The role of the Special Education Itinerant Teacher

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master

of

Educational Psychology

at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand.

Rebecca Jane Banks

2013

Abstract

This research is a qualitative case study examining the roles and responsibilities of the Special Education Itinerant Teacher on the support team of a student with very high and complex needs enrolled at a small, semi-rural, culturally diverse primary school. It utilises the ideas of social constructionism, that our 'reality' is constructed through our relationships and interactions with others. According to this paradigm knowledge about the role of the SEIT, like all knowledge, is co-constructed by the interactions and dialogue of the student's support team. Therefore semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were conducted with 9 participants who made up key members of the student's support team. Some relevant documentation was also gathered. The data collected was analysed inductively for emerging patterns in the narratives around the activities of the support teacher and each participant's experience of the support. The data indicated that the support of the SEIT was greatly valued by all participants, but a construction of two separate systems of education - regular for the regular kids, and 'special' approaches for students with high and complex needs, presented barriers to inclusion and genuine collaboration between all members of the team. These barriers are discussed, along with a number of supports which were also identified.

Acknowledgements

List of tables

Chapter 1

Introduction

Since graduating in the UK with a primary teaching qualification in 2000 I have worked in both regular schools and in schools and classrooms for children with disabilities (often referred to as the field of special education). At the time of my training there was increasing interest in inclusive education (also referred to as inclusion) with more and more students with disabilities enrolling in their local school. This change was not universally welcomed and the talk I heard in staff rooms reflected the belief that having a student with a disability was extra work, something 'on top of' the already busy role of class teacher. At this point I moved into separate (or segregated) education settings, working first in a residential home for children with 'severe behavioural and mental health needs' in state care and then to a special school satellite class hosted by an intermediate school in New Zealand. I spent two happy years teaching in this class, learning about my students, about adaptations that supported their learning, and how to work with the two teacher's aides who worked along with me to best effect.

I then moved over to work in the school's thriving outreach program as a Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) and was faced with a whole new challenge. My role as a 'special education' teacher changed dramatically. The students I supported were no longer in a class where I held responsibility for curriculum leadership, they were spread across several classes, and though I could usually give my input I was there for a couple of hours a week and the class teacher was now responsible for that leadership. I had to question how those two-three hours a week could be most beneficial to the class teacher and to the student. It became clear to me that it was the classroom, and the relationships in it, that held the most potential for positive impact. That would involve working with the teacher and teacher's aide, supporting them to teach the student with high needs well.

This research grew out of my experiences working with other teachers to enhance the learning and social experiences of the students I support.

Background of the outreach service

The Learning Support and Resource Centre initiative began in 2004 when funding was allocated for the development of eight Learning Support and Resource Centres (LSRC) nationally as a pilot project. Ongoing Resourcing Scheme (ORS) funding allows for 0.1 or 0.2 of a full-time teacher to be allocated to students with disabilities who have been formally verified as having 'high or very high needs' respectively. The LSRC initiative aimed to provide skilled teachers based in regular or special schools with ORS expertise to be assigned to cover the children with special needs within a specific group of local schools. These specialist teachers were to itinerate around various schools providing support to the students with special needs and help up-skill the teachers and teacher's aides. The rationale for this approach was that students would "have the benefit of a specialist teacher working in partnership with Ministry of Education specialists services, and other members of the team, to support their development and learning in the local school setting" and in turn "the students inclusion, teaching and learning and achievement will be enhanced through the skill and expertise of the specialist teacher" (p.9, Ministry of Education, 2011). The classroom teacher has ultimate responsibility for the student but is supported by the skilled specialist.

The project aims were to foster collaboration between special schools, schools with many students who had ORS funding, and the then Group Special Education, in order to promote excellence in specialist teaching support for students with special education needs and strengthen learning support networks around students with ORS funding in regular settings (Ministry of Education, 2011).

In 2010 the LSRC scheme was rolled out nationally when Success for all-Every School, Every Child (Ministry of Education, 2010) introduced the Specialist Teacher Outreach Service (STOS) to enable students on the ORS scheme to receive specialist teaching from a special school (or other school with expertise) while enrolled at their local schools (See the Education Gazette, 21 November 2011, p. 2). The STOS provides schools with a Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) who "provides an itinerating service to support the student, and the student's class teacher/s, school, support team, parents and family/whanau in the school setting" (Ministry of Education, 2011).

The accompanying provisional specialist teacher outreach practice framework (PSTOPF) (Ministy of Education, 2011, appendix C) was developed to guide the practice

of specialist teachers in the Outreach Service (and ORS additional teacher provision in schools) and outlines key roles, responsibilities and activities of the specialist teacher. It states that the Outreach Service provides:

- A significant opportunity for specialist teachers to *work as part of a team* so students with very high/high needs receive the best support and services they can to be successful learners in their local school.

- A key role for specialist teachers to support very high/high needs students to be *present, participating and learning* in their classrooms and for schools to be confident in their ability to support this; the hallmarks of inclusion (Ainscow & Miles, 2009).

- A range of *specialist teaching strategies, approaches and resources* for very high/high needs students, through the specialist teacher, for planning next teaching and learning steps.

- Relevant and timely *access to specialist services* for students and schools through the specialist teacher's in depth knowledge and understanding of the range of specialist services available.

- *Enhanced relationships* between schools, specialist services, parents and family/whānau, and communities.

- Increased *opportunities for specialist teachers to share information* about evidence-based practices with the class teacher/s and others and build on what is working well.

- Opportunities to *build the capacity of local schools* to cater for students with very high/high needs.

This would suggest that the Outreach Service is part of an approach intended to support the development of an inclusive education system by working with other stakeholders to build capability in schools to teach a diverse student group. The PSTOPF (Ministry of Education, 2011) provides some guidelines for the SEIT's role but states "the timing, type and level of support are based on an on-going dialogue and agreement with the schools, students, parents and family, and support team".

The SEIT's teaching and learning activities may involve:

- Assessing the student's learning needs and sharing these with the team

- Implementing and monitoring learning programmes and goals

- Teaching the students within the classroom, in a one-to-one setting or in small group or whole class settings

- Teaching the whole class, while the class teacher works with the student within the class

- Modelling effective teaching strategies, approaches and practices for teachers and teacher's aides and providing ongoing guidance

- Assisting class teachers to differentiate classroom and school curriculum content and prepare learning programmes

- Assisting class teachers to adapt and prepare learning materials and resources for the student appropriate to student needs

- Enabling student input into their learning, programme planning and review

- Monitoring student progress and achievement and developing next steps with support team

- Assessing the need for access to specialist services for the student

- Attending and supporting Individual Education Plan (IEP) meetings

- Providing evidence-based professional development, appropriate for the New Zealand context and curriculum, to class teachers and teacher's aides.

The PSTOPF (Ministry of Education, 2011) highlights the importance of collaboration in the SEIT's role. It states the support team around the very high/high needs student may include the student, class teacher, teacher's aide, specialist teacher, specialist services, family/whānau. This team works together collaboratively through the IEP process to develop, plan and implement a teaching and learning programme to meet the student's specific needs. This indicates that ORS funded students in classes in local schools are the responsibility of a team of people that includes the SEIT. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) team decides the roles and responsibilities for each team member depending on the student's learning context and the experience and support needs of team members.

The specialist teacher's collaborative activities may involve:

- Contributing to the IEP process (this does not include writing the IEP as this is a teacher/school responsibility)

- Working collaboratively with other team members to plan, develop and implement IEP goals into class and school programmes

- Gathering and reflecting on feedback on IEP goals

- Making timely and informed requests for specialist services

- Integrating specialist services/therapy interventions into everyday class and school programmes

- Sharing specialist knowledge and skills with class teacher/s, teacher's aides and team

- Coordinating services to best support the student's learning

- Ongoing liaison with specialist services and other agencies

- Liaising with student's family and whānau

- Supporting students in transition at key points in their schooling

- In secondary school, coordinating subject teacher assessments and reports.

The PSTOPF does not describe in detail what the 'specialist knowledge and skills' of the SEIT are, but does make mention of current evidence based practices as they relate to inclusion and the New Zealand context; in depth knowledge and understanding of specialist services; specialist teaching strategies, approaches and resources; and knowledge and skill in differentiations and adaptations to school and classroom programmes and materials.

These provisional guidelines provide the only information schools and SEITs have about what they should be doing to support the 'learning of students with high and very high needs'. To the knowledge of this writer, there has been no research done on the role of an effective SEIT in schools. Currently those working as SEITs are to negotiate the role on a case by case basis (Ministry of Education, 2011). Now that this service is rolling out nationally and more schools will be setting up outreach services it is even more important that there is clear information for schools that provide outreach support; for SEITs and for the schools they support about how the support can be maximised to enhance teacher capability and student learning, and what the respective roles and responsibilities of the key individuals involved are.

CHAPTER 2

Literature review

The development of 'special' education knowledge and practice

Education and special education in western cultures has developed within the paradigms of the natural sciences which has been described as fostering an understanding of disabilities as a skills deficit located within the individual student (Dudley-Marling, 2004). These paradigms include:

- o Individualism – educational success or failure is within the individual's innate qualities (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Gergen, 2009).
- o Positivism – There is one 'reality', true for all, which can be understood through scientific endeavour (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).
- o Scientific (quantitative) methodology – use of empirical methods to search for the (one right) answer (Guba & Lincoln, 1994)
  - Objectivity
  - Accurate measures
  - Prediction and control
  - Quantitative data
  - Validity and reliability

This understanding has been challenged by the social constructionist paradigm (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011). According to this paradigm, there is no universal truth or reality; we construct our knowledge through our relationships and interactions with others. "Realities are taken to exist in the form of multiple mental constructions that are socially and experientially based, local and specific, and dependent for their form and content on the person who holds them" (Guba, 1990; cited in Lincoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011, p.102). This thesis uses social constructionism as a framework for thinking about how 'special' education has developed as a separate paradigm. It also uses the idea that knowledge about the role of the SEIT is co-constructed through interactions and dialogue between people as the basis of its methodology.

Through their interactions, a group negotiates a common reality which can be valued by all. Members will co-ordinate their social actions and the language they use to

talk about their reality. Over time, if these shared, local constructions have social utility (that is, they serve the interests of the group), institutional structures will develop that serve to legitimise and justify their construction and so perpetuate the status quo. The social construction becomes stable and accepted by the group as 'truth'. As members of the group we then live out the implications of these social constructions. It is for this reason that Gergen (2009) stated our constructions can imprison us. By accepting one understanding as truth, we suppress alternatives from outside traditions. Our good reasons, good evidence and good values are generated from within our tradition (construction). For example, medical labels associated with disabilities means that when people talk about disability it is in the context of a fault within the individual which requires specialised medical intervention. Gergen (2009) highlighted the importance of critical reflexivity; the practice of questioning one's beliefs and listening to alternative frames of reality. This practice can reveal injustices in social structures and help different groups to create new ways of relating that are mutually congenial. This is becoming more important in a time when globalisation is bringing groups with conflicting realities into close contact.

Social constructionism can be used to examine how education and special education have developed as separate paradigms. Previously, 'special education needs' have been socially constructed as a fault or problem within the individual student (Dudley-Marling, 2004; Gergen, 2009; Mitchell, 2010). This posits certain relationships between individuals with disability and their environments. Deficits are assumed to be located within the individual who requires 'treatment' (Carrington, MacArthur, Kearney, Kimber, Mercer, Morton & Rutherford, 2012). This view may encourage education administrators and classroom teachers to believe that they are incapable of and therefore should not be reasonably expected to work with the disabled child (Slee, 2012). Thus ideas about education and special education have developed within separate paradigms. Separate systems and language have meant that students with disabilities have been educated by specialist educators and therapists in special schools, units or classrooms physically separate from general or mainstream education. Special education thinking can also be found in regular classrooms and schools in teaching and learning activities that are not grounded in the national curriculum and/or separate students out from their peer group on the basis of their disability or perceived 'differences/deficits' (Brantlinger, 1997).

Social constructionism has reconceptualised the idea of disability as residing in broader political, social, or cultural contexts of schooling (Higgins, MacArthur & Morton, 2008). This socio-political paradigm focuses on structural inequalities at the macro-social level being reproduced at the institutional level (Mitchell, 2010). Within this paradigm disability is defined as a limitation placed on disabled people by physical (access to buildings) and social arrangements designed only for those deemed 'able' bodied (Carrington et al., 2012; p.16). 'Treatment' should therefore be focused on changing those environmental arrangements which restrict access for some individuals based on the disability so that they can be accessed by all. Access to free and compulsory education that is responsive to individual needs is seen as a basic human right for all children and young people (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO], 2000).

Inclusive Education

The inclusive education movement has growing international support and recent global and national changes in educational policies promote the inclusion of students with disabilities in local schools (Joffe & Lattanzio, 2010; Bourke, 2010; Mitchell, 2010). In June 1994 representatives of 92 governments and 25 international organisations formed the World Conference on Special Needs Education, held in Salamanca, Spain. The Conference reaffirmed the right to education for every individual, as enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and renewed the pledge made by the world community at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All to ensure that right for all regardless of individual differences (UNESCO, 1994). The conference delegates agreed on a statement on the education of students with disabilities which asserts the rights of all students to receive their education in the 'regular' classroom. This urges educational systems to consider the wide diversity of children's characteristics and needs in order to provide an effective education for all (Morton, Duke, Todd, Higgins, Mercer & Kimber, 2012). Since then UNESCO has released the Dakar Framework for Action-Education for all (2000), this is a global commitment, which New Zealand has signed up to, to ensure all children receive a basic education. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) also supports inclusive education, it requires signatories to ensure:

8

Equal access to primary and secondary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning...Education of persons with disabilities must foster their participation in society, their sense of dignity and self-worth and the development of their personalities, abilities and creativity (United Nations, 2006, Article 24.).

New Zealand context

In New Zealand the education of children with disabilities developed outside the mainstream following a general worldwide trend of segregated and separate education for students with disabilities (Greaves, 2003). In the early 1980s New Zealand began to adopt inclusion when concepts of social democracy came to the fore (Dunstall, 1992). In 1989 this was enshrined in law when the Education Act gave people with special educational needs, because of disability or otherwise, the same rights to enrol and receive education at their local state school as people who do not.

Support for inclusion can also be found at the policy level. In 1996 New Zealand's policy framework Special Education 2000 promised a 'world class inclusive education system' (Greaves, 2003). A few years after this the New Zealand Disability Strategy (Minister for Disability Issues, 2001) was released. This states no child should be denied access to their local, regular school because of their impairment. The objective of the strategy is to improve education so that all children, youth and adult learners will have equal opportunities to learn and develop in their local, regular educational centres. Reflecting these objectives the New Zealand Curriculum (Ministry of Education, 2007) holds diversity, equity and community and participation as central values to be encouraged, modelled and explored, and inclusion as a guiding principle which should underpin all school decision making. It is clear from this that schools and teachers are expected to welcome and meet the educational needs of students with disabilities.

However, in a recent review, the Education Review Office (ERO 2010 a) found that only 50% of schools were fully inclusive while 30% were partially inclusive and 20% were not inclusive. The staff at schools with mostly inclusive practices demonstrated good practice in teaching students with high needs and in ensuring that they take a full part in the social, cultural and sporting life of the school (see ERO, 2010 b for evaluation indicators). They demonstrate:

- Ethical leadership and standards such as commitment in the face of challenges; a caring culture; experienced and able leadership and staff; managing available funding to support students with additional needs

- Coordinated and informed approaches such as effective teamwork, well-organised systems and constructive relationships; working with families/whānau; using information about the student to inform the programme and support; coordinated and effective transitions

- Innovative and flexible practice to manage the complex or unique challenges related to including a student with high needs (ERO, 2010).

This review came in conjunction with the release of Success for All-Every School, Every Child (Ministry of Education, 2010) which aims to have 100% of schools demonstrating inclusive practices as indicated by the presence, participation and engagement, and achievement of students with high needs by 2014.

Inclusion is concerned with the development of school communities for all children and young people, and is based on the development and application of a set of inclusive values in schools that enhance presence, participation and achievement for all (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). The focus is on full-time membership in students' local school in an age appropriate class. This approach places the focus on education systems as opposed to individual students (Mentis, Kearney & Bevan-Brown, 2012). It is argued that many students face barriers to their presence, participation and learning at their local school, providing a "compelling incentive to explore ways in which school systems can respond differently to diversity and reaffirm all students' rights to be included as valued, active participants" (Carrington et al., 2012, p. 6). Inclusion therefore is a process of identifying the physical and social arrangements that can act as barriers and forces of exclusion to some students, and removing them (Carrington et al. 2012) while simultaneously working to increase the presence, participation and learning of all students (Booth & Ainscow, 2011).

Inclusion is raising significant issues in education as it requires complex, radical educational reform (Carrington et al., 2012). Because of the development of separate and segregated education systems the knowledge, experience and resources of special

education are not currently located within 'regular' school systems. For inclusion to occur successfully and responsibly, the current two-system approach to education where students with disabilities are educated in segregated settings must change (Idol, 1997).We might also expect some conflict between the aims of inclusion and current institutional structures in schools and the education system.

As inclusive education gains momentum internationally and in New Zealand, schools and teachers will experience greater diversity in their classrooms as they learn to include and teach students with increasingly complex needs. While some regular class teachers include all students and draw on their knowledge of teaching and learning to meet the diverse needs of the students in their classes, others can struggle to include students with high or very high needs while also ensuring provision of individualised, special services (Eisenmann, Pleet, Wandry & McGinley, 2011). Kearney (2011), for example, found that the most powerful barrier to inclusion was a lack of knowledge on the part of the teacher. Indeed, with an increasingly diverse student group, classroom teachers are unlikely to have all the knowledge, skills and strategies required to meet the demands of all situations and all circumstances within inclusive education (Mentis et al., 2012). Equally, special schools must now examine and redefine their role within an inclusive education system (Merrigan, 2011; Day & Prunty, 2010).

Concerns have been raised about the way inclusion is to be implemented. According to Slee (2012), to push children and young people with disabilities into an unreconstructed regular school system is highly problematic, after all special schools exist because of the failure of regular schools to teach all children. Anastasiou and Kauffman (2011) also raise concerns that inclusion should not be at the expense of effective instruction, which they equate with 'special education'. "Great will be our sin if we eliminate a good institution such as special education, replacing it with an ineffective, inappropriate, and uniform education for children with disabilities" (p.380). It is not enough that students are physically enrolled at their local school. They must be able to take an active part in school life and learn within the curriculum in a way that meets their individual needs. The New Zealand Human Rights Commission (2010) and ERO (2010) have found that the local school is still not a real option for many students because in many cases the local school is not yet able to support student learning for all.

When support is not forthcoming for schools, there is a danger of 'inappropriate mainstreaming' (MacKay, 2002), where a student is present in their local class, but is unable to participate in appropriate learning or social activities. This reflects the tension that exists between the current education system and inclusion, and highlights the need to ensure that systemic changes are advanced so that all schools can provide effective and appropriate education which meets the needs of all students, including those with disabilities. The work of inclusion is to learn to detect, understand and dismantle exclusion as it presents itself in education (Slee, 2012). Slee argues that we should be asking what kind of education facilities are needed for all children and "how do we build the capacity of schools to grow with and to work with a difference?" (p. 11).

