial Practice Project (IPP) were to develop new approaches to training teachers to ensure that they:

- Have a greater awareness and understanding of the educational and social problems/issues that can affect children’s learning; and
- Have developed strategies they can use to support and deal with such difficulties.

To this end, the project worked with staff in the School of Education to implement reform of the post-graduate initial teacher education programme for primary and secondary teachers to ensure that social and educational inclusion is addressed within the core learning and teaching programme, rather than being an elective element selected by only a few student teachers.

The IPP currently focuses on the one-year post-graduate teacher education course leading to the Post-graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). The programme prepares teachers for primary or secondary teaching. In 2009/2010, 117 secondary education students and 106 primary education students completed the course. Teachers graduating from the course take up probationary teaching posts across Scotland.

This initiative coincides with large-scale curriculum reform across Scotland associated with the introduction of the curriculum for excellence, which emphasises more inclusive approaches to teaching and learning and a strong commitment to social justice.

In spite of widespread support for inclusion in principle among educationists, there are concerns that it is difficult to implement. One reason cited is that teachers do not know how to 'do' inclusion in a practical sense. A central task of the IPP has been to work with colleagues who deliver the PGDE to explore the different ways in which teachers and schools can become more inclusive of children who might have found learning and participation difficult in the past, and to develop a shared understanding of inclusive pedagogy, which has been built into the programme.

Inherent in the three themes that underpin the programme are challenges to many of the existing beliefs and practices that students may encounter when working in schools. First, the theme 'understanding learning' is based on the principle that difference must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning. Such a view challenges deterministic views of children's abilities and educational practices that are based on assumptions of a normal distribution of intelligence.

Second, the theme of 'social justice' places expectations on teachers that they are responsible for the learning of all children; this is a stance which requires them to conceptualise difficulties in student learning as dilemmas for the teacher, rather than as shortcomings in the pupils. This approach requires that teachers reject notions of inclusive practice that are based on provision for 'most' alongside something different for 'some'. Instead, it requires them to extend what is ordinarily available for all learners.

The third theme, 'becoming an active professional', requires that teachers must constantly seek new ways to support the learning of all children. A key tenet is finding ways of working with and through others to improve the learning experience of everyone in the classroom. This presents a challenge to traditional divisions between 'mainstream' teachers, who are responsible for the learning of most students, and 'specialists', who work with some children who have been identified as having 'special needs'. Instead it suggests that adults work together to find better ways of supporting all children

The IPP is led by Professors Florian and Rouse at Aberdeen University, in partnership with colleagues in the School of Education, partner local authorities and schools, the professional associations and trade unions, the Scottish Government Education Department, the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) and the school's inspectorate (HMIE).

The IPP has adopted the concept of inclusive pedagogy, based on research into teachers' craft knowledge that is producing new strategies to address adverse school influences in the production of special educational needs. Studies of teachers' craft knowledge are undertaken in recognition of the complexity of teachers' daily work and to assist in identifying classroom practices which help to increase the achievement of all children, without the need to identify difficulties in learning as limitations of the learners, a key policy problem

arising from the well-documented negative effects of marking out some students as in need of something 'different'.

The inclusive pedagogical approach is specifically concerned with redressing the limitations on learning that are often inadvertently placed on children when they are judged 'less able', or identified as having special educational needs, both key factors in reproducing social inequality.

The IPP team are conducting a follow-up study of a sample of PGDE graduates. It seeks to build on the theoretical foundations of the PGDE course to explore how these are enacted in practice, and where new teachers find the facilitators and the barriers to adopting inclusive pedagogy. Insights from this study will support teacher educators in understanding the experiences of new teachers, and to reflect on how best they can be supported by their time at the university. The links between the theory and practice of inclusive education are constantly being explored to develop a better understanding of how new teachers can be supported.<sup>329</sup>

This framework has led to the *Framework for Inclusion* that supports teacher training and professional development across Scotland. Such an approach is a direct counter to the exclusionary pressure and negative impact of labelling children that has led to deficit thinking among teachers. In the IPP and the *Framework for Inclusion* all teachers are trained to welcome the challenge of diversity, to develop the practical teaching craft skills to meet that diversity and to challenge administrators and colleagues to bring about real and lasting change.

