

**UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN**

**Inclusive Pedagogy:
A framework for teacher development in a
range of contexts**

Dr Jennifer Spratt
University of Aberdeen



Fair and equal education

Children and young people are entitled to an education that has their best interests at heart, and develops their personality, talents and abilities to the full. Fair and equal education recognises differences in children and young people's experiences, interests and backgrounds and ensures equality in access and provision.

(BERA (2015) Fair and equal education: An evidence-based policy manifesto that respects children and young people)

What do we mean by equality in education for diversity?

How do we address this in teacher education / professional development?

Not Just Numbers. Roderick Scott

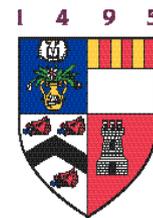
The dilemma of difference

When does treating people differently emphasize their differences and stigmatise or hinder them on that basis? And when does treating people the same become insensitive to their difference and likely to stigmatise or hinder them on that basis? (Minow, 1990, p. 20)

When children experience difficulty in learning it is unhelpful to do nothing. However, very often the 'help' provided inadvertently exacerbates the problem, by marking the child as 'different'. (See Norwich, B. (2009)).

Instead of providing something different or additional for children who experience difficulties in their learning, **inclusive pedagogy seeks to extend what is ordinarily available to everybody**

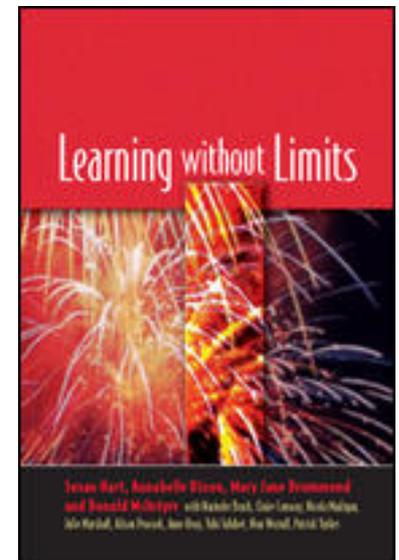
Florian, L. and Black-Hawkins, K., 2011. Exploring Inclusive Pedagogy. *British Educational Research Journal*, **37**(5), pp. 813-828.



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

The capacity to learn

- Inclusive pedagogy **rejects**:
 - the notion that children have a fixed ‘ability’
 - that a child’s current learning is can be used to predict future ‘potential’
 - that intelligence can be defined in terms of test based on logical / mathematical / reasoning skills
- Instead Inclusive pedagogy believes that every child’s **capacity to learn** is changeable
 - What teachers choose to do (or not to do) in the present can alter a child’s learning capacity for the future
 - Nothing is neutral



Reference: Hart et al (2004)
Learning Without Limits.
Maidenhead: Open
University Press

IP project – reciprocal cycle of teaching, research, teacher education

Concept of inclusive pedagogy
(Black Hawkins and Florian 2010)



Redesign of PGDE course
Informed by principles of inclusive pedagogy



Follow up study
Development of framework to interrogate inclusive pedagogy



Further development of concept of inclusive pedagogy
Working with the concept of 'everybody'



Inclusive Pedagogy masters level course
Research informed teaching

THE IP project – University of Aberdeen

Led by Martyn Rouse and Lani Florian

Scottish Government invested £1.4million in a research and development project (Inclusive Practice Project) to develop an initial teacher education course that addresses the increasing diversity of the school population.

The aim was to develop new approaches to training ALL teachers so they:

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

PGDE course developed with the notion of inclusive pedagogy at its heart

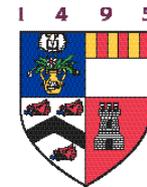


Professional Graduate Diploma in Education

Core content – professional studies

3 core themes – linked to key concepts of inclusive pedagogy

- Understanding Learning
 - Study of theoretical views of learning
 - Replaces ‘bell-curve’ thinking with the notion of ‘transformability’
- Understanding Social Justice
 - Considers dilemmas of access and equity in education
 - Examines role of ‘additional support’
- Becoming an Active Professional
 - The development of autonomy and resourcefulness, practical and ethical responsibility
 - Emphasises teacher responsibility to constantly look for new ways of working by working with and through others



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

The relationship between the principles of inclusive pedagogy and the PGDE core themes

Principles/ Underlying Assumptions	Associated Concepts/Actions	Key Challenges*	PGDE Course Themes	Outcome (programme graduates)
1. Difference must be accounted for as an essential aspect of human development in any conceptualisation of learning	Replacing deterministic views of ability with a concept of transformability	'Bell-curve thinking and notions of fixed ability still underpin the structure of schooling	Understanding Learning	Rejects deterministic views of ability Accepts that differences are part of human condition Rejects idea that the presence of some will hold back the progress of others Believes that all children can make progress (<i>if conditions are right</i>)
2. Teachers must believe (can be convinced) they are qualified/capable of teaching all children	Demonstrating how the difficulties students experience in learning can be considered dilemmas for teaching rather than problems within students	The identification of difficulties in learning and the associated focus on what the learner <i>cannot</i> do often puts a ceiling on learning and achievement. Teachers must be disabused of the notion that some children are not their responsibility	Understanding Social Justice	Commitment to the support of all learners. Belief in own capacity to promote learning for all children
3. The profession must continually develop creative new ways of working with others	Modelling (creative new) ways of working with and through others	Changing the way we think about inclusion (from 'most' and 'some' to everybody)	Becoming an Active Professional	Willingness to work (creatively) with and through others

The follow-up study

Aim

- To explore how (if at all) the principles of inclusive pedagogy underpinning the PGDE course are evident in the practice of new teachers

Methods

- 7 probationary teachers in 3 local authorities
- 3 research visits over first year
- Each visit comprises observation of one teaching session followed by semi-structured interview of about 45 mins

The follow up study

- What do teachers committed to inclusive pedagogy actually do?
- How do we know inclusive pedagogy when we see it?