Interprofessional collaboration as a way forward

Internationally many are now advocating/recommending collaboration between individuals who have traditionally worked in the separate settings of general and special education to share knowledge and experience that supports the inclusion and learning of all students (National Association of State Boards of Education, 1992; Department for Education [DfES], 2001; Fuch & Fuch, 1994). Inclusive teachers do not work alone; they share problem solving with other teachers and professionals, working with advisors on sensory and other disabilities in the same way that they use the expertise of curriculum specialists (Ballard, 1996; Mentis et al., 2012).

Zelaieta (2004) conducted action research to critically explore ways in which special schools can change their role and work more closely with their education colleagues supporting the development of inclusive practices. This was in response to the prominence given by the UK government to special schools as 'outward looking centres of excellence working with their mainstream partners and other special schools to support the development of inclusion' (DfES, 2001; Cited in Zelaieta, 2004). Zelaieta's research suggested there must be opportunities for staff from special and mainstream education to work collaboratively, including shared professional development opportunities for curriculum planning and teaching. She argues "Both special and mainstream teachers have aspects of expertise with regard to recognising in their practice the commonality and uniqueness of all learners, which, if used in collaboration, would increase the quality and flexibility of teaching approaches and further extend participation in learning on democratic principles" (Zelaieta, 2004, p.41).

A number of areas of potential support were identified by participants of this link scheme in the UK (Zelaieta, 2004):

- Confidence, encouragement and support
- Lending resources
- Increasing liaison between special and mainstream schools
- Building awareness of inclusion practices
- Increasing awareness of disability in the school
- Specific teaching methods such as communication aids, symbols, sign language
- Behaviour intervention plans and strategies
- Knowledge of adapted schemes of work, assessments etc.
- Advice on adapting the curriculum and identifying alternative delivery
- Suggestions of appropriate activities
- Help differentiating lessons and materials
- Help setting targets (finely graded)
- Help formulating IEPs
- Awareness of needs of child; physical/sensory; safety issues
- independence skills
- Adapting teaching styles
- Practical help with class management; including children; working as a team with teacher's aides
- Working in a multi-professional team, with many therapists for example

In New Zealand the Educational Review Office (ERO, 2010) recommend that the Ministry of Education consider, as part of the special education review, how effective schools, special schools, Group Special Education and Resource Teachers: Learning and Behaviour can work together to improve the level of inclusion in New Zealand schools. Success for All-Every School Every Child identified special schools as a source of support for local schools and inclusion through outreach services (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Role of the teacher in inclusion

According to Carrington et al. (2012) teachers play a critical role in furthering all aspects of the inclusive education process. They have the power to include and to exclude students by way of their knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and values, and by the quality of their actions. It is teachers' attitudes, beliefs and values that play a key role in creating inclusive classrooms and schools. Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) argue that teachers who accept responsibility for teaching a wide diversity of students (recognizing thus the contribution their teaching has on the students' progress), and feel confident in their instructional and management skills (as a result of training), can successfully implement inclusive programmes. But when teachers believe that there are some students who fall outside their realm of responsibility, or that there are some students they cannot be expected to teach, they are less likely to engage in effective pedagogies, students are less likely to have their needs met, and barriers will persist that prevent presence, participation and learning for all students.

The best evidence synthesis of quality teaching for diverse students in schooling by Alton-Lee (2003) identified quality teaching as a key influence on outcomes for diverse students, accounting for up to 59% of variance in student performance. This identified the central professional challenge for a teacher is the capacity to manage simultaneously the complexity of learning needs of a diversity of students.

A relationship has also been found between teachers' attitudes (of attachment, concern, indifference and rejection) towards their students and the type and quality of student-teacher interactions (Cook, 2001). When Robertson, Chamberlain and Kasari (2003) examined the relationship between general education class teachers and included students with autism, their findings suggested an association between the quality of the relationship and the quality of the student's current inclusion in their class.

While the class teacher has been described as the key to successful inclusion (Lyons, 2012) as they optimally assume responsibility for teaching and creating opportunities to learn for all students within their classroom, research indicates that class teachers do not always assume the leadership role in educating students with disabilities in their classrooms (Giangreco, 2003).

Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) reviewed the literature around teacher's attitudes towards the inclusion of children with significant and complex needs. They found evidence of positive attitudes to inclusion in general but no evidence of total inclusion, what they called a 'zero reject' approach. Teachers' attitudes were found to be strongly influenced by the nature and severity of the disabling condition presented to them (child-related variables) and less by teacher-related variables (e.g. years of experience). They were positive about integrating only those children whose disabling characteristics were not likely to require extra instructional or management skills on the part of the teacher. However, educational environment-related variables, such as the availability of physical and human support, were consistently found to be associated with more positive attitudes to inclusion. Teachers reported overcrowded classrooms, insufficient pre-prepared materials (differentiated packages), insufficient time to plan with learning support team, lack of a modified/flexible timetable, inadequately available support from external specialists and lack of regular in-service training were some of the barriers to including students with disabilities (Avarmidis & Norwich, 2002).

Teacher's attitudes to inclusion may reflect lack of confidence both in their own instructional skills and in the quality of support personnel available to them. Although classroom teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are increasingly positive, they can feel ill-equipped to provide instruction to an increasingly diverse student population (Zelaieta, 2004). Responsibility for students with disability is often passed on to support personnel such as teacher's aides (Giangreco, Yuan, McKenzie, Cameron & Fialka, 2005; Rutherford, 2011) and special education teachers (Lyons, 2012; Devecchi, Detton, Doveston, Sedgwick & Jament, 2012).

Teachers who are instructionally engaged with students with disabilities express responsibility for educating all students in their class, regardless of disability. They teach and communicate directly with students who have disabilities. They collaborate and participate in instructional decision making with special educators and teacher's aides. They direct the work of teacher's aides in their classroom—for example, planning lessons that match the skill level of the teacher's aide. They mentor teacher's aides and maintain an instructional dialogue with them, and they phase out support when their students no longer need it (Giangreco, 2003).

If all students are to be taught in their local school, it has been suggested that teachers will need to learn how to work collaboratively with other professionals, sharing the responsibility for meeting the needs of all students. The teacher's role is no longer to work alone within 'their' classroom taking sole responsibility for the learning of 'their' students (Mentis et al., 2012). In this new role teachers must be effective partners (Saggers, Macartney & Guerin, 2012). Partnerships are developed and co-constructed through building respect and trust among members, and through the mutual exchange of ideas and information (Saggers et al., 2012). This requires a genuine commitment to identify barriers to partnership and obstacles within teachers' own practice. Teachers must actively seek to develop and support collaborative partnerships with and between students, parents/whānau, teachers, the school community (support staff, other teachers), and the wider community including other professionals. Saggers et al. (2012) note that teacher education programs may have ignored partnership and negotiation skills in favour of curriculum subjects. In doing so the complexity of relationships so essential to supporting the inclusion of all students may be invisible to some teachers who are now required to enact such partnerships.

Role of the teacher's aide in inclusion

With increasing numbers of students who have disabilities attending their local school, teachers' aides are becoming an established part of the workforce in New Zealand and in other Western education systems (Rutherford, 2011). However, teacher's aides (also referred to as paraprofessionals) are often inadequately oriented, trained, supervised, appreciated or compensated (Mitchell, 2010) and generally marginalised (Rutherford, 2011). In partnership with qualified professionals, trained teacher's aides can serve a variety of valued roles (Giangreco et al., 2005) that can benefit all students and teachers (Rutherford, 2011).

Such paraprofessionals are often regarded as 'the solution to inclusion' (Rutherford, 2011), but research highlights the pivotal, complex, and ambiguous role that teacher's aides play in both helping and hindering disabled students' educational presence, participation and achievement (Rutherford, 2011). Teacher's aides play a valuable connecting role through their relationships with students, peers, teachers, families and the wider school community. Acting as interpreters, mediators and/or advocates, aides use their knowledge of, and relationships with, students to support their

academic achievement, social participation and inclusion in school life (Rutherford 2012). In instances in which students do not verbally communicate, or use a different language from the majority, teacher's aides can be critical in interpreting for peers and teachers (Rutherford, 2011). In educational contexts, the development of positive relationships between teachers (and teacher's aides) and students forms the foundation of effective learning and teaching. Working closely with students for sustained periods of time often results in teacher's aides developing a personal knowledge of students as complex human beings, rather than in terms of a one-dimensional master disability status (Rutherford, 2012; Downing, Ryndak & Clark, 2000). Drawing on their knowledge and relationships with students, teacher's aides are in a position to educate others about human difference by revealing student competence, to help peers and teachers move beyond labels or appearances to see and understand their shared humanity (Rutherford, 2012).

The Ministry of Education (2012) stated the role of teacher's aides is to support the learning and behaviour of the student with high needs. In practice this tends to involve the assignment of an aide to a child for a set number of hours (Rutherford, 2011). In New Zealand the absence of National educational policy to guide local schools, principals, and teacher are left to make their own decisions about the use of support staff (Rutherford 2012). The research indicates that frequently there is a lack of clarification of the respective roles and responsibilities of teacher's aides and teachers (Downing et al., 2000; Howard & Ford, 2007; Rutherford, 2011). The Education Review Office (2010 a) raised concerns that even in schools which demonstrated mostly inclusive practices teacher's aides were doing too much of the programme planning with too little input from teachers. There was also concern that teachers had insufficient time to plan for students with high needs. Other researchers have also found that teacher's aides have a considerable degree of autonomy and responsibility in providing academic, social and behavioural support to students (Howard & Ford, 2007).

When Blatchford, Russell, Bassett, Brown and Martin (2007) researched the roles and effects of teacher's aides in English primary schools (years 4-6) the overwhelming opinion of teachers was that teacher's aides are very effective in supporting them in an indirect way. Teachers saw themselves as the beneficiaries of teacher's aide support. Teachers benefited from delegating the 'neediest' pupils to the teacher's aides because they are able to focus more of their attention on the rest of the

class. This allowed them to satisfy the ideal of meeting the needs of all pupils. If some needs are perceived as not met, the pressure and guilt that this generates could be reduced through the deployment of teacher's aides in interactive rather than clerical roles. Pupils with disabilities, and those whose attainment and behaviour is of concern, can be disproportionately demanding of a teacher's time, so having teacher's aides in the class can make a significant contribution to meeting the needs of all pupils. Reliance on teacher's aides may feel effective for teachers because it relieves, distributes, or shifts responsibility for educating a student with special needs (Giangreco, 2003). But having an adult by a student's side for all or most of the school day can interfere with a student's inclusion as a participating member of the classroom community (Giangreco et al., 2005). Research has revealed a number of issues regarding the conventional utilisation of teacher's aides in schools (Rutherford, 2012).

Giangreco and colleagues have consistently outlined a number of unhelpful practices in which aides' presence may:

- interfere with teachers' engagement with disabled students and limit their access to quality teaching;
- separate students from classmates and limit social interactions;
- stigmatise some students;
- result in students' dependence on aides;
- limit students' development of autonomy and control over their lives, as well as affecting their sense of identity;
- result in students' behaving 'inappropriately' as a means of communicating their desire to be free of their aide (Rutherford, 2011).

As already stated, teacher engagement (the extent and nature of interactions between a classroom teacher and his or her students) is one of the most important contributors to the success of general education placement for students with disabilities (Giangreco, 2003). Effectively educating students with disabilities who are striving to meet individual learning outcomes while participating in the general education curriculum requires the integral involvement of the classroom teacher—who is likely to be the only certified educator in the classroom throughout the day—in the teaching team (Giangreco, 2003). If teachers prioritise the education of the majority over the responsibility to teach all students or, consciously or unconsciously regard the disabled

student as 'not my problem' this is likely to impact on the role of the teacher's aide in the class and outcomes for the students (Rutherford, 2011). The assignment of an individual aide to a student with a disability often co-occurs with lower levels of teacher engagement (Causton-Theoharis, 2009; Giangreco et al., 2005), whereas the use of a classroom teacher's aide, under the direction of the teacher, more often co-occurs with higher levels of teacher engagement (Downing et al., 2000). Teacher engagement is not just important for students with disabilities. Teachers who are highly engaged with students who have disabilities are poised to improve their overall teaching (Giangreco, 2003). This research suggests that teams should explore alternative supports that facilitate increased teacher engagement with these students.

Recent literature has also raised questions about whether educators are asking too much of teacher's aides in the classroom, given their skills and typically low levels of compensation (Giangreco, 2003). Downing et al. (2000) examined the perceptions of teacher's aides regarding their roles and responsibilities in supporting students with moderate to severe disabilities in inclusive classrooms. Numerous roles and responsibilities were described including providing behavioural support, monitoring students, teaching, adapting and modifying curricula, materials and activities, supporting personal care, facilitating interactions with peers, clerical tasks, collaborating with team members and communicating with parents. The teacher's aides described being responsible for making many decisions about instruction that could have a great impact on a student's learning. Though all teacher's aides stated that training was critical for doing their job effectively and had concerns about their qualifications related to some of their activities and responsibilities, the majority had received no training when they were hired. Howard and Ford (2007) also found that teacher's aides supporting students in secondary school settings received little systematic feedback and evaluation on their performance.

In New Zealand no training is required to work as a teacher's aide, the only criterion for employment is the satisfactory completion of a police screening check (Rutherford, 2012). Students with disabilities—usually the students with the greatest learning challenges in the classroom—often receive their primary or exclusive instruction and support from the least qualified staff members, at least in terms of curriculum and instruction (Howard & Ford, 2007; Giangreco, 2003; Giangreco et al., 2005). It has been noted "the quality of education a student with disabilities receives

should not be dependent on the effectiveness of those who have the lowest status and the least training of any professionals in the school system" (Brown, Farrington & Knight, 1999, p.252).

Separating students with disabilities within the classroom isolates them from their peers and may encourage insular relationships between these students and the paraprofessionals assigned to them (Causton-Theoharis, 2009). Overdependence on teacher's aides can adversely affect the social and academic growth of students with disabilities, resulting in their inadequate instruction and peer interactions. In some cases, students with disabilities feel stigmatized because they receive targeted paraprofessional support.

The role of the special educator in inclusion

As education systems move towards inclusion the role of special educators is changing internationally. For instance, in the UK since 1999, when additional funds became available from Local Education Authorities (LEA s) and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to pilot approaches to outreach support, more special schools have begun to develop outreach services. It was found that support and outreach services promoted inclusion and improved the life chances of many vulnerable pupils. Most services provided very high quality advice and support based on extensive specialist knowledge otherwise unavailable to the school (Ofsted, 2005).

Teachers who have worked in special education will have experience in teaching students with various disabilities, and may also have post-graduate qualifications. From my own experience, I would suggest that they are likely to have developed knowledge of a range of impairments and the effects of impairment on students' learning and social experiences. They may also have knowledge of current evidence based practices that can support children with complex disabilities to learn within the curriculum. They should also be used to working in trans-disciplinary teams with other professionals such as therapists to integrate the therapies into the teaching-learning process. Their experience in teaching students with disabilities could be a valuable addition to the expertise the class teacher holds when planning learning and social experiences to meet the needs of all students, including those who have disabilities.

Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) found that support from specialist resource teachers is an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion. Class teachers in inclusive classrooms who co-taught with resource teachers reported positive attitudes towards inclusion and high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence and satisfaction. Class teachers in traditional classrooms held less positive perceptions and viewed classroom adaptations as less feasible, and less frequently used, than did teachers in classrooms with the protected resource of two teachers.

As for teacher's aides, the role of the special educator in inclusion is also marked by ambiguity internationally. Devecchi et al. (2012) compared qualitative studies of teacher's aides in the UK and support teachers in Italy and found similarities in both roles despite differences in professional qualifications and responsibilities. In Italy support teachers are qualified teachers who undergo further post-graduate training which offers a broad understanding of disability theory delivered by experts from relevant professions as well as placement in inclusive settings. Their primary role is developing the IEP for the student in collaboration with the class teacher. The support teacher is however, allocated to the class the child attends rather than to individual students, so their remit is to develop and apply modifications and adaptations so as to support the learning of all the children. But contrary to the spirit of the law, which makes support teachers and class teachers equally responsible for all students, like many teacher's aides, support teachers are not seen as part of a team but as specifically designated to teach only the child with disabilities, they do this in isolation and frequently outside the classroom. This seems to stem from unclear roles and responsibilities and unresolved discrepancies in relation to expectations between teachers, support teachers and support staff, but also between school staff and other professionals, or parents. Devecchi et al. (2012) speculate the lack of the classroom teachers' engagement with support teachers may be a result of the additional training support teachers undergo in Italy which reinforces teachers' views that working with children with disabilities is a matter of specialised knowledge which they do not have.

Takala, Pirttimaa and Törmänen (2009) studied the work of special education teachers in Finland. Their work was partly inclusive but also entailed segregative elements. The main problems identified were a lack of time for consultation and an unclear work profile. The bulk of their work involved teaching students (66%), mostly in small groups or individually and least often in co-operation with the class teacher.

Indirect work consisted of background work such as planning, assessing and making materials (22%) and consultation with others (12%). Consultation was a smaller role in the work profile than in theory or professional recommendations. Though teachers identified many positive outcomes from co-operative teaching this was the least common model, especially in the primary age range. Lack of time for consultation meant special education teachers worked more like assistants, which many felt was a waste of their resources. Teachers often were not used to working with other teachers and many found it disturbing. The special education teacher could not get to know all the students in a class, which made co-operative teaching difficult. Obtaining high quality education which leads to good results from students was identified as a reciprocal process; when teachers know their job and work together with other professionals the quality of special education will be high.

Lyons (2012) also noted that the inclusion movement led to a radical shift in the role of the special educator in Canada. In a review of the roles and responsibilities of special educators within inclusive schools personnel described an expanding special education role that was sometimes ill-defined and not well understood by classroom teachers, administrators, teacher assistants, and the special educators themselves (Lyons, 2008; cited in Lyons 2012).

This research challenges the view that providing support through either the deployment of teacher's aides or qualified support teachers is a simple matter of additional resources. For the participants in these studies supporting children with disabilities is often done in isolation and collaboration with the class teacher is far from being the norm. The need for more non-contact time so they can plan collaboratively has been stressed in a number of American studies (Avarmadis & Norwich, 2002).

The concerns raised in the research intersect with issues related to roles and responsibilities of classroom teachers and teacher assistants. Special education teachers are spending less time with students, some classroom teachers are struggling to teach students with diverse needs and there are growing concerns over the reliance on teacher's aides to instruct students with disabilities.

The role of collaboration in inclusion

The rise of inclusion means that teachers and others who have previously worked within different paradigms (special and regular) and within physically separate settings, are now sharing the same space and are expected, despite their differences, to work together and communicate across any boundaries to co-ordinate their actions. It behoves all teachers to find new ways to include and teach all children, within one system of education that provides the support and guidelines needed for schools to be inclusive of diversity. This implies a need for teachers to work collaboratively within inter-professional groups to share knowledge about teaching and learning that is grounded in the New Zealand curriculum and in ideas about fairness and social justice for all (Mentis et al., 2012).