#### **Box 9.4 Scotland: The *Framework for Inclusion***<sup>330</sup>

The *Framework for Inclusion* is designed to ensure that all students and teachers are appropriately guided and supported from the outset and throughout their careers towards gaining knowledge and understanding of inclusive education. The *Framework* was developed by a working group set up by the Scottish Government, through the Scottish Teacher Education Committee (STEC).

The *Framework* is for teacher educators designing initial teacher education (ITE) programmes, student teachers, teachers and teachers following advanced professional studies.

It covers the values and beliefs of inclusive education, professional knowledge and understanding for inclusion, and skills and abilities needed for inclusion. It has a strong social justice component, covering human rights; the right to education; rights in education; participation and diversity; the right to a learning environment free of discrimination.

It discusses crucial questions relating to inclusive education:

- Given that all learners at some point may have additional support needs, under what circumstances might the following children be vulnerable?
- What are the issues of language, ethnicity, social class and poverty, specific learning difficulties, more able children, Scottish travelling communities and looked after children?

- What are the issues of participation and access to inclusion (mainstream classroom, common curriculum framework, assessment, extra-curricular activities)?
- What are the role, responsibilities and professional identity of a new teacher?
- What are the opportunities and challenges of working with others?

The *Framework* sets out Scottish legislation and policy initiatives that relate to inclusive education, including the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 and *Supporting Children's Learning: Code of Practice* (2005).

### Learning and teaching issues

- Promoting learning of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Raising awareness of the importance of the social and emotional climate for learning.
- Raising awareness of a variety of appropriate teaching, learning and assessment approaches.
- Encouraging the appreciation of the range of interests, experiences and needs within and beyond the classroom and the ability to address these by focusing on what the child already knows and can do.
- Increasing opportunities and removing barriers to learning and participation.
- Providing learning opportunities for students to think about their teaching and develop their understanding of different aspects of inclusion.

### Programme development issues

- Ensuring representation of a range of expertise in programme planning, development and implementation. Involvement of all staff in the appropriate programme related staff development.
- Student teachers: Students should explore their assumptions about children and young people, schools and social justice.
- Professional knowledge and understanding: Students should acquire a knowledge and understanding of current policy, practice and provision, learning theories and pedagogical practices.
- Professional skills and abilities: Students should acquire skills and abilities to recognise and build upon previous experiences and learning of pupils, groups and classes.

### Teachers' values and beliefs

Teachers should identify evidence of the following indicators within their practice:

- Are some forms of achievement more valued than others?
- Are some learners' achievements more valued than others?

- Are learning and teaching approaches being used to improve the achievement of all?
- Are the approaches being used effective?
- Are there any inherent disadvantages to the learner of these approaches?

### Box 9.5 Samoa: Training teachers for inclusion

Samoa is an independent island country in the South Pacific with a population of around 200,000 people. According to the latest survey conducted in 2009–2010, there are an estimated 5,000 disabled people in the country, 46 per cent of whom are children. Samoa ratified the *Salamanca Statement* in 1994. The Samoan Government therefore strongly supports programmes for the inclusion of disabled children in schools. The government sponsors all trainees who wish to take up teaching as a career. The National University of Samoa's Faculty of Education offers three programmes for these trainees: general education; special needs education; and early childhood education. The aim is to ensure that equal opportunities are provided for all children to access a balanced education system, taught by well-qualified teachers.

This training was a key initiative by the Ministry of Education, as there are increasing numbers of disabled children in schools, and a need for more teachers who have undertaken awareness-raising programmes and training. With Samoa's involvement in UNESCO activities and international conventions, the country now has a platform for action to push for these developments. Research has shown there is a need for teachers to be trained in the area of inclusive education, so a course on this is now compulsory for all teacher trainees in both primary and secondary education programmes.



*Using inclusive methods in Samoa.*  
CREDIT: SENESE

The main issues and challenges relate to changing people's attitudes and beliefs, including those of children in school and of educators, parents and the community as a whole. Other challenges include a lack of expertise, as many of the volunteers who started the programme are from overseas and often return home at the end of their contracts. It can be difficult to market this area of specialty to trainee teachers, as some have negative attitudes towards disabled children.