Instead of providing something different or additional for children who experience difficulties in their learning, inclusive pedagogy seeks to **extend what is ordinarily available to everybody**



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

Extending what is ordinarily available to everybody

- Planning for everybody
- Using 'everybody' approaches to address individual dilemmas

An example of planning for everybody - Clare

- Tasks involved non-standard measurement
- Complex series of tasks
- Scaffolded by teacher's choice of partners
- Demonstrates principles of
 - Understanding learning
 - Social Justice
 - Active professionalism



Chloe – taking an everybody approach to individual problems



'Danny'

No interest in school. Liked to look out of window at granny's farm and daydream

Chloe's response:

Whole class cross-curricular project on conservation based around farming

Teaching practices which include all children
Extending opportunities to all learners, rather than 'most and some,'

Sees difficulties in learning as dilemmas for the teacher
Strategic responses to difficulties in learning

Florian, L. and **Spratt, J.** (2013): Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28:2, 119-135
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2013.778111>

Chloe



I think [before the PGDE] I believed that people's ability is changeable, but I didn't really know how to articulate it and I certainly wouldn't have known how to translate it in practice with the sort of passion and the organisation in my own thoughts to how to bring it into the classroom. And that's what the course has helped me with.

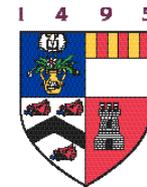
And it gives you the language to be able to justify what you're doing and trying to make them think a wee bit. And now that I'm not going to be a probationer anymore I can dig my heels in a wee bit more [laughs].

Conclusions

- Diversity of teacher setting and experience – need for set of theoretical inclusive principles to act as a lens through which to interrogate practice
- Through the development of an analytical framework for inclusive pedagogy we are creating a robust tool with which to examine how teachers draw from those principles in different contexts.
- Interaction between the three themes of inclusive pedagogy
- ‘Different ways of thinking about ‘everybody’
- The study of inclusive pedagogy can equip teachers with the language to justify decisions about practice

Florian, L. and **Spratt, J.** (2013): Enacting inclusion: a framework for interrogating inclusive practice, *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 28:2, 119-135

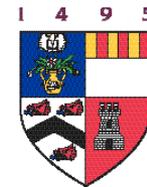
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2013.778111>



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

Then.....the master's level course

- Confident with the learning from the PGDE course, we designed an on line Master's level module 'Inclusive pedagogy'
- Course participants are practicing teachers, both class teachers and learning support teachers
- Scottish and international participants
- Principles of inclusive pedagogy taught at a deeper level, with wider reading required
- Assignment based on change in their own practice
- Inclusive pedagogy grid used to analyse their practice



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

What do experienced teachers make of inclusive pedagogy?

- A challenge to existing practice.....
- Not always easy to introduce within existing structures and cultures
- Can be serious challenge to professional identity and working relationships
- But.....some very exciting and innovative projects

Spratt, J. and Florian, L. (2014) Developing and using a framework for gauging the use of inclusive pedagogy by new and experienced teachers in Forlin, C. and Loreman, T. *Measuring Inclusive Education*. Bingley: Emerald pp263-278



UNIVERSITY
OF ABERDEEN

Some projects

A support teacher replaced the practice of taking a small group out of class for 'emotional literacy' sessions, but instead took the whole class for a series of sessions, arguing that this was beneficial to all.

A classroom teacher disbanded ability grouping for mathematics for the first time in her career, and instead offered a series of choices available to everybody.

An additional support teacher and classroom teacher swapped roles so that the additional support teacher led the class whilst the classroom teacher spent more time getting to know the children experiencing difficulties

A classroom teacher worked closely with her additional support colleagues to find ways of supporting a non-English speaking pupil in the classroom, instead of sending her out of the class for specialist support

.....and some more projects

The transition to secondary school for a girl with complex learning difficulties had been planned as an individual, extended process, with visits taking place over the final term of primary school. Instead, the whole class spent more time concentrating on transition, and where the pupil made extra visits this was organised along with a group of peers, to avoid isolation.

A teacher of a small group of children with behavioural difficulties invited a wider group of regular education staff to visit the group and supported them to contribute to the education programme, thereby enhancing the skills of teachers in the wider school to understand and respond appropriately to challenging behaviour

A primary special school teacher of children with severe and complex disabilities organised shared play sessions with a nearby primary school.



In conclusion

This presentation has tried to demonstrate how, through a process that closely links research, teacher education, and classroom practice, we have sought to develop a research-informed approach to teacher development that addresses issues of fairness and equality in the context of today's diverse classrooms.

Wellbeing 8. Roderick Scott