Inclusion requires teachers to take responsibility for ALL students in their class (Carrington et al., 2012). However this occurs within a model of collaboration where teachers work together with parents, other teachers and professionals to meet the needs of all students (Mentis et al., 2012). School based collaboration can be considered an interactive process and one that involves individuals coming together to solve mutually defined problems with the expectation that all participants have expertise to contribute (Paulsen, 2008). This kind of collaboration is embedded in all aspects of teaching and recognised as a critical aspect of quality teaching and inclusive practice (Mitchell, 2010; Saggers et al., 2012). It is also reflected in New Zealand education policy (see Success for All- Every School, Every Child, 2010; New Zealand Curriculum, 2007; and Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans, 2011).

The research indicates that there are many potential benefits to working in this way. Dettmer, Thurston, Knackendoffel, and Dyck (2009) report that when professionals share their expertise in team situations all members grow in confidence, expertise and understanding, and outcomes for students are positively affected. This new knowledge and expertise is often also applied to other students in the class (Kampwirth, 2003). Idol (1997) states that collaboration is necessary in order to offer education programs that are available to all students and provide appropriate modifications and adjustments to meet their diverse needs. For instance, Hunt, Soto, Maier and Doering (2003) demonstrated that collaborative teams made up of general and special education personnel and student's parents were able to collaboratively develop and implement plans of support for a student with disabilities plus a classmate considered at risk. These were associated with increases in academic skills, engagement

in classroom activities, interaction with peers, and student initiated interactions. Other benefits include a sharing of resources; teachers feel they can readily access assistance (they do not feel so alone); members of the team feel energised, motivated and more stimulated than when they work alone (Mentis et al., 2012). Forlin (2001) states that challenges (barriers to inclusion) can be overcome when teams (teacher, students, specialist support personnel, and administrators) engage in collaborative problem solving. Mitchell (2008) also identified a number of potential benefits of collaborative teaching. It can create synergy; the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. It can provide opportunities for colleagues to learn new ways of addressing barriers to learning from each other. It can also increase the coordination of services for learners with disabilities. Developing supportive, authentic and collaborative partnerships between all partners is crucial to inclusive school culture. It is very difficult to cultivate inclusive practices in a school where collaboration is not actively being practiced (Paulsen, 2008).

Effective interprofessional practice, when two or more professionals work together as a mutually respectful team towards a common goal, results in clear communication, successful task allocation and insight into the roles and responsibilities of those working in the team. This in turn leads to collaborative, client-centred practice where conflict, confusion and duplication of work are minimised (Mentis et al., 2012). While ineffective partnerships may result in wasting some resources put in place for students with disabilities (Guerin, 2008; cited in Saggers et al., 2012). Successful interprofessional practice relies on a number of interrelated factors the most important elements being the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that the professionals bring to the team. Mentis et al. (2012) describe four competency domains and their related knowledge, skills, attitudes and values identified by the Interprofessional Educational Collaborative Expert Panel (IECP) in 2011 which are relevant to all interprofessional teams. These included teamwork, roles and responsibilities, communication and values and ethics.

Teamwork includes cooperation, coordinating roles, collaboration to problem solve, sharing decision making and power, and establishing procedures and protocols for the smooth running of the team. Educating learners with disabilities in inclusive settings requires a great deal of collaboration and teamwork. Teachers may find themselves working with teacher's aides, parents/whānau, specialist teachers, therapists,

and medical specialists. This kind of collaboration can be a challenge for professionals who spend most of their time isolated in their classroom or clinics (Mitchell, Morton, & Hornby, 2010). It can be a big step to develop new ways of working in which you share responsibility and expertise with other professionals in other disciplines (Mitchell, 2008). This requires a deliberate shift from an individualistic professional culture to a culture of collaboration through interprofessional education and learning (Casimiro, MacDonald, Thompson, & Stodel, 2009).

Roles and responsibilities involve the use the knowledge and agency of one's own role as well as the knowledge of other professionals for the benefit of the client. Members need to be able to recognise and acknowledge the professional expertise of others in the team and use this knowledge and expertise to support and enhance student participation and learning (McCulloch, 2011; cited in Mentis et al., 2012). However, Thousand and Villa (2005) state 'the norms, traditions and organisational structures of many schools perpetuate the segregation of staff members and students' (p.68). There are long-held beliefs regarding the roles of teachers and other school staff that may be deeply ingrained within the culture and practice of some schools. To access the resources of other educational personnel traditional roles must be relinquished and job functions must be redistributed across any number of other people. But resistance and negative attitudes of staff can be a barrier to effective collaboration between educators (Lyons, 2012). Inclusive schools are those which have redefined the role of the teacher as a collaborative team member (Mentis et al., 2012).

Communication involves team members' ability to share their professional expertise and learn from each other; so open, clear and supportive communication is pivotal. The size of some support teams mean it is difficult even to assemble key participants for meetings (Mitchell, 2008). Values and ethics include working with others to uphold a climate of mutual respect and shared values including honesty, integrity, cooperation, and respect. In addition, demonstrating ethical conduct, managing ethical dilemmas and maintaining professional knowledge. Difficulty communicating across disciplines and in accommodating to a range of philosophies and personalities can be barriers to successful collaboration and inter-professional practice (Mitchell, 2008; Mentis , Quinn & Ryba, 2006).

Increasingly teachers, and other professionals, need to be aware of the characteristics of effective collegial teams, democratic partnerships and authentic collaboration and understand how these characteristics can be implemented to successfully reframe relationships, learning and leadership (Price-Mitchell, 2009).

One of the most influential variables in the provision of effective inclusive education is the beliefs of the school principal about inclusion. If a principal believes inclusion is an evolving process in which teachers have roles and responsibilities, then flexible, collaborative and effective teaching is likely to be observed in the teachers' classrooms (Stanovich & Jordan, 1998; cited in Carrington et al., 2012). Some ways principals can support inclusion are by providing sufficient time for classroom teachers and specialist support staff to engage in collaborative planning for instruction (Naraian, 2010) and by encouraging classroom teachers and specialist support staff to engage in co-teaching practices (Rice & Zigmond, 2000). Time and financial constraints are a considerable barrier to collaboration (Zelaieta, 2004) and administrative support (Mitchell, 2008) is crucial to overcoming these.

Some general principles for successful collaborations have been identified. These include:

- Commitment from the school (Zelaieta, 2004)
- Establish clear goals for the collaboration (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004)
- Define roles and responsibilities (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004)
- Joint responsibility for decisions and outcomes; consensus decision making (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004)
- Problem solving approach (Mitchell, 2010)
- Trust and mutual respect; reflective (of self and others) (Mitchell, 2010; Zelaieta, 2004)
- Be willing to learn from others and give credit (Mitchell, 2010)
- Joint professional development opportunities (Zelaieta, 2004; Bevan-Brown, Bourke, Butler, Carroll-Lind, Kearney & Mentis, 2011)
- Good liaison between parties (Zelaieta, 2004)
- Resolve conflicts (Mitchell, 2010)

- Review progress regularly (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004)

In collaborative consultation, group members agree to view all members as possessing unique and needed expertise, as a team they take ownership of the identified problem. Frequent face to face interactions take place between the team members. Leadership responsibilities are distributed within the group and team members hold each other accountable for agreed commitments. Language and communication is crucial, professional jargon is minimised and active listening encouraged, group members consciously work on consensus. It is important to be familiar with the roles and skills that various people bring to the team. Learning to understand and adapt to the various beliefs, styles and knowledge bases of people from different professional backgrounds can be a challenge (Mentis et al., 2006).

Research aims

The present study aims to look closely the SEIT's roles and responsibilities as understood by themselves and also other key members of the student's support team, how they spend their time, the interprofessional relationship between the SEIT, the teacher and teacher's aide and the impact this has on their respective attitudes and practice. Possible benefits of this research include fostering an understanding of the interprofessional relationship between the class teacher and the specialist itinerant teacher and their individual roles in maximising student's presence, participation and engagement in the class. It is hoped that through the project 'good practice' (which has had a positive impact on the student outcomes) will be highlighted and institutional structures which act as barriers to such 'good' inter-professional practice will be identified.

Research questions:

1. What is the main role/s of a specialist outreach teacher and how do they spend their time in schools?

2. How do class teachers and teacher's aides understand and experience the support of the specialist outreach teacher?

3. How has the support of the specialist education teacher changed teachers' practices and/or attitudes towards inclusion?

Chapter 3

Methodology and Methods

In this Thesis I wanted to explore the roles and responsibilities of the SEIT as understood by the SEIT as well as the teacher, teacher's aide and other key members of the support team of a student with very high needs. This is a qualitative study using case study methodology. This approach was used because the focus of the research is the individual views and perspectives of those people engaged in a complex contextually bound social situation. This research hopes to identify how one school is making use of the support offered by the Special Education Itinerant Teacher (SEIT) and to examine in more depth the collaborative professional relationship between the teacher, teacher's aide and the SEIT. The project also focuses on how these professionals perceive each other's roles and responsibilities, and the contextual factors that impact on their inter-professional relationship. There are two main reasons for taking this approach. One is to understand how these roles can enhance the learning of a diverse group of students in a classroom, and the other is to support the development of inclusive schools through this enhanced understanding.

Quantitative vs. Qualitative Research methodology

This thesis uses social constructionism to guide its methodology. Quantitative research, which developed within the paradigms of the natural sciences discussed earlier in chapter one, is often hailed as the 'gold standard' (Stake, 2010). While empirical research has provided much useful information to educators it is not the only or even the best way of gaining knowledge (Gergen, 2009). There are a number of difficulties when the positivist paradigm and methodology is applied to studying *social phenomena*, and particularly in the context of education. As Erickson (2011) stated there is "...an intellectual history of social and cultural research in which, across many generations of scholars, serious doubts have been raised as to the possibility that enquiry in the human sciences should be, or could be, conducted in ways that were continuous with the natural sciences." (p.55)

The positivist paradigm uses quantitative methodology in order to gain knowledge of reality. It is based on the assumption that reality is stable over time, making it possible to predict and control outcomes (identify causal relationships). The

researcher is considered separate from the object being researched and should remain objective in order to learn the truth, unbiased by any subjective values they hold (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Research is measured against validity, reliability and generalizability.

But human behaviour is contextually bound, malleable and continuously in motion (Gergen, 2009). It is not stable and so prediction and control is not possible. The aim of research under the social construction paradigm is to describe and understand one subjective, co-constructed, local, social reality and to inform positive action (Lyncoln, Lynham & Guba, 2011, Gergen, 2009). Positivist research typically looks at average effect sizes across groups. Effect size is a way of answering questions about how much more successful one variable might be over another in achieving some desired outcome (Hattie, 2009; Snook, Clark, Harker, O'Neill & O'Neill). Such comparisons are not as informative of complex situations as qualitative methodologies which look most carefully at a phenomenon and aim to understand that one thing well (Stake, 2010). Rather than being separate from the research object, the researcher is actively involved in co-creating the results with the research object (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This thesis asks questions about complex social issues around teaching and diversity where participants are likely to hold unique perspectives. By co-constructing knowledge with participants it will be possible to develop a deep understanding of the different perspectives and complex interactions involved.

These differences have necessitated a paradigmatic shift towards qualitative research approaches. Yin (2011) identifies five features of qualitative research. Studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions; concern with representing the views and perspectives of the people in the research; covering the contextual conditions within which people live; contributing insights into existing or emerging concepts that may help to explain human social behaviour; and striving to use multiple sources of evidence rather than relying on a single source alone. Common practices include flexible research designs, the collection of 'field based' data to capture the context as well as participant's perspective, the analysis of non-numeric data and interpretation (possibly multiple) of findings (Yin, 2011). Observation, interviewing and examining artefacts are the most common methods in qualitative research (Stake, 2010).

Through a social constructionist lens positivism becomes a favoured social construction which has come to be known as 'truth'. Scientists have a number of

linguistic repertoires (ways of talking) and discursive strategies, institutionalised within the conventions of scientific writing, to assert their research claims as 'fact' and to subvert the claims of others (Aguinaldo, 2004). In this sense validity can be interpreted as a practice of power.

According to positivism, research is valid to the extent that its findings offer access to objective social reality (Aguinaldo, 2004). This theory is problematic for social constructionists who reject notions of truth and objective knowledge. Trustworthiness and credibility have been used as alternative measures of the quality of qualitative research (Yin, 2011). Research should be *transparent*, procedures and data should be described and documented for external review. It should withstand scrutiny from others. It should also follow an orderly set of procedures to minimise careless work (*methodic-ness*). It must *adhere to evidence*, that is, research must be based on an explicit set of evidence. Conclusions are drawn in reference to data from each perspective, with testing for consistency across sources and with efforts to seek out contrary cases. In other words data that has been collected and analysed fairly. However, within this either/or framework (trustworthy/not trustworthy; credible/ not credible) such conceptions work to de/legitimise social knowledge, research practice, and experiential possibilities (Aguinaldo, 2004).

Aguinaldo (2004) proposes that validity should not be conceived as a determination (valid/not valid; trustworthy/not trustworthy) which serves to foreclose knowledge assessed not valid or trustworthy, but as a continual process of interrogation. This interrogation necessitates multiple and sometimes contradictory readings of the function any particular research representation can serve. Research findings are conceptualised as representations and should be scrutinised for their realist, critical, deconstructive, and reflexive narrative functions. Realist narrative assumes an objective world and functions to tell us what is and therefore, what we should do; Critical narrative highlights political structures that shape the social world within uneven social relations; deconstructive narrative emphasises the social construction of narratives, works against the production of foreclosures and encourages proliferation of possibilities; reflexive narratives make known the constitutive role of the researcher and the process through which her reading is selected from an infinite number of possible readings. Researchers should make their choices and the reason for those choices explicit so they can be held up to scrutiny.

31

Reliability, in the positivist framework, is the extent to which research findings can be replicated. As Eisenhart (2006) states experimental procedures can only works if variables being measured do not change over time, are not variably influenced by circumstances and are not affected by human intention or desire. In education and other social practices this is not the case. Educational contexts are varied, dynamic, over-determined and inter-related. Thus experiments done in one context using finite number of variables are unlikely to be reproducible in others and their results are unlikely to be realised elsewhere. She gives the example of the Tennessee class size experiment, which identified a causal relationship between smaller class sizes and an improvement in student achievement. This experiment, which cost millions of dollars and took over a decade of work, could not be replicated in California and when it came time to apply the findings the economic context had changed and the state could no longer afford to reduce class sizes to the level that worked in the experiment. She puts forward interpretive and practical science, which seek to answer questions of what is going on but also how and why, as alternatives. These challenge experimental science, making it a costly, irrelevant and ineffective approach to learning what needs to be known to take action on pressing educational problems. Qualitative researchers often measure the quality of research against its utility or usefulness, for instance in revealing social injustice or resulting in positive action (Gergen, 2009, Aguinaldo, 2004, St Pierre & Roulston, 2006). Considering the Government's goals for a fully inclusive education system this research has the potential to be very useful in guiding practice around specialist teachers and how they are utilised in a way which can further the Government's aims and provide the best support to student with high and very high needs and their teachers.

The Case Study method

The case study method has been chosen for this project. A case study is an empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident. This is the case when the context is highly pertinent to the phenomenon. The inquiry copes with a technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest that data points. There will be multiple sources of evidence that will provide multiple perspectives and ways to explore the phenomenon. It often benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to

guide data collection. It shares all the features of qualitative research that Yin (2011) identified.

This project will investigate the role of the ORS funded SEIT within a 'real life' context. The unique context will guide and shape the practice of the SEIT and so without including this information much of the meaning of the teacher's actions will be lost. A case study inquiry will cope with the large number of variables of interest likely to be present.

Because operational links can be traced over time, case studies allow researchers to find functional relationships, as experiments involving comparisons and correlations do. But unlike experimental comparisons which tend to ignore differences within two comparison groups, a case study allows researchers to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. For this reason, they are particularly useful (but not restricted to) when the researcher is asking how and why questions about complex social phenomenon, but has no control over behavioural events (Yin, 2009) as in this case.

Because experimental variables cannot be manipulated a full variety of evidence must be gathered. A case study often takes evidence from documentation, interviews, direct observation of the phenomenon, and sometimes artefacts. Multiple sources of evidence contribute to the credibility and believability of the research (Yin, 2009). This research gathered data from multiple sources in order to gain a deep understanding of the case as well as to increase its credibility.

The bulk of the data was gathered through interviews with participants directly involved with the case. Kvale (2007) described interviews as key venues for exploring the ways participants experience and understand their world as they describe in their own words their activities, experiences and opinions. Interviews can provide researchers with unique information or a new interpretation about a phenomenon (Stake, 2010). A qualitative interview takes the form of a guided conversation (Yin, 2009) but goes beyond a spontaneous social exchange. It is a careful questioning and listening approach with the purpose of obtaining thoroughly tested knowledge (Kvale, 2007). The researcher has a line of inquiry and so sets boundaries around the interview, but the participant must be allowed to colour the interview, and even step outside the boundaries at times (Yin, 2011). Carefully considered follow ups and probes from the

interviewer will allow the participant to clarify and refine their meaning (Yin, 2011; Stake 2010). It is possible the interview may elicit change in the participant as part of the process of self-reflection.

They are not an egalitarian dialogue among equal partners, but have a specific power asymmetry. The interviewer sets the stage, controls the sequence and uses the outcome for his/her own purposes. While they should be a positive experience for participants it should be noted that they could also elicit anxiety and defensiveness. It is vital participants give informed consent, their confidentiality is secured, and the potential consequences to participants have been considered. Interviews have been described as the construction site for knowledge (Kvale, 2007), the interviewer must be aware of their own role in that knowledge production.

The weaknesses of interviews are that responses may be biased, participants may have poor recall, and poor or inadequate articulation (by the interviewer or interviewee) may distort meaning. Reflexivity may also be an issue, where the interviewee gives what the interviewer wants to hear (Yin, 2009). The interviewer must be careful to maintain an unbiased and neutral manner throughout the interview but also recognise that bias remains (Yin, 2011). For this reason it is necessary to corroborate interviews with data from other sources (Yin 2009).

Direct observations, both formal and informal, provide valuable additional information about phenomenon (Yin 2009), the routines, rituals and interactions of the participants (Yin 2011). This information is seen and perceived directly by the researcher, and is not filtered by others such as in verbal reports or documents (Yin, 2011; Stake 2010). Events are seen in real time and in their context. It is possible to see the influence the context has on the phenomenon. Reflexivity is an issue here also, the presence of an observer may influence the behaviour of those present, causing events to proceed differently than they would otherwise (Yin, 2009; 2010), and this must be taken into account. Selectivity can also be a problem with direct observations. Broad coverage is difficult without a team of observers and this can result in a lack of representativeness. Multiple observations reduce these issues but are time consuming and costly. For these reasons it was decided that observations were beyond the scope of this research.