- Lecturers at the Faculty of Education were initially given scholarships to be trained in the area of special needs education so they can return and train the teachers in inclusive education;
- Consultation was carried out with the Ministry of Education and stakeholders on programmes and courses;

- Education programmes were offered at the Faculty of Education, especially courses specifically designed for teachers of special needs;
- Education workshops and training with the Ministry of Education was offered to all principals and teachers in primary and secondary schools;
- Working collaboratively with the Ministry of Education, attending workshops and training overseas, engaging in research and studies have all helped with the successful implementation of the programme.

Lecturers at the Faculty of Education and Ministry of Education officials worked on and sustained the initiative. The government supported it by sponsoring student fees.

The initiative was launched in February 1997, when the National University of Samoa moved to a new campus at Le Papaigalagala, Vaivase and the teacher training college amalgamated with the university. Training and awareness workshops took place around the country to inform educators and the community about the importance of inclusive education.

In February 2000, the inclusive education course was made compulsory for all teacher trainees. At the end of that year, the first six trainees graduated from the Faculty of Education, majoring in special needs education.

Achievements to date include:

- An increasing number of teacher trainees wish to major in special needs education;
- An increasing number of teachers of special needs are involved in national organisations and committees for children with disabilities;
- Teachers of special needs are involved in curriculum development;
- The Samoa Education Act 2009 highlights the importance of inclusive education for all children with disabilities and the support of teachers and the community;
- An outreach programme has been developed, for example trainees undertake visits to the hospital to conduct education activities for children, and there has been positive feedback from the hospital and community.

Teachers' performance is monitored by school inspectors. Most are coping well and succeed in accommodating the various needs of children in the community. Research is still to be completed to consolidate further ideas for the development of the programme and further evaluation will be done by the Ministry of Education and the university.

Plans are in the pipeline for a Bachelor's Programme for teachers of learners with special needs. Short training courses are planned for teacher aides/assistants through SENESE Inclusive Education (Box 8.5). Advocacy work will continue and more courses and resources are planned for schools to help teachers implement inclusive education.<sup>331</sup>

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### Box 9.6 Brunei Darussalam: In-service development for inclusion

Brunei Darussalam practices an active inclusive education policy. The Government's endorsement of the policy through its ratification of the *Salamanca Statement* was a catalyst for facilitating and assisting the inclusion of students with special educational needs.

Most government schools have at least one trained special education teacher and children with special needs considered at risk of exclusion join their peers in mainstream classes. With no special schools to close down, the Ministry of Education concentrated its efforts on preparing and supporting teachers, administrators, parents and students for a more diverse school culture and population. Professionals at the Special Education Unit provide support to schools on inclusion.

As part of this support, continuous professional development programmes are organised every month. Starting in 2008, the Special Education Unit embarked on a phased project, 'Inclusive Model School of Excellent Services for Children', and began with two primary schools and two secondary schools in 2008.

In July 2008, a three-day national seminar and workshop was co-organised by the Special Education Unit and the University of Brunei Darussalam. It was opened by Datin Paduka Dyg Apsah bte Hj Abd Majid, Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Education. The theme was 'Embracing Diversity: Effective Inclusive Schools' and the keynote address, 'Embracing Diversity: Strengthening Inclusive Schools' was made by guest speaker Dr Lori Bradshaw.

The seminar's main objectives were to:

- Provide a forum for sharing information and experiences on current trends, best practices and developments in special education;
- Establish networking and professional collaboration between the Special Education Unit, the school system, the Ministry of Education, the University of Brunei Darussalam and various local agencies;
- Review the progress of special education programmes and highlight directions for the future.

About 500 participants, including headteachers and principals, primary and SENA teachers from the Department of Religious Studies, officers and staff from the Ministries of Education, Health, and Culture, Youth and Sports and representatives of NGOs, attended the seminar.<sup>332</sup>

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### Box 9.7 New Zealand: Training materials for inclusive education

The New Zealand Ministry of Education has sponsored the three Rs of diversity: recognise, respect and respond.<sup>333</sup> This is best delivered as a whole school activity related to classroom activity and student outcomes.

The three Rs website provides a wealth of training materials for New Zealand schools and teachers to help them:



*Eager to learn:  
at school in South  
Africa.*

- Gain an overall understanding of the basic elements that are key to effective practice in meeting the differing needs of students;
- Develop a flowchart that reflects the school's unique strategies for identifying and meeting needs;
- Source strategies for consulting school staff and involving them in the development or review of learning support processes;
- Ensure that staff are involved in the review process;
- Source activities that may be useful for professional development;
- Download examples of models, forms and surveys that may be helpful as catalysts for discussion.