Documentation and archival records can corroborate and augment evidence from other sources. Unlike interviews and observations they are stable and can be reviewed repeatedly. They contain exact names, references and details of events, which can be very helpful, and can cover a long span of time, many events and many settings. However, they can be difficult to find and often require permission to be accessed. Documents were written for a specific purpose and audience outside of the case study and researchers must be aware of this bias. Inferences can be made from documents, which may be worthy of further investigation but should not be treated as definitive findings (Yin, 2009). Another difficulty which can arise is an overabundance of materials available. Here researchers must be selective and include only the most pertinent material. A limited amount of documentation was gathered for this research to augment the data obtained from interviews.

Case studies have been criticized for lacking rigor, for producing massive, unreadable documents, and having little basis for generalizability (Yin, 2009). Flyvbjerg (2011) argued such criticisms are the result of misconceptions about case studies. Rather than containing a bias towards verification (a tendency to confirm researchers preconceived notions) the case study contains a greater bias towards falsification of preconceived notions than towards verification. This is because the case study can test views directly in relation to phenomenon as they unfold in practice. Because the study objects (participants) can "talk back", they can correct the researcher of any incorrect assumptions and also provide new variables previously not considered. Participants in this research had the opportunity to correct the researcher during the interviews and when they reviewed the transcript.

Researchers can increase the rigour and validity of their research by using multiple sources of evidence, establishing a chain of evidence and having key informants review a draft case study report. Reliability can be increased by making as many steps as operational as possible and conducting research as if someone were always looking over your shoulder (Yin 2009).

Flyvbjerg (2011) argued that while summarising case studies is often difficult, especially as concerns case process rather than case outcomes, this is more often due to the properties of the reality studied than to the case study as a research method. It is often not desirable to summarize or generalise case studies.

Though case studies represent unique cases, it is possible to strive to identify implications for other situations (Yin, 2011). The 'force of example' and transferability are underestimated as a source of scientific development (Flyvbjerg, 2011). This is known as analytical generalisation and is a reasoned judgement about the extent to which findings from one study can guide what might occur in another situation. It is based on the similarities and differences of the cases on relevant attributes and is usually the responsibility of the receiver of the information to decide on the relevance rather than the researcher. As this case is set within the current education system and its typical provisions there are likely to be many similarities to other cases which will make it possible to generalise what was found to other similar cases. Providing rich, dense, detailed descriptions, longitudinal information and multidisciplinary assessment are helpful to this process (Yin, 2011). It is also possible to generalise to theoretical propositions, rather than populations or universes (Yin, 2009).

Case study context

This case study was conducted in the context of a primary school that has an ORS funded student with very high and complex needs receiving support from a SEIT provided by the local special school outreach program. The case was identified from the researcher's contacts as a SEIT. The school is a semi-rural school with a roll of 202. It caters for students from Years 1 to 6 and has a culturally diverse student roll ranking as decile 5. The school has a history of positive ERO reports (ERO report, 2011). Molly, the ORS funded student, was in her third year enrolled at the school and is currently placed in a composite year 1/2 class. All the participants except the principal, who started at the beginning of the year, had been involved in her education in some way since she enrolled. Both teachers taught Molly in her first year of school as well as the current year. The SEIT came on board soon after she enrolled. Molly has Cerebal Palsy which severely compromises all areas of her functioning including gross and fine motor control as well as communication. She is non-verbal and is learning to use augmented technology to help her communicate. As her needs are very high she has input from a wide range of professionals as well as the class teacher, full time teacher's aide, and the SEIT; these include physiotherapist, occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, augmented communication device specialists, and a special education advisor.

Participants

Participants in this research include the team working to support Molly's learning and social experiences in her local school. This included the ORS funded SEIT, the 0.6 class teacher and the 0.4 class teacher, the teacher's aide, Molly's mother, the school Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator (SENCO), the Ministry of Education Special Education Advisor (SEA) and the new school principal.

All the teachers (including the SEIT) were experienced, having at least 10 years' experience in class teaching. The two class teachers had worked together before, as the 0.4 teacher had done the 0.6 class teacher's classroom release for a number of years. Neither teacher had any additional post graduate qualifications in teaching students with disabilities but had attended professional development during the course of their careers. The SEIT had worked in special education in South Africa for a number of years and in New Zealand for 5 years, two in a special education setting and three in the outreach role. At the time of the research she was completing post-graduate qualifications in teaching students with Autism.

At the time of data collection a new Principal had just been appointed to the school. He had worked with the special school outreach service in his previous school.

The SEA has worked with the SEIT on a number of other cases for the last three years. She went to the Ministry of Education as a very experienced classroom teacher and has worked as a SEA for over 10 years.

Procedures

Interviews. All the participants were interviewed once at a time and location of their choosing. Interviews lasted between 45 to 60 minutes for key participants (SEIT, class teacher and teacher's aide, principal, mother) and less for other participants. An interview schedule was used as a guideline for topics covered (Appendix A), but a semi-structured, open questioning approach was employed so that opportunities for free interaction, clarification and discussion could be pursued through open-ended questions. Interviews were recorded, with participants' agreement, and transcribed for analysis.

Relevant documents were also collected. These included the schools ERO report, most recent Individual Education Plan (IEP), and relevant school policies.

Data analysis. The data collected was analysed inductively for emerging patterns in the narratives around the activities of the support teacher and each participant's experience of the support. Inductive approaches are intended to aid an understanding of meaning in complex data through the development of summary themes or categories from the raw data (data reduction) which establish a clear link to the research aims (Thomas, 2003). First the transcripts were read several times by the researcher and once by thesis supervisors to become familiar with the content and identify 'themes'. A coding frame was discussed and developed (Appendix B); this was derived from the research aims and from multiple readings of the transcripts. The transcripts were coded and categories were refined and revised in order to create summary categories which capture key aspects of the themes in the raw data which were most relevant to the research questions. Appropriate quotes which conveyed a core theme were selected. The interview transcripts were also reviewed against the provisional Specialist Teacher Outreach Practice Framework (STOPF).

Ethics

The study was approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee. The Massey University code of ethical conduct for research involving human participants has guided the analysis of the ethical issues present in this project. The study involves interviews with a parent, teachers, teacher's aide and a school principal who comprise part of the team working to support a disabled child at primary school. Confidentiality, anonymity and the right of withdrawal are central features of the study. However the study took place in one school, and participants will have access to the final thesis if they wish to read it. In this regard complete confidentiality and anonymity could not be guaranteed amongst the participants themselves should they choose to read the thesis.

The researcher recruited the scool and participants by approaching the scool principal about the possibility using the school as the case study. With his agreement a letter was sent to the board explaining the study and requesting their permission to approach the parents and staff involved in the case for their informed consent to participate (Appendix C). The parents of the ORS funded student were contacted via telephone by the researcher to explain the research and ask if they were comfortable for the case study to be based around their child. They indicated they were happy for the

research to proceed so information sheets and consent forms (Appendix D) were sent to them and delivered to the other participants via the school. Once the participants had returned the consent forms via the envelopes provided the researcher contacted them to arrange a time and place for interviews.

The study considers the establishment and development of roles and responsibilities amongst the adults who provide direct support to the disabled child. It was therefore important to have in place some procedures for ensuring that the research supports positive professional relationships and does not undermine these. Participants were advised on the information sheet and consent form that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any point, decline to answer any questions they were not comfortable with and review a transcript of their interview and to modify or remove any data they did not wish to have included in the study. Interview material was carefully reviewed for anything that may be potentially damaging to the relationships of the adults in the study. Data have been presented factually but with respect for participants as they continue to work together in a team. The focus has been on reporting in such a way that the elements of effective interprofessional teamwork as well as the challenges are addressed in ways that advance knowledge about teaching and learning in diverse classrooms.

All identifying features were removed or changed for this report. Participants are identified by their role or by pseudonym.

The special education itinerant outreach teacher who participated in this project is a work colleague of the researcher. The researcher is also working as a specialist itinerant teacher in the same outreach service. The researcher and participant do not work in the same schools or with the same students.

<u>**Chapter 4**</u>

Results

This chapter is structured around the three main research questions, with findings presented under relevant thematic headings. Data from the interviews are used to exemplify and support the findings.

The research questions are:

1. What is the main role/s of a specialist outreach teacher and how do they spend their time in schools?

2. How do class teachers and teacher's aides understand and experience the support of the specialist outreach teacher?

3. How has the support of the specialist education teacher changed teachers' practices and/or attitudes towards inclusion?

1. Special Education Itinerant Teacher roles

A key area of focus in the study was the roles and responsibilities of the SEIT as perceived by the eight participants. The provisional specialist teacher outreach service framework (PSTOSF) states the roles and responsibilities of the SEIT include supporting the student, class teacher/s, teacher's aides, other teachers involved with the student, specialist service practitioners, the student's parents and family/whanau when providing specialist teaching and learning support (Ministry of Education, 2011). It lists a number of activities the SEIT may complete which relate to teaching and learning activities for the student, and to the SEITs role as part of the student's support team. Analysis of the interview transcripts in reference to the activities listed in the PSTOPF is summarised in Table 1. Any additional activities not in the PSTOPF but which are described in interviews have been added to the table and appear in italics.

Table 1. Roles fulfilled by the specialist outreach teacher as described by participants

Teaching and learning:	.6 teacher	.4 teacher	SEIT	Teacher's aide	principal	parent	SENCO	GSE
Assessing learning needs			*	*				*
Implementing and monitoring programs	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Teaching students			*			*		
Modelling good practice	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Assisting teacher with differentiation	*		*	*	*	*		*
Assisting teacher to adapt & prepare materials and resources	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Enable student input			*	*				
Monitoring progress and developing next steps	*	*	*	*		*		*
Assessing the need for specialist services (n/a, all in place)								
Attending and supporting IEP meetings	*		*	*			*	
Contribute to the IEP process			*	*			*	
Providing PD to teacher & TA	*		*	*				
Collaboration:								
Collaborative planning to implement IEP goals			*TA	*	*	*TA	*	*
Gather feedback on goals and reflect		*		*				
Integrate specialist services interventions into programmes	*		*	*	*			
Share specialist knowledge and skills with the class teacher/s, teacher's aide and team	*	*	*	*	*	*		
Coordinating services		*	*			*		
Liaising with specialist services and other agencies			*					
Liaising with family			*			*		
Supporting students transitions (n/a)								
Share resources			*	*	*			
Support and encouragement			*	*				
social club	*		*	*	*	*		
Links to the Special School(e.g. music)					*	*		

The activities mentioned by most participants are in bold and included implementing and monitoring programs; modelling good practice (mostly to the teacher's aide); assisting the teacher (aide) with differentiation; assisting the teacher (aide) to adapt & prepare materials and resources; sharing 'specialist knowledge' and skills with the class teacher/s, teacher's aide and team; Collaborative planning to implement IEP goals. The other activity which was described by most participants was extending the student's social opportunities beyond the school with the SEIT led M&M social club.

The SEIT was at the school for about 3 hours in the morning of the same day each week. Although participants saw the SEIT's role as primarily involved with teacher support, the interviews also revealed that the SEIT spent the bulk of her time in the school working directly with Molly and the teacher's aide. Contact with the teachers was limited to the 0.6 teacher around class time, before school started at 8.30am, during the morning tea break, or via email.

SEIT activities which relate to teaching and learning

Participants indicated that most of the SEITs time in school was spent teaching Molly directly, modelling teaching strategies for the teacher's aide, gathering feedback from the previous week, implementing and monitoring teaching and learning activities.

The SEIT has also set up a social opportunity for Molly with another student she supports who has the same type of disability. They meet up twice a term during school hours in a community setting to engage in a social activity together with support. The parents of both students have also been able to link up through this and be a source of support to each other:

> *0.6 TEACHER: the best thing I think that she has done for Molly is introducing her to Michelle.*

> *TEACHER'S AIDE: The SEIT has brought in another special needs child and that's been amazing, honestly, it's been so worthwhile. I don't think it has anything to do with the fact they both have special needs either. I think it's just the fact they've both been given the opportunity and the time to do that...you don't normally make that opportunity available to other people. [The SEIT] has really made a point and we've made it happen. It's been amazing and if we did that with*

a few more kids it would probably blossom, it's been an awesome eye opener. A good starting point.

The interview with Molly's mother gives an insight into how parents might struggle to enrich their children's social opportunities and experiences.

RESEARCHER: What about the social side of things?

MOLLY'S MOTHER: Yes, so that's really the side I was a bit ... feel like (how to say)... I feel helpless ...but the SEIT was very good. She makes a few relationships with ... the little girl in another School, Michelle.'

Collaborative role of the SEIT

She also worked collaboratively with other professionals on Molly's support team to coordinate and integrate specialist services into Molly's class programmes. These included speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist and Talklink service providers.

SEIT: we try to overlap some of our sessions so we can learn from each other, [the OT] can see what I'm doing, I can see what she's doing, and how can I support her program and how can she support mine. We're not pulling in different directions at the moment, our work is overlapping. We are using skills we have learned from each other...by learning from each other and modelling to each other we have been able to adapt our own planning and programming so that we incorporate the skills we have learned.

This did not happen immediately however, the SEIT, the 0.6 teacher and the teacher's aide all describe the work of the team initially as very fragmented:

SEIT: we had the speech and language therapist, the occupational therapist, the physiotherapist, we had Talklink, and the (0.6) teacher and the teacher's aide and myself on the team and we all had ideas, but we didn't gel...getting the team to trust each other and finding a way to work together was quite an experience.

0.6 TEACHER: I remember it (the first meeting) clear as day. There was the occupational therapist, the speech therapist, the Special Education Advisor, the parents, the principal, the other class teacher, the SEIT and a representative from

the preschool. There was like 12 people around this table... and OT wanted this and SEA wanted that, PT wanted this and I wanted this...and of course the parents wanted this huge thing, and they wanted it done now, because you want the best for your kids no matter what.

Participants also talked about the SEIT's knowledge and experience and how this supported problem solving around the various barriers that came up:

PRINCIPAL: they are a resource... they've got skills and suggestions and programmes'. And because ... you know the SEIT teachers have been around all the other schools, they've seen "Oh look we had the same problem in this school and this is how we solved it," and "Oh okay thank you." Like that, so yeah, so that's how I see that resource being used. A bit more hands-on than an RTLB.

The key participants (teachers, SEIT and teacher's aide) all talked about a lack of knowledge and experience, and feelings of anxiety and defensiveness which may have been barriers to inter-professional practice and collaboration at the beginning.

SEIT: none of us actually had any experience in dealing with Molly and the level of needs she had. Just her physical needs were overwhelming and when we started working we actually just didn't know where to start.

SEIT: Early on in the process we would have been more defensive I think if someone was there watching you.

The 0.6 teacher talked about her initial feelings when she realised the extent of Molly's physical needs and Molly's parents' expectations with regards to her physical development at the school.

0.6 TEACHER: it was scary, really scary...it's like, hang on a minute, we're not physios, we are not teaching her to walk. We're actually on the social and academic side here.

RESEARCHER: It was outside your area, as you say, previous experience and training?

0.6 TEACHER: Yeah really outside our comfort zone, yeah, way outside.

It took time for the team to build relationships and trust necessary to work together effectively, and the SEIT identified this time as a critical element in the development of good interprofessional practice:

SEIT: it's about taking time to say hello, to catch up with them...and to build that trust first before working with each other, otherwise it's really difficult.

For this reason changes to the team were not welcomed by the SEIT.

SEIT: You know you'd just get to know the speech and language therapist and she'd leave and you'd get another one.

None of the participants talked about the SEIT engaging in on-going collaborative work with the class teachers. Though collaborative planning to implement goals was mentioned by most of the participants this related more to the SEIT and the teacher's aide than to the teacher and SEIT or teacher and teacher's aide. The SEIT suggested that dedicated time was needed to support an effective working relationship with the classroom teacher, particularly around the IEP meeting:

SEIT: the barriers have been not enough time with the teacher. I don't think that time needed to plan together is really valued (in general). You've had that time to have your IEP meeting, and that's all you need whereas I would like time after the meeting to draw it up with the teacher and say, "Now how are we going to do that?" How can I contribute the knowledge and skills that I have if we don't sit and work together? How can I understand the frustrations of the teacher when I say, "Use this", and it's not practical in a classroom situation? The biggest barrier is the time after the IEP to work together and to plan and program together.

Supports for interprofessional collaboration

The SEIT found it easier to work collaboratively with the class teacher(s) when they were proactive about planning for Molly and noted that it took time to develop a sense of joint responsibility for Molly:

SEIT: when I got there in the mornings it was like 'I'm busy, I've got work to do, I've got 27 other children to deal with'... now she will take the time during lunchtime or morning tea to -sit and chat about Molly's learning.

The SEIT attributed the teacher's initial response to her feeling overwhelmed. The teacher also described feeling unprepared and ill-equipped at this stage. As the SEIT and class teacher worked alongside each other a collegial relationship developed over time and the class teacher's confidence grew. She then engaged readily with the SEIT about how to teach Molly and support her learning.

Opportunities to work together as a team helped to develop more collaborative practices. One example given was opportunities for inter-professional learning when some team members attended professional development together as a team with Molly in mind. The teacher's aide and SEIT attended two courses with the speech and language therapist and the occupational therapist. This helped them come to a consensus as a team about how Molly's priority needs could be addressed in an integrated way:

> *SEIT: the OT had been telling us to follow this program, I did know about the program but I knew we couldn't really run it as it was presented at the workshop in the classroom. We had to make adjustments for Molly. She (OT) couldn't really understand why we were making those adaptations, then we went to this training together, and that was the real change for us. We said 'ok now we all understand what we want and we could explain why we had made changes. And because we went as a team, you're also more accountable to each other, because when you said 'are you doing the guided reading?' we all knew what we were talking about. So that training together as a team was great. It made a big difference, yeah.*

Meeting regularly and good communication was also described as helpful in getting the team to work together more successfully. The team meets every term to review the IEP, the other professionals on the team go into the school regularly and stay in touch with each other by email.

It was difficult too for the team to manage the time to work together, especially when the inter-professional team have commitments to other students and other schools. It was necessary to build relationships with the inter-professional team and for members to work in a flexible way.

> *SEIT: I know if I email any of the ladies (on the team) and say can you come and see me while I'm there they will make that effort but I think that's come through building that relationship with them.*

The support of the school was also crucial to allowing the team to work collaboratively, with both the SEIT and principal commenting on this:

> *SEIT: I'm welcome to work in the class with the student, and while I'm working with the student they don't release the TA to do something else, but the TA stays with me. Another thing that's really important is that when we have our IEPs they're done in school time, because they give us that opportunity to meet together, at a time that's convenient to everybody, so that is good. Also they have released the teacher and the teacher's aide to go to workshops, and I think they even paid for me to go to the one, they wanted us to go as a team so they were quite happy to support that, and get somebody else in for the day to look after the class.*

> *PRINCIPAL: And also the biggest part of it (my role) is just ensuring that there is the release, the time and the organisation so that when we have the IEPs for the many people who - I think next door is not big enough for it - yeah, just making sure that that can happen.*

School support and flexibility has also allowed the SEIT to bring in some activities outside the role described by the PSTOPF which have been described as worthwhile by all the key participants. Molly has been able to access group music sessions with the outreach school's specialist music teacher through the link the SEIT has with the school:

> *MOTHER: it's just another good thing that's supported from [the special school] again, we have a Tuesday music lessons in that [special school satellite] class, she's already starting to know what is going to happened and then she copies them. They normally do the names and they would point to each letters. So before, I hold her hands and I would point it, but this Tuesday she put her hands there and I... she actually move all by herself. I just hold her like this and she move like all by herself! So she got the concept. Yeah so I quite like it! I like it, I enjoy it myself there too...Yeah, she loves music and she loved it the way... with those techniques from that setting (special education).*

Molly's mother and the school principal both expressed that they valued the link the SEIT represented with the local special school (like keeping a foot in the door):

PRINCIPAL: Well cause the other 0.1 goes to [the special school] and so we have support from that and access to the resources which I think is great; you know cause they're all there - the specialists and so forth. So at least there's a sharing of the load. And that way at any stage if the parents choose to use [the special school] or any of the satellites then there is that relationship there which is good, because I mean that's going to have to be a reality; something that parents will have to decide either way.

MOTHER: we're not unrealistic or think she will be just exactly like the normal kids, but we want to push a little bit on the academic side, and then [the special school] was involved we think brilliant because we always know even if we go to the mainstream (school), you will have [the special] school involved and the special teacher involved. So, yeah, we think it's a great combination. It's worked out perfect for us.

An important part of the role for the SEIT was changing attitudes and expectations about students with special needs, and building an understanding that all students are capable and able to learn:

SEIT: ...the biggest thing is helping the teacher see the student as a capable learner because a lot of times teachers (can) focus on the negatives and are so overwhelmed by that that they miss the opportunities to teach and to connect with that child.

2. The class teachers and teacher's aides experience of the support of the specialist outreach teacher?

The teacher's aide's experience

Because she has a very high level of complex needs Molly has full time teacher's aide support under the ORS scheme. In discussing the role of the TA, participants in this study highlighted the key role played by the TA in the inclusion and teaching of Molly. Participants described the TA as primarily responsible for meeting Molly's learning, social and physical needs, liaising with the family, adapting and preparing learning materials, trialling equipment, and collaborating with other professionals and incorporating programs into schedule.

Meeting Molly's physical, social and learning needs. All the participants agreed the TA was primarily responsible for the majority of Molly's needs in class:

0.6 TEACHER: I would say the teacher's aide is primarily responsible (for Molly's learning) because she is the one that's with her all the time.

0.4 TEACHER: that [academic pressure like working on goals] falls on the teacher's aide, my pressure is making sure she is included in the classroom [e.g. mat time].

Adapting and preparing learning materials. The teacher's aide also had the role of creating Clicker 6 grids so that Molly could access learning activities through assistive technology:

TEACHER'S AIDE: my main role is to meet the needs of Molly, all her physical needs, and I carry out all her educational stuff, and set up her stuff on her computer for her to do, interact with the other kids at morning tea and lunchtimes.

Liaising with family. The TA was the primary liaison for Molly's mother:

PARENT: we [parent and the teacher's aides] are quite close... we basically talk every day before and after school...I have more talk with the teacher's aides because the classroom teacher's busy.

Collaborating with other professionals. The TA also worked with any other professionals who came in to support Molly, such as the OT or physiotherapist.

The SEIT also stated that the teacher's aide held responsibility for Molly's educational experiences, but she felt that the teacher should be holding more of this responsibility:

SEIT 'it should be the teacher [who has responsibility for the social and learning experiences of Molly], who is at the moment is the teacher's aide...(during SEIT sessions in class) we set things up (e.g. modified teaching and learning activities or social experiences), her and I, and she runs with it (will complete the activity/ies throughout the week or use the modification in other areas as appropriate).

The teacher's aide and other key participants described a number of competing demands on Molly's schedule that meant the teacher's aide was positioned by the team as a central ('lead') figure in Molly's education:

TEACHER'S AIDE: I probably hold the lead role and everyone just rolls around and lets me know what to do, I'm kind of the rock in the middle, everyone lets me know what they would like or discusses how things could happen and I make them happen...as best as I can.

From the IEP meeting discussion notes and goals there are a number of activities to be included in Molly's schedule and the IEP notes and participant interviews indicate responsibility for making sure these happen ultimately rests with the teacher's aide:

- Molly to be more active at school
- Molly to have opportunities to stand on her own
- toileting to be scheduled
- Molly to be able to sit independently; sitting positions programmed into the day
- Trial powered wheelchair for Molly (according to interviews TA implements and reviews assistive technology)
- Vantage lite communication device to be used twice daily
- Clicker 6 grids and pictures to be prepared by teacher's aide or teacher (in interviews this was described as the teacher's aides job)

It is the teacher's aide, sometimes with the support of the SEIT, who finds time in the schedule for Molly to have these opportunities, there is no data indicating that there is any monitoring done beyond the SEITs weekly questioning, this indicates it may be left to the teacher's aide to make sure these things take place regularly.

Getting the equipment needed for Molly was not a fast efficient process initially. This improved over time and with experience. The teacher's aide took the lead on this process:

0.4 TEACHER: I mean I know just trying to get the wheelchair and that went backwards and forwards and then a chair for sitting on and it's like, oh we just

want her to be right and stuff gets left here. And you think take it 'cause some other child needs it, you know.

The teacher's aide is described by many participants as very proactive:

SEIT: Also the teacher's aide is very proactive...She initiates quite a bit, and I think even though you work interprofessionally, someone does need to initiate it.

Relationship between the SEIT and TA. The teacher's aide had been working in that role for four years at the same school but this as the first time she had worked with a student with a high and complex level of educational need, and she reported that her only other experience or qualifications came from being a mother . This role did not qualify her to be an expert on teaching Molly, however:

TEACHER'S AIDE: the bottom line is I'm not a teacher, and I'm also not a qualified special needs teacher, and I don't really know anything about Molly's condition.

TEACHER'S AIDE: I'd like a bit more information, courses or learning about Molly's condition for what it is.

The teacher's aide reported that she received the most support from the SEIT:

TEACHER'S AIDE: I'd be lost without my SEIT...she's been my rock, I can go to her if I have any problems. Having someone who can give you a boost and who understands what you're going through can make a huge difference to how you feel about yourself and your job.

She reported that the SEIT brought in new ideas and ways of doing things that made it possible to see that Molly could achieve success as a learner. She'd check in every week on how things had been going and checked to see whether the TA required any advice or assistance:

TEACHER'S AIDE: We've all really pushed each other along.

Learning about assistive technology. The teacher's aide reported like all the participants that the most positive impact on Molly's learning and inclusion came from assistive technology in the form of switch accessible computer and the communication device:

TEACHER'S AIDE: when we got onto switches it was amazing. You know, the door just opened, somebody unlocked the door so that made a huge, huge difference…that was the first sign of success…something that she could do.

The teacher's aide reported she sometimes got an hour a week to work on setting up Molly's program on the computer. She would have liked more time and training in working with the computer and felt it was 'huge and endless'.

The teacher's experience

Teachers described feeling overwhelmed when Molly first enrolled. Teachers indicated Molly's inclusion was possible because of the presence of the teacher's aide full time and the support of the SEIT. They identified a number of factors which could act as a barrier to Molly's inclusion and interprofessional practice. These include physical arrangements like the size of classrooms as well as systemic factors like the large number of consultative professionals on the team.

Feeling overwhelmed and lacking knowledge. Both teachers reported feeling quite overwhelmed by Molly's level of needs and the ability of the school to meet them:

0.6 TEACHER: it was scary, really scary. And then when mum and dad said our aim for her when she leaves the school is she's going to walk out of here, we just about walked out of the room. It's like, no hang on a minute, we're not physio's, we are not teaching her to walk…So the expectations of us were huge, well we felt they were.

This concern persists even after two years:

0.4 TEACHER: It worries me as to are we giving her enough specialised, you know, physical care almost for her.

The teachers appreciated the modelling the SEIT could provide:

0.4 TEACHER: You can see how to interact with Molly by the way she does it. Again it's all about having good role models for how to interact.

The restrictions of the physical environment (space, access, appropriate equipment) were a source of stress and frustration to the teachers. Building modification took a long time; in fact there was still some work to do two years later:

SENCO : I think the most difficult time was when we were redoing the school for her...

RESEARCHER: did it take a long time getting everything in place?

SENCO: yes, I think they're still...I don't know that the bathroom is completely proper to the standards of these people in the Ministry, but she's using it though. And I know the ramp out here, there was an issue with that because it was too high a gradient or something, so the building inspector wouldn't sign it off.

RESEARCHER: so lots of niggles

SENCO: yeah so there were lots of little bits and pieces. The new bit they put outside room 1 and 2 and now the room 2s door keeps dropping and it's cracked their door glass.

Despite the modifications the physical environment still presented barriers to Molly's inclusion. Most of the classrooms were not big enough to accommodate her needs and this restricted Molly's ability to move through the school with her peers:

0.6 TEACHER: one of the bigger shocks for us when she arrived, was how much space she actually takes up and being her third year at school mum wanted her to go through with her first peers but these old classrooms are the only classrooms big enough to cope with her and all her stuff and how much physical room she takes up. In a chair she takes up a lot of room. When she's sitting she takes up a lot of room. When she's playing she takes up twice the amount of room of another child because she doesn't have complete control of her body. It's space. It's huge, it really is huge...there was no physical way we could actually shift her from this classroom.

Interprofessional work. Having such a large and complex team supporting Molly in class has its challenges for the teachers and school. The 0.6 teacher found the disruption caused when specialists visited the class difficult:

0.6 TEACHER: The number of bodies that come and go... you'd have three or four adults in the classroom at a time, that was the worst thing. Awful. And you're trying to teach your class and they are talking with the teacher's aide about getting her to sit properly in her chair and this conversation could go on for half

an hour. Adults voices are a different tone and everything to a child's voice so the kids are tuned into that adult voice...very, very distracting, it was really frustrating...if other schools or other classes are having this full inclusion with children with really high needs with full-time teacher's aides with all these attached people, all conversations must take place out of the classroom.

The goals created for Molly's inclusion in the initial IEP were overwhelming to the teachers at that stage in both number and scope. The teacher describes how overwhelming this was to her:

0.6 TEACHER: She will learn to communicate. She will learn to be toilet trained. She will learn to sit on a chair. She will learn her phonics. She will... and that was our first IEP. And we're like, she will come to class every day. She will sit without bashing another child. She will know when it's appropriate to speak out.

RESEARCHER: So your goals that you needed to be in place for her just to be in the classroom weren't even thought of in that meeting.

0.6 TEACHER: Yeah, so it was awful. It really was and it was just to get her into class 'cause we had no ramps or anything, it was all stairs and it took forever and she was always late. Trying to just get her to class on time and sitting on the mat with her teacher's aide...by 8.30 was huge. That took us a term. It's a slow process.

These challenges could be understood as arising from the fact that many of the other team members were from outside the school and operating in a consultative model. Therapists from the Ministry of Education do not often work directly with students; instead they work through school staff by leaving a plan for them to follow. This is efficient when therapists have high case loads and limited time for each student but can be frustrating for school staff:

0.6 TEACHER: Well it would, it would yeah, because they rock in, they spend half an hour, they leave again. Oh I know how a classroom operates, but that snapshot can change within five minutes after you leaving again.

0.4 TEACHER: But even trying to get in to observe her or whatever, it's sort of always hard to get the follow up quickly and promptly to make changes or to

improve things. So I think that's where we're lucky with the teacher's aide because she has got her ear to the ground and the SEIT, the fact that they connect every week makes a massive difference.

The class teachers also valued the contribution of other professionals who had a background in teaching, noting that these professionals understood the classroom context:

0.6 TEACHER: It became better when the special education advisor attended every meeting. Because she's from a teaching background she sits there and goes, "Now that's just silly".

Initially the teachers reported that they felt the other professionals on the team (such as therapists) were experts who 'knew best' with regards to Molly and the school team (teachers and teacher's aide) would just 'nod our heads and try' to put in place the things they recommended. They found expectations for them to implement such 'therapeutic' goals quite stressful and indicated they felt these were not their or the school's responsibility:

0.6 TEACHER: we just say no now...we learned after the first year that no actually it's not going to happen at school. That [e.g. toilet training] is not our job and it's not the teacher's aide's job.

Effective integrated practice. The data indicates that by spending time in the class with Molly and her supporters the therapists were able to work collaboratively to make a positive impact on Molly's classroom experiences and her outcomes. The support the 0.6 teacher appreciated the most, from all the other professionals including the SEIT, was practical support that would make an immediate impact on the classroom functioning. Some examples included the support the physiotherapist gives in showing the teacher's aide exercises to strengthen Molly's core, and the work the OT does in collaboration with the class teacher to help Molly develop the fine motor control she needs to press buttons accurately so she will be able to access her assistive technology:

0.6 TEACHER: So coming to an understanding about that, you know, saying do it this way and then she'll actually build up her strength. It's that sort of thing. It's not big stuff... Its little stuff so it makes it easier for Molly and it makes it easier for the teacher's aide to move her from place to place.

0.6 TEACHER: [the SEIT] give us stuff that we can actually use. You've got her group, her people up here who all want the best for Molly, but are all from different backgrounds and everything and then you've got us who are in the classroom and I think that group forgets the classroom. We are the classroom and the SEIT is here to make that work so that Molly is making progress, she is having success.

Teachers reported that they valued the specialist knowledge and experience the SEIT had to share which helped with problem solving:

0.4 TEACHER: I just feel like she's more in touch with technology, she's able to know what's out there. She knows everything at her fingertips. She sort of knows the systems and that's really important to have, couldn't live without her.

0.6 TEACHER: You flounder in the dark and it's so nice to have that, God forbid, we wouldn't have coped if we hadn't had that person.

0.6 TEACHER: "[SEIT] we need to do this, how do we do it?" And she'll come back and she'll go, "This is what I reckon you could try, try this or try that" or whatever. Or, "I've come across this really great activity, I was doing this research and I've come across this fantastic thing which is going to be great for Molly" or "Need to read this, here's the website, go and have a read of this." So she challenges us as adults as well which is really cool.

The SEIT also helped the teacher to see Molly's progress and capabilities as a learner:

0.6 TEACHER: And we don't notice stuff and she'll come in the following week and go, "Oh my God, when did she learn to do that?" Well it's only been a week, she can't have, you know.

Assistive technology. Assistive technology (switch accessible computer and communication device) was identified by the teachers as very important in enabling Molly access to the curriculum and providing a means of interacting with her environment. Helping the school to implement these has been an important part of the SEIT's role for the teachers as well as the teacher's aide:

0.4 TEACHER: it is really neat. Especially being able to write the stories and being able to do the talking, saying good morning and go through McDonalds and say toiletries 700 times to embarrass your teacher. Sitting in the library and pressing the one that says toiletries, so she's got a wicked sense of humour.

The teacher stayed informed of what was happening but like the other professionals, the SEIT shared her specialist knowledge with the teacher's aide rather than the teachers:

0.4 TEACHER: The SEIT gives me a report back about what was covered and things, that's emailed to me. So I actually have a paper trail as well.

Both class teachers confirmed that the SEIT worked closely with the teacher's aide while she was in class and valued this:

0.4 TEACHER: the fact that they (SEIT and teacher's aide) connect every week makes a huge difference because it motivates the teacher's aide to carry on for the next week.

The 0.6 teacher expressed concerns about spending time out of the class herself unless it was formally organised like the release day she took every fortnight:

0.6 TEACHER: It's a lot of time out of the classroom. Usually your class gets combined with another class, it's not a release day. It's not a reliever comes in, so it's not great on your class or the class next door.

3. How can the SEIT influence practices and/or attitudes

The teachers and the teacher's aide all reported that they valued the work of the SEIT. However, the data indicates that the SEIT may have had a greater impact on the teacher's aide's attitudes and practices than on those of the teachers.

Teachers

Viewing Molly in terms of capability. The data shows that the teachers' attitudes towards and expectations of Molly seem to have changed during the course of her inclusion at the school. Interviews indicated that initially the teacher's perceptions of Molly were around her disability and 'limitations'. With the help of the support team Molly was able to surpass these expectations and demonstrate to those around her that

she was a capable learner. Assistive technology was viewed as a key to understanding Molly's capability:

> *0.4 TEACHER: she was a beautiful little girl who came in and watched what was going on but had no way to participate. I think the most she probably ever did was choosing the colour pencil that someone would colour in her work for her and things. You know, there's a lot of things that she physically cannot do but as technology catches up...I didn't think that she would be reading robot words and all of that [as she is now]. Just didn't know how we could have done it but with the assistive technology it's just phenomenal.*

> *0.6 TEACHER: our saying around here now is 'never assume'... no it's not working, go back, start again, smaller steps. You're assuming that she knows this, or you're assuming that she can't.*

The SEIT also noticed some changes in the attitude and practice of the teacher over time. She indicated that at first the teacher did not engage with the SEIT around Molly's learning or in Molly's teaching, but over time her attitude and levels of engagement have increased:

> *SEIT: we [the teacher's aide and I] kept showing her [teacher] what Molly could do during the previous year so she became excited about Molly's learning, and started to see Molly as an able learner, and started to have a higher expectation whereas before, the first year she had Molly she saw her as the child with a disability and how are we ever going to do this?.... now she has seen that Molly can do more, and she is using clicker 6 to access her literacy skills, she's included in the reading, so she's made a plan to include Molly in the daily routine [class program].*

Seeing other professionals, including the SEIT, modelling good practice seems to have helped Molly's teachers recognise that they could work with Molly, and that she could be a successful learner:

> *0.4 TEACHER: I've seen better models of it. Last year's teachers were amazing with her. We've got another lady who volunteers on a Tuesday and a Thursday and she's amazing with her...I kept looking and I think oh I never did that with*

her. I never talked to her about that, and I thought well actually she wasn't able, you know, it was both of us weren't ready.

But despite learning about Molly's capability, teachers continued to hold some reservations at times about having students with complex disabilities in the class, particularly in relation to student behaviour:

0.6 TEACHER: It's a hard one because every child has the right to be included but sometimes I feel that it is to the detriment of the other children in the learning environment, especially if it's behaviour.

Teacher's aide

The teacher's aide was able to describe the direct effect that working with the SEIT had had on her practice. She described how the SEIT had shown her how she could actively expand Molly's social opportunities and incorporate her talking device throughout her day in meaningful activities. She also talked about how the SEIT showed her how she could engage Molly in learning activities and draw more from her using visual aids and the switch accessible computer.

The teacher's aide was enthusiastic about the future and the success Molly could experience with the assistive technology while the teacher was more reserved, particularly with regards to the communication device which all participants found difficult to come to grips with initially:

TEACHER'S AIDE: they knew that they device was really good in their opinion but they didn't give us time to get through the steps we needed before we looked at their device ... But it's a communication device, it will be amazing in the long term.