The materials include the statutory requirements, early identification, a model for developing school-wide procedures, inclusive systems and ensuring staff ownership. Each of these topics is broken down into stages, so developing a model includes presentations and activities on:

Stage 1: Initial identification

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage1-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage1-rationale_e.php)

Stage 2: Class-based assessment

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage2-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage2-rationale_e.php)

Stage 3: Collaboration with teaching team

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage3-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage3-rationale_e.php)

Stage 4: Collaboration with learning support team or management

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage4-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage4-rationale_e.php)

Stage 5: School-based assessment and support

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage5-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage5-rationale_e.php)

Stage 6: Collaboration with parents, caregivers, family, and whānau (extended family)

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage6-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage6-rationale_e.php)

Stage 7: Specialised assessment

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage7-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage7-rationale_e.php)

Stage 8: Ongoing monitoring, review, and evaluation

[http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage8-rationale\\_e.php](http://www.tki.org.nz/r/diversity/develop/stage8-rationale_e.php)

The Ministry of Education has also produced the Springboards to Practice series that summarises research and gives pointers to teachers and schools about useful practice. These were developed as part of the Enhancing Effective Practice in Special Education project. The Springboards weave research information together with student, parent and teacher voices into practical teaching suggestions.

The project was part of a wider Ministry of Education initiative to support and

develop teaching and learning for all students. The Ministry is increasingly conscious of the need for evidence-based practice. In an educational context, evidence comes from three sources: professional practitioners; families and young people drawing on their lived experience; research (both national and international).

By using the suggested activities in their own teaching contexts and recording their findings, teachers will help to build knowledge of what works for students in New Zealand schools.<sup>334</sup>

## Conclusion

Many different approaches are being taken to reduce drop-out and increase the admission to school of disabled children and students around the world. Latest estimates suggest up to 60 per cent of the remaining out-of-school children are disabled.<sup>335</sup> There are a huge number of disabled young people who have missed out on education. The real danger is that the Education for All target will be missed and international NGOs, donors and governments will continue to ignore 'the missing millions'. The solution lies in three areas.

First, there needs to be a big push into community education to challenge stigma and negative attitudes and facilitate disabled children getting to school. This requires a grassroots, bottom-up approach. It needs funding and training for grassroots disabled people's organisations and NGOs in 'training the trainers' courses and financial resources to remove barriers at the local level. Community-based rehabilitation and empowerment of local disabled people's organisations and parents' groups are key here.

Second, teachers who are in service around the world should be trained in a rights-based approach to inclusive education, using child-friendly methods, making them aware of the practical adjustments that can be made to accommodate disabled learners. This means embracing a pedagogy of inclusion. University education departments, teacher trainers and advisers must reject the old paradigm of the medical/special educational needs model in favour of inclusion and a rights-based approach, where teachers are shown how to mobilise resources, including pupils' peers, to devise solutions to barriers. Specific impairment supports and adjustments are also needed and resource teachers need to be trained and appointed, to work with teachers. It has been shown that whole school staff training is much more effective than taking out a few teachers and expecting them to facilitate the rest (MacArthur, 2009). For more than 20 years a whole range of methods of inclusive pedagogy has been developed and tested, mainly in North America, and has been shown to have a positive effect on the learning of all children.

Third, initial and continuing training and professional development must have inclusion at their heart and all trainee and in-service teachers should have continuing access. The model developed at Aberdeen University by Lani Florian and Martin Rouse has the potential to transform teacher training around the world. This is not expensive, but it is about changing the objectives and key components of the development of teachers.

*What I have seen in Canada ... is that teaching is teaching. Teachers know how to teach. They know how to teach all learners. This does not mean that they know everything about how to teach all learners. It does mean that learners are more like other learners than they are different. It means that most of the ordinary techniques of teaching will work. And remember that inclusive education is collaborative. Sometimes a regular teacher will need and benefit from the support of another teacher, professionals from other disciplines, from parents, or even from students.*

Professor Gary Bunch, York University, Toronto