The teacher seemed to focus more on Molly's present physical abilities and on current practical classroom considerations rather than on the potential benefits for Molly and the school in the future once the device was mastered:

0.6 TEACHER: Well we've had Talk Link of course. And of course they wanted her to use a board with pictures and to take them off and point but she hasn't got the coordination and then she didn't even have the, to actually reach her arm out to point to a card or whatever. Or the strength to sit up so that it was in front of

her at the table because we only had the stool or the box for her to sit on. There was no actual down time sitting back in your chair like this, lounging back. So [our main priority has} been and it still is an efficient effective way [for her] to communicate.

A number of key themes which relate to the role of the SEIT emerged from interview data. These include the attitude of the teachers, confusion about respective roles and responsibilities of the teachers, teacher's aide and SEIT as well as other professionals, supports and barriers to interprofessional collaboration, and issues around processes of accountability and review.

Chapter 5

Discussion

Analysis of the data revealed that the SEIT was regarded as an important support in the inclusion of Molly, a student with very high needs. The aim of this service is to increase the capacity of schools and teachers to meet the needs of diverse students and thereby contribute to the development of a fully inclusive education system in New Zealand. According to social constructionism all knowledge and meaning are constructed through our interactions with others (Guba, 1990) and are transmitted within social contexts, through our culture, language, and thought. The participants in this study can be thought of as active in these processes, constructing ideas about the respective roles and responsibilities of teachers, SEITs, teacher's aides and other professionals involved in supporting diverse classrooms.

Inclusion is based on important ideas about social justice and constructions of 'one education system for all' in which professionals and others continuously work to develop schools where all children and young people are present, participating and learning at school. While the present study found that teachers working with SEITs can learn to view children with complex needs from a 'capability' perspective, there is also some evidence of the construction of two separate systems of education and two types of students – able-bodied and disabled. In this case, there remains a belief that Molly may require an education that is different to that experienced by her peers. This construction can shape the way in which Molly is perceived; the systems designed to support her learning and participation; and the ways in which participants (teachers and others) respond to Molly as a student, and to each other as professionals.

As Gergen (2009) points out, our social constructions can imprison us as we live out their implications. The study illustrates how these constructions and the related systems and attitudes can present some barriers to effective collaboration between the class teacher, SEIT and teacher's aide and Molly's inclusion. But through a process of critical reflexivity (Gergen, 2009), a practice of questioning ones beliefs and listening to alternate frames of reality (as presented through professional conversations amongst teachers, the SEIT and teacher's aide in this study), such barriers can be revealed thus supporting the development of new, more inclusive ways of working . A number of

supports for these processes were identified in the study and these are discussed in this chapter.

Attitude of the teachers to inclusion

Research indicates that teachers' attitudes to inclusion are crucial to its outcomes (Lyons, 2012). The right of children with disabilities to be educated with their peers in their local school has been established in New Zealand law since 1989 (New Zealand Government, 2004), yet participants in the present study held differing perspectives on inclusion as a basic human right of every child. Some participants expressed a view that some children might be included to the detriment of others.

The teachers expressed concerns about their ability to meet Molly's needs in class, particularly in the early stages. Neither teacher reported having any professional development or experience in teaching students with complex needs like Molly. This may have influenced them to believe they were not qualified to teach Molly and therefore placed that responsibility on others, some of whom, like the physiotherapist and SEIT, were seen as having the 'specialist' knowledge and skills necessary to work with Molly. The responsibility they felt for the rest of the class and lack of time to collaborate with the SEIT or to learn more about Molly meant that the bulk of Molly's educational and social experiences were in the hands of the teacher's aide. The teachers therefore spent little time instructing and communicating directly with Molly. This arrangement effectively separated Molly and the teacher's aide from the rest of the class and may also have limited their participation in on-going collaboration and decision making with others on the support team. These are all signs that the teachers were unable to engage in a teaching and learning relationship with Molly (Giangreco, 2003).

The 0.4 teacher was very positive about the importance of sharing knowledge and experience with others:

> *0.4 TEACHER: connecting with other people [would be helpful], the things that the teacher's aide and the SEIT can share with other people who have got children with cerebral palsy and their roles would be invaluable wouldn't it?*

But this quote indicates that there may be confusion around the roles and responsibility of key members of the support team. The teacher's aide and the SEIT are associated with Molly as 'experts' separate from the teachers and, as Giangreco et al.

(2005) warn, this may serve to separate students with disabilities in people's minds from the rest of the class and the class teachers. As Giangreco (2003) states, this is a lot of responsibility for teacher's aides who often have no qualifications, little experience in teaching, limited formal orientation to their role, and receive relatively low remuneration for their work.

Rutherford (2012) argues that teacher's aides and parents, who work closely with students for sustained periods of time, develop a personal knowledge of the student as a complex human being. As is often the case, Molly's teacher's aide (with the support of the SEIT) took on a role of advocate or ambassador, using her knowledge of and relationship with Molly to support her academic achievement, social participation and inclusion in school life, and sharing Molly's achievements with her peers and teachers to help change perceptions. The interview data indicates that there was indeed a shift in teacher's attitudes to Molly as a capable learner. However, due to systemic issues the teachers did not regularly work closely with Molly, and they found it difficult to develop their knowledge of her beyond her disability status (Rutherford, 2011). This attitude is unlikely to be limited to the participants of this research as the Special Education Advisor indicated:

> *SEA: I think that there is a group of teachers my age or perhaps a little younger who have never taught an ORS verified child and their attitude is 'I've never taught a child like this before, why should I have to teach one now?' I think sometimes it takes a shift from the teacher's experience maybe that puts them into an area they aren't perhaps as comfortable. Young teachers are usually great; they're willing to give it a go.*

Younger teachers may have learned about inclusion during their teacher training and have taught classes which include children with disabilities from the start of their career, as inclusion has been recognised in New Zealand policy, legislation and teaching practice. Ideas about social justice and the inclusion of students with disabilities may therefore be part of accepted practice for them. However some teachers may not have encountered these ideas in their training, and may have limited experience teaching students with disabilities. Inclusion could require a large shift in their long standing thinking and behaviour around teaching and learning. Carrington et al. (2012) argues teachers play a critical role as they have the power to include and to exclude students by

way of their knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs and values, and by the quality of their actions. The SEIT in this study supports this idea, describing how the attitude of class teachers can be a barrier to inclusion:

> *SEIT: the first thing I notice is the attitude of the teacher...some teachers say "I don't want this student in my class, they should be in a special school or at least out in a satellite unit". The teachers don't seem to see working with a special needs child as part of their class, they see it as something extra and...and...it's almost like an option for them.*

This may reflect 'special education' thinking, where disability is viewed as a problem within the individual which is in need of specialist 'treatment' (Carrington et al., 2012) and so falls outside the remit of teachers (Slee, 2012). This is in direct contrast to ideas about social justice that underpin inclusion (Mitchell, 2010) and places the problem in social, cultural and environmental arrangements which act as barriers to some students' inclusion at their local school and places the onus on school communities to identify those barriers and remove them (Carrington et al., 2012).

This thinking reflects the findings of Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) who found that teachers' attitudes were strongly influenced by the nature of children's and young people's impairments. Teachers were not positive about including students whose disabling characteristics would require extra instructional or management skills on their part. Molly's needs are highly complex. Interviews indicated that Molly's level of need for support at school was daunting even for the SEIT and the other professionals who have more experience supporting students with disabilities. The research indicates that teachers' attitudes and beliefs that they are not adequately trained or prepared to meet the needs of students with disabilities is a barrier to their taking responsibility for their learning (Lyons, 2012). In this case it seems that the very high level of needs associated with Molly's condition caused her teachers to question their own capability to teach her. Because the teachers felt they should or could not be responsible for Molly's education, they gave this responsibility to others, a process that could then limit opportunities for them to learn about Molly by engaging directly with her. In this regartd, there were limited opportunities for Molly's teachers to gain experience and develop the skills and confidence needed to overcome their initial anxiety.

As was discussed earlier, teachers who are highly engaged with students who have disabilities are poised to improve their overall teaching (Giangreco, 2003):

SEIT: I think the benefits as a teacher are you can grow a lot, if you allow yourself to experience learning with a child with special needs, you can really grow as a teacher and as a school. ... you can become so much better teacher.

This suggests that teachers who do not engage with their students who have disabilities will be unlikely to build the capability and confidence to teach diverse students and move inclusion forwards as the government intends (Ministry of Education, 2010).

Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) also found that while teachers are likely to show initial resistance to any innovative policy, their attitudes might become more positive later on, as they develop the necessary expertise to implement policy and experience success from their efforts. They concluded that the implementation of inclusion is likely to be a gradual process as teachers and schools develop the necessary values, understandings, systems, resources and expertise and will require careful planning, monitoring and review of the process. This case study suggests that an essential element (Lyons, 2012) to developing an inclusive education system is that teachers have the values (Carrington et al., 2012), time and supports (Dettmer et al., 2009; Hunt et al., 2003) that are needed for them to genuinely engage with students with disabilities in their classes.

Roles and responsibilities of teachers and teacher's aides in the classroom

The attitude of the teacher impacted on the role and responsibilities of the SEIT and the teacher's aide. Much of the research tells us that the respective roles and responsibilities are not always clearly defined or well understood by teachers, teacher's aides and special educators and that this is a barrier to effective collaboration and inclusion (Giangreco et al., 2005; Lyons, 2012; Devecchi et al., 2012; Rutherford, 2011; Howard & Ford, 2007). In this case, most of the participants agreed that Molly received most of her teaching and learning from the teacher's aide. The teacher's aide worked collaboratively with the family, the SEIT and numerous other professionals to try meet Molly's very high needs in the class setting. The teacher's aide was enthusiastic,

proactive and initiated much of the work around Molly, and her capability may have encouraged others to see her as the key to Molly's learning:

> *PRINCIPAL: whilst the teacher is very important, we've got a very good teacher's aide as well who knows and cares and really genuinely enjoys the job she's doing which helps [talking about transition to new class and teacher].*

As research has found, the teacher's aide can have considerable autonomy and responsibility in providing support to students like Molly. Molly's teacher's aide expressed concerns about her qualifications relating to some of these responsibilities (Downing et al., 2000; Howard & Ford, 2007). Lack of pre-service preparation or professional development of teachers in how to work effectively with teacher's aides may impact on related competencies demonstrated in their practice (Giangreco et al., 2005). It may be valuable for teachers to have some training in how to work with teacher's aides while maintaining an understanding that as teachers their knowledge of teaching and learning processes is relevant, and that they are responsible for the education of all students in the class.

Blatchford et al. (2007) speculated that teachers delegate the neediest pupils to teacher's aides because they feel this enables them to meet the needs of all pupils while allowing them to focus their attention on the rest of the class. Research has identified a number of issues with having a teacher's aide attached to a student rather than a class, not least of which is the fact that this often co-occurs with lower levels of teacher engagement (Giangreco et al., 2005; Rutherford, 2011). The result is often that the primary instruction of the student/s with the greatest learning challenges is in the hands of the least qualified staff member (Howard & Ford, 2007; ERO, 2010 a). In this case there seems to be an overdependence on the teacher's aide at the expense of building alternative supports. This may isolate Molly from the teachers and her peers and foster an insular relationship between her and the teacher's aide (Causton-Theoharis, 2009).

However, there are numerous ways that teachers could utilise the teacher's aide for the benefit of all the students in the class. Giangreco (2003) suggests team members can minimize the unintended, undesirable effects of paraprofessional support by seating students with disabilities in the midst of the class, among their classmates—encouraging on-going access to both teacher and peers—and by avoiding unnecessarily close proximity to the teacher's aide. In addition, they can use teacher's aides for whole-class

support, or assign them in ways that free up the teacher to spend time with students who have disabilities. Finally, team members can establish a classroom culture that encourages peer-to-peer support through such strategies as cooperative learning groups and peer tutoring.

Researchers suggest that schools needs to think about the provision of relevant training and professional development, effective orientation or induction and on-going supervision, clarification of teachers' and aides' respective roles and responsibilities, fair employment conditions, recognition of professional status as aides, and career development opportunities (Rutherford, 2012).

The SEITs main role in this case seems to be teaching Molly directly and supporting the teacher's aide. At her own instigation she also utilised her contacts to extend Molly's social experiences and learning opportunities outside of the classroom. She reported considerable collaboration with other professionals on Molly's support team which had positive outcomes for Molly and also the professionals involved. This is supported by literature which indicates there are many potential benefits to working within a model of collaboration to meet the needs of all students. These include improved outcomes for all students (Kampwirth, 2003) as well as growth in confidence, expertise and understanding of team members (Dettmer et al., 2009). However, the SEIT expressed frustration at the lack of time available to collaborate with the class teacher, the key individual in terms of Molly's inclusion.

If regular time was set aside for such collaboration it would be possible for the teacher and the SEIT to plan together and share their expertise so that potential problems/barriers for Molly's inclusion could be quickly identified and solutions developed (Paulsen, 2008). In addition this would enable them to learn from and with each other so that they grow in skill and confidence (Dettmer et al., 2009) and also in their ability to communicate and so collaborate more effectively in the future (Price-Mitchell, 2009). Avarmadis and Norwich (2002) found that support from a specialist resource teacher is an important factor in shaping positive teacher attitudes to inclusion. Class teachers who co-taught with resource teachers also reported high perceptions of self-efficacy, competence and satisfaction. However, this was in classrooms where the class teacher and resource teacher co-taught. We can speculate that this arrangement is likely to involve considerable collaboration between the two professionals.

Devecchi et al. (2012) found a similar lack of collaboration between class teachers and support teachers in Italy. They speculated that the additional training that support teachers undergo reinforces teachers' 'special education' views that working with children with disabilities is a matter of specialised knowledge which class teachers do not have. Slee (2012) has also raised concerns about the view of disability based on the traditional paradigms of the natural sciences which western education systems are based on. These paradigms, which identify disability as a fault or deficit within the individual which requires 'treatment', can encourage teachers to believe they are incapable of working with the disabled child and so should not be reasonably expected to do so. It aligns these students with the medical field and teachers may feel that their expertise in teaching and learning is not relevant to such students when in fact all students, including those with disabilities, can benefit from a common set of strategies, even if they have to be adapted to take account of varying cognitive, emotional and social capabilities (Mitchell, 2010). This may have been a factor in this case. With the presence of someone from a special education background the teachers may have felt justified in placing responsibility for Molly's education with the teacher's aide because she had the support of the SEIT. In interviews the SEIT was cited as the main support for the teacher's aide in her role rather than the teacher. This is concerning as the SEIT is only at the school to offer support once a week for a few hours.

The SEIT was able to utilise the links she had developed with other schools to provide Molly with some valuable opportunities to develop friendships in the M&Ms club. This was regarded as a very positive outcome by all participants and provided an authentic context for Molly to develop her communication as well as the chance to make a friend. Children and young people with disabilities face many barriers when it comes to making friends (Giangreco et al., 2005) so an important part of the SEIT role may be thinking outside the box to ensure that such students are given ample opportunities to interact socially with a range of peers so that they might develop genuine friendships. The adults supporting Molly have seen how important it is for Molly to have the opportunity to build friendships. This strategy could be utilised by the teachers to help Molly build relationships with peers in the classroom, by actively creating opportunities for Molly to spend time with peers who share common interests. The M&Ms club could be opened out to members of her class to begin to create a wider circle of friends for Molly.

The SEIT's link with the special school also made it possible for Molly to join music sessions with a satellite class which were delivered by a specialist music teacher and adapted for a class of high needs students. Molly enjoyed these sessions and participants valued this opportunity for Molly. This could also have been an opportunity for the class teachers to learn with and from the specialist music teacher. There may be elements to the specialist music teacher's approach to teaching and learning which could be incorporated into the class's curriculum based music activities so that Molly can be participating and learning along with her classroom peers. The class teachers and SEIT could spend some time in these music sessions and/or invite the specialist music teacher to visit the class and possibly run a music session with Molly and her class. The teachers and SEIT could then work collaboratively to incorporate the elements from these sessions which were supportive to Molly into their planning for curriculum music lessons.

The research indicates that special educators attempting to work within inclusive settings consistently report ill-defined and poorly understood roles and responsibilities, which results in difficulties in working collaboratively with other teachers (Devecchi et al., 2012). Many special educators feel that they are a wasted resource (Takala et al., 2009) as they end up working more like teacher's aides. The government makes it clear that a major aim of outreach services is to build capacity of local schools to cater for students with high/very high needs (Special Education, 2007). For this to be possible class teachers need support to engage directly with their students with high needs and to plan collaboratively with the SEIT. This could have far reaching effects, for instance the difference in the impact of the work of the SEIT on attitude and/or practice between teacher's and teacher's aide's may be because the teacher's aide spent so much more time working directly with Molly and the SEIT, collaborating around how to make learning accessible for Molly with the assumption that she was a capable learner (Rutherford 2012; Downing et al., 2000). They moved beyond focusing on the limitations or restrictions Molly's disability might represent to identifying how the environment could be changed so that Molly could access and engage in quality social and learning experiences.

Giangreco (2003) suggests the classroom teacher, SEIT, and teacher's aide should meet regularly to plan how to include the student with a disability in group lessons and to identify individually appropriate learning outcomes that are clearly

understood by all team members. Next, the teacher and SEIT can determine the student's need for differentiated expectations, instruction, materials, and assignments, as well as ways in which the teacher's aide can help implement such differentiation. Where other professionals are on the support team, such as therapists, they should also be part of this planning. They have important knowledge about how to support students to meet their learning goals. As Dettmer et al. (2009) reports, when professionals share their expertise in team situations all members grow in confidence, expertise and understanding. However, this case indicates that there is a risk that outreach services and SEITs could be an underutilised resource with a limited impact on the learning and social expereinces of students with complex needs if scaffolding is not in place for teachers, SEITs, and teacher's aides to negotiate effective roles, responsibilities and relationships.

Clear, honest and professional on-going communication, negotiation of a shared understanding of their respective roles and responsibilities, and collaborative ways of working together for the good of all students is vital (Rutherford, 2012). Initial and on-going education needs to cater for aides, teachers and principals to enable the development of a shared understanding of the legal, ethical and professional practice issues relating to the education of disabled and other marginalised students (Giangreco and Broer, 2005; Howes et al. 2003; Rutherford, 2011). Downing et al. (2000) also suggest that any professional development/learning should involve the class teacher, teacher's aides and special educator so that roles and responsibilities can be clearly articulated for all team members.

Collaboration

Researchers have indicated that developing supportive, authentic and collaborative partnerships is crucial to the development of inclusive school cultures (Mitchell, 2010; Saggers et al., 2012). Successful interprofessional practice relies on the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of the professionals on the team (Mentis et al., 2012):

> *PRINCIPAL: I often say that systems are wonderful to people who get involved and we're only as strong as the next person who's prepared to work in that same manner. And like I'm positive it works fine, it works for Molly and staff; all staff*

are very good with Molly. But yeah it only takes one person to say, "Well no I'm not working that way," ... so that could be a barrier.

Teachers in this case study had a low profile on the team that collaborated around Molly. When teachers lack confidence in their knowledge and ability to teach all students, even those with complex needs, they can be reluctant to actively engage with these students (Zelaieta, 2004; Rutherford, 2011; Avarmadis & Norwich, 2002). When teachers are not actively involved, they are likely to miss out on opportunities to develop their own confidence, knowledge and practice (Giangreco, 2003) and to learn about how they can work effectively with and learn from other professionals (Casimiro et al., 2009). It is essential that teachers have the support they need to learn through active engagement with their students and other professionals. This is one of the ways in which schools can develop capability to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

In line with what the research tells us the interview data indicates that where there was collaboration between members of the support team there were positive outcomes for the student and the team members (Dettmer et al., 2009). The work of the team around Molly became more targeted and effective. Team members were able to identify priority needs and negotiate shared goals. Each member was able to contribute their own knowledge and expertise to the planning around Molly. Team members were able to learn from each other and so increase their skills and knowledge in meeting the educational needs of diverse students. This also allowed team members to increase their awareness of other team members' specialised areas of expertise and how they could contribute to positive outcomes for Molly, building respect and trust (Mentis et al., 2012). Having built positive relationships based on mutual respect and trust these professionals will have many of the prerequisites in place for good collaborative practice when they come together again around other students.

It is important to note that, as the research suggests, interprofessional practice and collaboration was difficult to achieve at first (Saggers et al., 2012). There were a number of barriers that came up in interviews that have also been identified in the research around interprofessional practice. When the team was first established there was no system to help them establish clear goals for the collaboration, the roles and responsibilities of the team members, the ground rules for effective collaboration and

how the collaboration would be reviewed. These have been identified as key principles of successful collaboration (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004):

RESEARCHER: So was there any process at the beginning to work out how the team might work or to establish guidelines?

SEIT: No, I think that's one of the biggest, you know looking at all the teams that I work with, it's not really set out that clearly at the beginning. We all just got together and knew something had to be done and it had to be straight away, and we didn't have a real structure to do it in. So no, I don't think we...although we had worked successfully as a team before and I think that might be quite important. We knew what each other's roles were, and expertise's were, but we were just thrown.

There seemed to be a level of anxiety about the team's ability to meet Molly's needs in an inclusive setting, at least initially. Collaboration, where professionals from different disciplines share responsibility and expertise, can be a challenge for professionals who may be used to working in relative isolation in their own classrooms (Mitchell, 2010; Mitchell, 2008). The size of the team also made it daunting for team members and hard to manage for the school, teachers and teacher's aide (Mitchell, 2008). One of the major obstacles was making time to meet and collaborate that was convenient to all team members. It was particularly hard to find time to collaborate with the teacher. As discussed previously, schools and teachers may find it difficult to relinquish long held beliefs regarding the role of teachers (Thousand & Villa, 2005) and may be reluctant to release teachers from the classroom in order to collaborate with others. Alternatively, schools may not have the policy support they need to dedicate time in this way. For schools to be able to fully access the resources of the SEIT and other educational professionals it is important to recognise the central role of the class teacher. Schools can examine current constructs around the roles and responsibilities of their own staff and of itinerant professionals, and decide if and how they can be changed and developed to meet the needs of diverse student populations.

The findings also indicate that school personnel could find it hard to communicate with others across professional boundaries and collaborate with other professionals who did not share a background in classroom teaching. Research has found that difficulty communicating across disciplines and in accommodating to a range

of philosophies and personalities can be a barrier to successful collaboration and inter-professional practice (Mentis et al., 2006).

> *SEA: I think that one of the barriers is around the Ministry of Education's service, that we're very consultative, our speech and language therapists are consultative, our occupational therapists are consultative, our physiotherapists are consultative and there's not that hands on, teach the child that's over to you guys. '*

While a consultative model is aimed at enskilling teachers, there was a perception that such an approach could also reduce a sense of 'shared responsibility' for student learning that has been identified as an important principal for successful collaborations (Mitchell, 2010; Pinkus, 2005; Zelaieta, 2004).

Another barrier seems to have been when the other professionals were regarded as 'experts' by the school staff. This belief may arise out of 'special education' thinking which is based on an understanding of disability as a fault within the individual which can be treated by professionals with 'specialist' knowledge, a view which Slee (2012) suggests can become a barrier to inclusion (Slee, 2012). Brief visits and a consultative approach could, in this case study, inhibit open communication between team members particularly if teachers did not feel they could question approaches used by other professionals. This could result in frustration amongst team members, In contrast the SEIT regularly spent time in the class which supported effective communication and the development of a relationship based on shared understanding and responsibility:

> *SEIT: Regularly going in [works well], it is weekly in that timeslot, not once every now and then. In that way you do form a much better relationship with your team and the parents and with the student. When you get to the IEP the parents feel you know their child.*

Another potential barrier to collaboration seems to have been communication, particularly as it relates to the clarification of roles and responsibilities (Mentis et al., 2012):

> SEA: *A team approach, absolutely a team approach [is pivotal to making a successful outcome]. So that the IEP document is used as a planning document and tasks who is going to take responsibility for what.*

This has been described in terms of the teacher, teacher's aide and the SEIT, however there was also confusion around the role of some of the other professionals and how they could work collaboratively to create integrated effective practice. For instance the 0.6 teacher was unaware of the role of the speech-language therapist outside verbal speech production and therefore felt that this resource was not being used as effectively as it could be. There was also some ambivalence around Molly's communication device. However, restricted communication is one of Molly's greatest barriers and is identified as the priority goal by all key participants.

> *PRINCIPAL: 0.6 teacher is saying well yes that's going to be her future but also we have to be aware of what works for her in the classroom now and making sure that supports her needs now as well obviously. Yeah, I think we're more on board by just seeing how it works and so probably seeing the relevance of it, so communicating that with people [is important].*

Participants found it hard to broach issues relating to roles and responsibilities of other team members as they worked closely together to develop and safeguard their relationships. This meant there were no systems for review or accountability within the team and challenging issues were difficult to address. There was no opportunity for critical reflexivity (Gergen, 2009) among the team so that they could begin to co-construct respective roles which were more collaborative and which furthered the goal of inclusion.

Many of these barriers were eventually overcome by team members, though it is reported that this took up to a year. They accomplished this in a number of ways. They were flexible in their practice, changing the way they worked to make themselves available to team members and working alongside them, even attending professional development together. Engaging together in professional learning was described as particularly helpful in establishing effective interprofessional practice and research indicates it is likely to be particulalry worthwhile when a new team is established (Bevan-Brown et al., 2011). They actively developed relationships with other team members, staying in touch by email, valuing the contribution other team members made, taking the time to get to know them:

> *TEACHER'S AIDE: everybody listens to everybody else and comments and it seems to work quite well.*

They also made time to collaborate regularly and learn from each other. This allowed them to identify shared goals they could all contribute to so develop effective integrated practice.

The SEIT was able to utilise experience she had gained in applying Assessment for Learning (AfL) practices (common to schools and regarded as best practice) to her work teaching students with disabilities in order to bring practices around Molly in line with those of the classroom:

> *SEIT: Now that we have really good goals, and I've put it into classroom language, everybody in the class room can use that language and her goals are just naturally integrated. So instead of trying to make it something different I try and reword it into something they can understand.*

This suggests it may be beneficial for professionals who work in education but are not teachers to stay up to date on current practice in classrooms. This should foster clear communication, collaboration and effective integrated practice.

It may also be beneficial to develop clear guidelines for classroom visitors so that professionals can collaborate effectively without disrupting the class. This could be done quite easily with a conversation with the teacher before they start working in the class. As the 0.6 teacher describes, "The team works better when everyone in the team is … on the same page as everybody else".

Accountability

Many participants were aware of the potential issues around roles and responsibilities. These were described by the Special Education Advisor, the SEIT and the principal:

> *PRINCIPAL: it's [the teachers role] making sure that you don't leave everything to the teacher's aide because that could be a double edged sword; one, the teacher's aide can get a bit frustrated and secondly, on the other hand, and I'm not saying this is the case, but as long as the teacher's aide thinks [she's] the teacher and starts just doing their own thing and that's not necessarily a good thing either because again they haven't got maybe the curriculum*

background...particularly in a situation like this where she [Molly] has teacher's aide the whole time she's at school.

SEIT: Teachers don't always program for the student they leave the programming up to the teacher's aide or someone else and they just hand over responsibility to the teacher's aide or whoever comes in.

SEA: She [the teacher] is the key relationship in that classroom. I think for children who have substantial teacher's aide hours, the risk for them is that their key relationship is with the teacher's aide.

These statements reflect what the research indicates. That rather than resulting in collaborative practice where the shared expertise of those involved maximises the inclusion of all students, the presence of a teacher's aide and/or special educator can act as a barrier to teacher engagement with students who have disabilities (Devecchi et al., 2012). An awareness of the potential issues around roles and responsibilities was not in this case enough to avoid them. Though many participants stated that the class teacher has responsibility for Molly's educational and social needs, most reported it was in fact the teacher's aide bearing the responsibility.

Schools may need support to use the release time of a .1/.2 ORS funded teacher position well. Some participants raised questions about how the current position was utilised, but the team had not addressed this as a whole. Possible use could have included direct work with Molly and collaborative work with the SEIT and other professionals on the support team. This would have allowed the teacher to make full use of the opportunity to learn from and with others who have useful expertise to share.

The SEIT in this case study remarked that there was insufficient time for collaboration with the teacher. Lack of time is frequently raised as a barrier to collaboration and inclusion in research. Hunt, Soto, Maier and Doering (2003) reported that the need for compensated time for regularly scheduled team meetings appears to be an essential component of the collaborative teaming process. They state it is incumbent upon the school organisational leadership to set an expectation for collaboration and to explicitly create opportunities, incentives, rewards and training for such collaboration. Responding to the educational needs of students at risk and those with disabilities requires schools to unify and reallocate resources. It has been noted that this is not

easily resolved. Many schools remain mired in traditional norms of teacher individuality and organisational isolation (Smith & Leonard, 2005).

The research indicates that the principal plays a vital role in developing inclusive practices and collaboration (Smith & Leonard, 2005). The new school principal indirectly describes the risks associated with having full time teacher aide support, though not in regards to this case:

> *PRINCIPAL: Yes, so it [full time teacher's aide support] becomes a crutch... at the end of the day the teacher can't really be the hands-on person day to day, but also has to be aware of the student's needs, and so ensure that there is that time, 'cause at the end of the day they're in a mainstream classroom so they need to have teacher time; which is what part of her 0.1 additional teacher time with her.*

> *PRINCIPAL: [in a previous case] TA hours reduced all the time, but in some ways it was good because we then had to, were forced to [say] 'okay what are we going to be doing on those days?*

Research by Smith and Leonard (2005) highlights the critical and challenging role of the principal for establishing collaborative cultures for successful school inclusion. This research suggests that principals who are highly visible to students and teachers, who work with teachers to solve problems pertaining to inclusion, who encourage teachers to determine inclusion program needs, who work to provide the necessary human and material resources required for implementation and who are highly committed to professional growth are able to share their vision and support for professional collaboration and school inclusion.

Need for school-wide review of inclusive practices

Many researchers have stressed the need for schools to examine their practices against the social model of inclusion in order to identify barriers to the inclusion of students with disabilities in current systems (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Carrington et al., 2012). In other words, to engage in critical reflexivity to reveal injustices in their social structures and help create new, more mutually congenial ways of relating (Gergen, 2009). In a piece of participatory action research Lyons (2012) found that role issues within inclusive classrooms were resolved through school wide action planning and equipping classroom teachers with instructional strategies, materials and support to

teach all students within their classrooms. Participants were guided through four phases to identify the problem, develop action plans in teams which clearly outlined actions, responsibilities, timelines, and data collection procedures, implement the plans and then collaboratively reflect on their experiences. The data from the research revealed that participants did not identify role problems within the actions implemented within the study. Their findings demonstrate that when classroom teachers were equipped with instructional strategies to teach all children in their classroom, when materials that were appropriate to each student were available within their classroom and when they outlined responsibilities within the context of instructional planning role issues dissipated. These findings point to the importance of engaging teachers and teacher's aides in clarifying problems and establishing priorities and the need to equip classroom teachers for inclusive instruction. The initial stage of clarifying the problem and setting priorities was the most challenging part of the process but all agreed it was necessary.

Giangreco et al. (2005) advocate for exploring different supports that focus on strengthening collaboration between general and special education, building capacity in general education, and placing more reliance on natural supports such as smaller class sizes or peer support. They suggest schools should scrutinize current roles and practices of teachers, teacher's aides and special educators, consider whether they are appropriate and extend the conversation about support of students with disabilities in their school. Classrooms based on shared responsibility supports can benefit a wider range of students with and without disabilities (Causton-Theohais, 2009). Howard and Ford (2007) also highlighted the need for an examination of the mechanisms utilised by teachers and teacher's aides for negotiating job tasks, and the effectiveness of those negotiations on team functioning and for enhancing the role of teacher's aides.

Conclusion and recommendations

The PSTOPF states that the outreach service provides a significant opportunity for specialist teachers to work as part of a team so students with high and very high needs receive the best support and services they can to be successful. The findings of this research suggest that the opportunity is there because SEITs are in schools working with the student and their support team where possible every week. This case study has highlighted some potential barriers and supports which schools and SEITs should be aware of if this service is to help advance us towards a fully inclusive education system

in New Zealand. Barriers included 'special education' thinking that could separate out children with disabilities and reduce oportunities for teachers and children to work and learn together; a lack initially of shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the team members; insufficient time for collaboration between teachers, the teacher's aide and SEIT; and no system of accountability which might have identified some of these challenges. To move forward schools and SEITs may need support to work well interprofessionally and to co-construct ideas about teaching and learning within systems which are inclusive of all. Some practices which this and other research suggests may be helpful to teachers and school in this endeavour are below.

Supports:

- Class teachers established as the curriculum leaders and work directly with students with high needs
- Regular, scheduled collaboration between teacher, teacher's aide and SEIT
- school administration must value and facilitate the ongoing collaborative efforts of the team
- identify and clarify the priority needs for inclusion as quickly as possible
- shared responsibility for goals, with the understanding there are no 'experts' but that all members have something to contribute
- engaging in interprofessional learning together around effective instruction of all students
- being flexible in practice and prepared to work in new ways
- working to negotiate an understanding of own role and responsibilities and the role of other team members
- having a system for accountability, for instance regularly review collaborative efforts
- School-wide review of inclusive practices

For the SEIT to be able to share information about evidence based practices with the class teacher and build on what is working well, teachers need support to engage in ongoing collaboration (Sagger et al, 2012). This will require the support of the school (Mitchell, 2010).

The teachers' beliefs and attitude (social constructions) about inclusion and the student are crucial to the outcomes (Avarmadis & Norwich, 2002), so it may be necessary to work with the teacher to help them see the student as a capable learner and that they themselves have the knowledge, skills, support and resources they need to meet their learning and social needs.

Schools, teachers and SEITs can be given time to explore the issues around inclusion (Carrington et al., 2012) and work together to identify problems, make an action plan which includes clearly defined roles and responsibilities, implement the plan as a team and continue to reflect as a team on the process and outcomes (Lyons, 2012). This is likely to involve the redefinition of some roles (Thousand & Villa, 2005) as well as opportunities to explore the roles of others. This will ensure that schools, teachers and SEITs are building the capacity of schools and teams to cater for students with very high and high needs as set out by the PSTOPF (Special Education, 2007).

Limitations

This research had a number of limitations. Firstly, the case study design allowed us to explore in depth the experiences of a team supporting a student with very high needs but the exploration of one case may mean that generalizability to other settings is limited (Yin, 2009).

The bulk of the data for this research came from interviews; reflexivity could be an issue in all interview data (Yin, 2009) but particularly in this research in the current educational climate of professional accountability. Participants may have felt constrained to give answers that appealed to the researcher, rather than an honest account of their attitudes and experiences. Participants were also aware that the researcher is a colleague of the SEIT in the same outreach service and may have felt pressure to give the answers they thought the researcher was looking for.

Another issue that may have impacted on the interview responses was that participants all worked closely together on the same team. Because of this confidentiality could not be guaranteed, all participants were aware that should any participant choose to read the final thesis they would know what views the other participants expressed during interviews. This knowledge may have affected the views expressed by the participants.

The scope of the project meant the data collection was limited to interviews and the collection of a limited amount of pertinent documentation. This may limit the creditability and believability of the findings as multiple sources of evidence, such as observations, could not be collected (Yin, 2009). The fact that the interviews of multiple participants corroborate each other does allow some confidence in the results.

The interview transcripts and categories were reviewed by the thesis supervisors which acted as a consistency check of the analysis. However, stakeholder checks of the analysis of the data were not conducted and this may limit the trustworthiness of the research findings (Thomas, 2003). Participants were provided with a transcript of their interview to review and make any alterations they liked.

A case study design allows researchers to test views directly in relation to the phenomenon (Flyvbjerg, 2011), such comparisons increase the trustworthiness of the data analysis (Thomas, 2003). The participants' experiences seem to confirm what previous research in this area has found. However, we must be careful when generalising the results of this research across other contexts. A case study design was selected because the context was highly pertinent to the phenomenon under investigation, so care must be taken when comparing the results to cases where the background context might be very different.

Though this research confirms the results from a great deal of previous research, much of this research comes from contexts outside New Zealand and where different models of special education are operating in inclusive settings. This research does not tell us how common the experiences of this team are across the New Zealand context. More research into how SEITs in different contexts are working with their counterparts in local schools is needed so that the resources put in place to support students with high and very high needs and their teachers and schools are maximally effective, and we can continue to development a high quality, inclusive education system for all.

References

Alton-Lee, A. (2003). *Quality teaching for diverse students in schooling: Best evidence synthesis*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Aguinaldo, J.P. (2004). Rethinking validity in qualitative research from a social constructionist perspective: From "Is this valid research?" to "What is this research valid for?" *The Qualitative Report, 9(1),* 127-136. Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR9-1/aguinaldo.pdf

Anastasiou, D. & Kauffman, J.M. (2011). A social constructionist approach to disability: Implications for special education. *Exceptional Children, 77,* 367-384.

Avarmadis, E. & Norwich, B. (2002). Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: a review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 17(2),* 129–147.

Ballard, K. (1996). Inclusive Education in New Zealand: Culture, context and ideology. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 26*(1), 33-45.

Blatchford, P., Russell, A., Bassett, P., Brown, P. & Martin, C. (2007). The role and effects of teaching assistants in English primary schools (years 4-6) 2000-2003. Results from the class size and pupil-adult ratios (CSPAR) KS2 project. *British Educational Research Journal, 33* (1), 5-26.

Bevan-Brown, J., Bourke, R., Butler, P., Carroll-Lind, J., Kearney, A. & Mentis, M. (2011). *Evaluation of the 'tips for autism' Professional Learning and Development Program. Education Report: Summary report*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.

Booth, T. & Ainscow, M. (2011). *Index for inclusion: Developing learning and participation in schools* (3rd Ed.). Bristol, UK: Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education.

Bourke, P.E. (2010) Inclusive education reform in Queensland: Implications for policy and practice. The International Journal of Inclusive Education. 14(2),183-193.

Brantlinger, E. (1997). Using Ideology: Cases of Nonrecognition of the Politics of Research and Practice in Special Education. *Review of Educational Research 67(4),* 425-459.

Brown, L., K. Farrington, T. Knight, C. Ross, and M. Ziegler. (1999). Fewer paraprofessionals and more teachers and therapists in educational programs for students with significant disabilities. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps* 24, (4) 250–253.

Carrington, S., MacArthur, J., Kearney, A., Kimber, L.M., Morton, M. & Rutherford, J. (2012). Towards Inclusive Education for All. In S. Carrington & J. MacArthur (Eds.). *Teaching in Inclusive School Communities*. Milton, QLD: Wiley. Pp3-38.

Casimiro, L., MacDonald, C.J., Thompson, T.L. & Stodel, E.J. (2009). W(e) learn: A framework for online interprofessional education. *Journal of Interprofessional Care, 23*(4), 390-400.

Causton-Theoharis, J.N. (2009). The golden rule of providing support in inclusive classrooms: Support others as you would wish to be supported. *Council for Exceptional Children, 42* (2), 36-43.

Cook, B.G. (2001). A comparison of teacher attitudes towards their included students with mild and severe disabilities. *Journal of Special Education, 34*(4), 203-213.

Day, T. & Prunty, A. (2010). The role of special schools and special classes in Ireland. *REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland, 24, 3-23.

Department for Education and Skills [DfES]. (2001). *Inclusive Schooling: Children with Special Educational Needs*. Retrieved from http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DfES-0774-2001.pdf

Dettmer, P., Thurston, L., Knackendoffel, A., & Dyck, N. (2009). *Collaboration, consultation, and teamwork* (6th ed.). Columbus, OH: Pearson.

Devecchi, C, Dettori, F., Doveston, M. Sedgwick, P & Jament, J. (2012). Inclusive classrooms in Italy and England: The role of support teachers and teaching assistants. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 27* (2), 171-184.

Downing, J.E., Ryndak, D.L & Clark, D. (2000). Paraeducators in Inclusive education: Their own perceptions. Remedial and Special Education, 21 (3), 171-181.

Dudley-Marling, C. (2004). The social construction of learning disabilities. *Journal of Learning Disabilities, 37*, 482-489.

Eisenhart, M. (2006). Qualitative science in experimental time. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 19*, 697-707.

Eisenman, L.T., Pleet, A.M., Wandry, D, & McGinley, V. (2011). Voices of special education teachers in an inclusive high school: Redefining responsibilities. *Remedial and Special Education, 32*, 91-104.

Education Review Office. (2010 a). Including Students with High Needs. Retrieved from http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Including-Students-with-High-Needs-June-2010.

Education Review Office. (2010 b). Evaluation indicators. In *Including Students with High Needs*. Retrieved from http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-

Reports/Including-Students-with-High-Needs-June-2010/Appendix-3-Evaluation-Indicators.

Erickson, F. (2011) Ethics and politics in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research (4th ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Forlin, C. (2001). The role of the support teacher in Australia. *European Journal of Special Needs Education, 16 (2, 121–131.*

Flyvbjerg, B. (2011). Case Study. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (4th ed., pp.301-316)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fuchs, D., & Fuchs, L. S. (1994). Inclusive schools movement and the radicalization of special education reform. *Exceptional Children, 60,* 294-309.

Gergen, K.J. (2009). *An Invitation to Social Construction (2nd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Giangreco, M.F. (2003). Working with paraprofessionals. *Educational Leadership, 61* (2), 50-53.

Giangreco, M.F. & Broer, S.M. (2005). Questionable Utilization of Paraprofessionals in Inclusive Schools: Are We Addressing Symptoms or Causes? *Focus on Autism and other Developmental Disabilities, 20(1),* 10-26.

Giangreco, M.F., Yuan, S., McKenzie, B., Cameron, P. & Fialka, J. (2005). "Be careful what you wish for…": Five reasons to be concerned about the assignment of individual paraprofessionals. Council for Exceptional Children, 37 (5), 28-34.

Greaves, A. (2003). *Special Education 2000: Rhetoric or reform?* Retrieved from http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz/webdav/site/education/shared/about/research/docs/FOED%20Papers/Issue%2012/ACE_Paper_4_Issue_12.doc

Guba, E. G. (Ed.). (1990). *The paradigm dialog*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Guba, E.G., & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 105-117)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hattie, J. (2009). *Visible Learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analysis relating to achievement*. Abingdon, OX: Routledge.

Higgins, N., MacArthur, J., & Morton, M. (2008). Winding back the clock: The retreat of New Zealand inclusive education policy. *New Zealand Annual Review of Education, 17,* 145-167.

Holstein, J.A., & Gubrium, J.F. (2011). The constructionist analytics of interpretive practice. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (4th ed., pp. 341-357)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Howard, R. & Ford, J. (2007). The roles and responsibilities of teacher's aides supporting students with special needs in secondary school settings. *Australian Journal of Special Education, 31* (1), 25-43.

Howes. A., Farrell, P., Kaplan, I. & Moss, S. (2003). The impact of paid adult support on the participation and learning of pupils in mainstream schools. In: *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education.

Hunt, P., Soto, G., Maier, J. & Doering, K. (2003). Collaborative teaming to support students at risk and students with severe disabilities in general education classrooms. *Council for Exceptional Children, 69* (3), 315-332.

Idol, L. (1997). Key questions related to building collaborative and inclusive schools. *Journal of Learning Disabilities,* 30(4): 384–394.

Joffe, K., & Lattanzio, R. (2010). Inclusive Education: Opportunities for Re-Design. Presented at the Canadian Association for the Practical Study of Law in Education (CAPSLE) Conference April 25 – 27, 2010. Retrieved from http://inclusiveeducationcanada.files.wordpress.com/2013/07/archdisabilitylawc entrecapsle2010paper-april12010.pdf

Kampwirth, T.J. (2003). *Collaborative consultation in the schools: Effective practices for students with learning and behavior problems.* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Kearney, A. (2009). *Barriers to school inclusion: an investigation into the exclusion of disabled students from and within New Zealand schools.* A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Education. Retrieved from http://mro.massey.ac.nz/bitstream/handle/10179/876/02whole.pdf?sequence=1

Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing interviews.* London: SAGE Publications.

Lincoln, Y.S. (2010). "What a long strange trip it's been…": Twenty-five years of qualitative and new paradigm research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 16,* 3-9.

Lincoln, Y.S., Lynham, S.A., & Guba, E.G. (2011). Paradigmatic Controversies, contradictions, and emerging confluences, Revisited. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research (4th ed., pp. 97-128)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lyons, W.E. (2012). Examining role issues in inclusive classrooms through participatory action research. *Canadian Journal of Action Research, 13* (3), 19-37.

MacKay, G. (2002). 'The disappearance of disability? Thoughts on a changing culture', *British Journal of Special Education, 29* (4), 159-163.

Mentis, M., Kearney, A. & Bevan-Brown, J. (2012). Interprofessional learning and its contribution to inclusive education. In S. Carrington & J. MacArthur (Eds.). *Teaching in Inclusive School Communities*. Milton, QLD: Wiley.

Mentis, M., Quinn, S., & Ryba, KA. (2005). Linking inclusive policies with effective teaching practices. In D. Fraser, R. Moltzen, & K. Ryba (Eds.) *Learners with Special Needs in Aotearoa New Zealand.* (pp. 74 - 98). Southbank, VIC: Dunmore Press

Merrigan, C. (2011). Outreach: A future role for special schools in Ireland. *REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland,* 24, 77-84.

Minister for Disability Issues. (2001). *The New Zealand disability strategy: Making a world of difference: Whakanui Oranga.* Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Health

Ministry of Education. (2007). *The New Zealand curriculum.* Wellington, New Zealand: Learning Media.

Ministry of Education. (2010). *Success for all: Every school, every child.* Retrieved from http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/OurWorkProgramme/SuccessForAll.aspx

Ministry of Education. (2011). *Specialist Teacher Outreach Service Funding and Service Agreement.* Wellington, New Zealand: unpublished.

Ministry of Education. (2011). Collaboration for Success: Individual Education Plans. Wellington, NZ: Learning Media Limited.

Ministry of Education. (2012). Information for parents and caregivers: The role of the teacher's aide. Retrieved from http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~/media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/SpecialEducation/ParentInformation/InfoSheetTeachersAideRole.pdf

Ministry of Education. (2013). *Guidelines for the Specialist Teacher Outreach Service.* Retrieved from http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~/media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/SpecialEducation/SupportForStudentsQuickGuide/GuidelinesSpecialistTeacherOutreachService.pdf

Mitchell, D. (2008). *What really works in special and inclusive education: Using evidence-based teaching strategies*. Oxon, UK: Routledge.

Mitchell, D. (2010). *Education that fits: Review of international trends in the education of students with special educational needs*. Retrieved from http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/publications/special_education/education-that-fits/executive-summary

Morton, M., Duke, J., Todd, N.A., Higgins, N., Mercer, L. & Kimber, M. (2012). The social and political underpinnings of the inclusive education movement. In S. Carrington & J. MacArthur (Eds.). *Teaching in Inclusive School Communities*. Milton, QLD: Wiley. Pp. 39-64.

Naraian, S. (2010). General, special and … inclusive: Refiguring professional identities in a collaboratively taught classroom. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26*, 1677-1686.

National Association of State Boards of Education. (1992). *Winners all: A call for inclusive schools*. (Report of NASBE Study Group on Special Education). Alexandria, VA: Author.

New Zealand Government. (2004). Education Act 1989. Retrieved from http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1989/0080/latest/DLM175959.html

New Zealand Human Rights Commission. (2010). *Human Rights in New Zealand*. Retrieved from http://www.hrc.co.nz/human-rights-environment/human-rights-in-new-zealand-2010/chapters-from-human-rights-in-new-zealand-2010

Ofsted. (2005). *Inclusion: The impact of LEA support and outreach services*. Retrieved from http://www.inclusive-solutions.com/pdfs/Ofstedsupportservices2005%20.pdf

Paulsen, K.J. (2008). School-Based Collaboration: An Introduction to the Collaboration Column. *Intervention in School and Clinic,* 43 (5), 313-315.

Pinkus, S. (2005). Bridging the gap between policy and practice: Adopting a strategic vision for partnership working in special education. *British Journal of Special Education, 32*(4), 184-187.

Price-Mitchell, M. (2009). Boundary Dynamics: Implications for Building Parent-School Partnerships. *The School Community Journal, 19 (2), 9-26.*

Rice, & Zigmond, (2000). Rice, D., & Zigmond, N. (2000). Co-Teaching in secondary schools: Teacher reports of developments in Australian and American classrooms. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 15*(4)*, 190-197.*

Robertson, K., Chamberlain, B. & Kasari, C. (2003). General education teachers'relationships with included students with autism. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 33 (2), 123-130.

Rutherford, G. (2011). In, out or somewhere in between? Disabled students' and their teacher aides' experiences of school. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-18.

Rutherford, G. (2012). The relational role of teacher aides in supporting students and teachers. In S. Carrington & J. MacArthur (Eds.). *Teaching in Inclusive School Communities*. Milton, QLD: Wiley. Pp313-339.

Saggers, B., Macartney, B., & Guerin, A. (2012) Developing relationships that support learning and participation. In S. Carrington & J. Macarthur (Eds.).*Teaching in inclusive school communities*. QLD, Australia: Wiley, 209-236.

Snook, I., Clark, J., Harker, R., O'Neill, A. & O'Neill, J. (?). *INVISIBLE LEARNINGS? A commentary on John Hattie's "Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement"*. Retrieved from http://www.nzei.org.nz/site/nzeite/files/misc%20documents/Invisible_Learnings .pdf

Smith, R. & Leonard, P. (2005). Collaboration for inclusion: practitioner perspectives. *Equality and Excellence in Education, 38*, 269-279.

Slee, R. (2012). How do we make inclusive education happen when exclusion is a political predisposition? *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 17 (8), 1-13.

St. Pierre, E.A., & Roulston, K. (2006). The state of qualitative inquiry: A contested science. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 19*, 673-684.

Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative Research: Studying How Things Work*. New York: The Guilford Press.

Takala, M., Pirttimaa R. ,& Törmänen, M. (2009). Inclusive special education: The role of special education teachers in Finland. *British Journal of Special Education, 36* (3), 162-172.

Thomas, D.R. (2003). *A general inductive approach for qualitative data analysis.* Retrieved from: http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/soph/depts/sch/hrmas/_docs/Inductive2003.pdf

Thousand, J.S. & Villa, R.A. (2005). Organisational supports for change towards inclusive schooling. InR.A. Villa & J.S. Thousand (Eds), *Creating an inclusive school* (2nd ed., pp. 57-80). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006). Retrieved from http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (2000). *The Dakar framework for action. Education for all: meeting our collective commitments.* Paris: Author. Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education.* Spain: Author. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF

Ward, A. (2011). Let's talk about teacher aides. *Kairaranga, 12* (1), 43-50.

Yin, R. K. (2009). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods (4ʰ ed.).* Thousand oaks, CA: Sage.

Yin, R.K. (2011). *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish.* New York, NY: Guildford Press.

Zelaieta, (2004). From confusion to collaboration: Can special schools contribute to developing inclusive practices in mainstream schools? In F. Armstrong and M.Moore. Action research for inclusive education: changing places, changing practice, changing minds. New York, NY: Routledge Falmer.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CLASS TEACHER

Thank you for your interest in this study. You will be familiar with this the project from reading the information sheet. This interview will be recorded, with your permission, and then transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription for editing.

I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, family and principal work together to support the learning of a student who has ORS funding for very high needs. I want to talk about how you see your role in this process and how individual's roles come together to enhance the student's day to day life at school alongside their peers.

Background

Tell me about your background. Your teaching experience, any qualifications, and any of experience with special needs.

Tell me about your background history with the SEIT.

How do you see your role and approach as a teacher? How would you describe your personal philosophy or approach to teaching?

What are your views about the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools? What experiences have informed your opinion?

How did you feel when you learned you would be teaching an ORS funded student? How well did you feel able to support X? has this changed now you are teaching x again.

What are your priorities for student x, how have you gone about making sure these are targeted?

Tell me what it has been like to have X (ORS funded student) in your class.

What have been the benefits of having ORS funded student in your class? What has been difficult?

The support

Describe what support have you had from the school. What other support has been available to you?

Who is involved in the student's support team?

How would you describe the work of the team? How does the team work together?

How would you describe the team's contribution to the education and inclusion of X?

Who is primarily responsible for the learning and social experiences of the ORS child?

Please describe the process involved in deciding how the teacher, itinerant teacher, and teacher aide should work together to support the child. Who takes the lead in this process?

What do you value most about the team? Where would you like to see changes?

The specialist itinerant teacher

How would you describe the role of the specialist itinerant teacher?

How would you describe the way you work together?

How would you describe the way the specialist itinerant teacher contributes to the inclusion of X?

What do you value most about the work of the specialist itinerant teacher? What changes would you like to see?

The future

Describe how you feel about the prospect of teaching other ORS funded students in the future?

What support would you like to have?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR TEACHER AIDE

Thank you for your interest in this study. You will be familiar with this the project from reading the information sheet. This interview will be recorded, with your permission, and then transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription for editing. You will be free to make any changes to the transcript you wish.

I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, teacher aide, family and principal work together to support the learning of a student who has ORS funding for very high needs. I want to talk about how you see your role in this process and how individual's roles come together to enhance the student's day to day life at school alongside their peers.

Background

Tell me about your background. Qualifications, your interest in and any of experience with special needs.

How would you describe your role as a teacher aide?

What are your views about the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools?

What experiences have informed your opinion?

The ORS child

Describe how you see your role with the ORS child.

What do you see as the main areas of focus for the ORS child's learning at school?

Tell me what you do in a typical day.

How would you describe the way you work with the SEIT? And with the class teacher? All together?

What is your involvement with planning (IEPs) for and teaching the ORS child?

Who provides guidance for you in your work with the ORS child?

What has been done so far this year to help you work out what you should do in the ORS child's classroom?

What aspects of your work with the ORS child do you feel happiest with? What aspects of your work do you feel you need more support and assistance with? How could this be provided?

The support

Who is involved in the student's support team? Tell me a bit about your background with the team members.

How would you describe the work of the team? How does the team work together?

Describe how you see your role on the team.

How would you describe the team's contribution to the education and inclusion of X?

Who is primarily responsible for the learning and social experiences of the ORS child?

Please describe the process involved in deciding how the teacher, itinerant teacher, and teacher aide should work together to support the child.

Who takes the lead in this process?

What is the role of the class teacher in the inclusion and education of the ORS funded student? What works well? What changes would you like to see?

How would you describe the role of the specialist itinerant teacher?

What do you value most about the team? Where would you like to see changes?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SPECIALIST ITINERANT TEACHER

Thank you for your interest in this study. You will be familiar with this the project from reading the information sheet. This interview will be recorded, with your permission, and then transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription for editing.

I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, family and principal work together to support the learning of a student who has ORS funding for very high needs. I want to talk about how you see your role in this process and how individual's roles come together to enhance the student's day to day life at school alongside their peers.

Background

Tell me about your background. Your teaching experience, any qualifications, and any of experience with special needs.

How do you see your role and approach as a specialist itinerant teacher? How would you describe your personal philosophy or approach to teaching/supporting students?

What are your views about the inclusion of students with special needs in mainstream schools? What experiences have informed your opinion?

What do you see as the main focus or priorities for student x? how do you go about making sure these are kept central to the work done with and around student x?

Tell me what it has been like to support X (ORS funded student).

Where has the support worked well? What has been difficult? What areas would you like to see some changes?

The class teacher

Tell me about your relationship with the class teacher? What is your background history?

How would you describe the role of the class teacher?

How would you describe the way you work together?

What do you value most about the work of the teacher?

What changes would you like to see?

The support

Describe what support have you had from the school. What other support has been available to you?

Describe where the support has been helpful. What changes would you like to see?

Who is involved in the student's support team? How would you describe the work of the team? How does the team work together? How would you describe the team's contribution to the education and inclusion of X? What do you value most about the team? Where would you like to see changes?

Who is primarily responsible for the learning and social experiences of the ORS child?

Please describe the process involved in deciding how the teacher, itinerant teacher, and teacher aide should work together to support the child.

Who takes the lead in this process?

The future

Describe how you feel about your role in general? What is working well? What changes would you like to see?

In an ideal world how would you work to support the inclusion of special needs students?

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES FOR THE PRINCIPAL

Thank you for your interest in this study. You will be familiar with this the project from reading the information sheet. This interview will be recorded, with your permission, and then transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription for editing.

I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, family and principal work together to support the learning of a student who has ORS funding for very high needs. I want to talk about how you see your role in this process and how individual's roles come together to enhance the student's day to day life at school alongside their peers.

Background

Tell me about your background, qualifications, experience etc.

What are your views on Success for all, the government's targets for inclusion? What are the benefits of inclusion? What are the difficulties?

What is the school policy on inclusion? Describe anything you have put in place to support inclusion.

What support is available to you as a school to meet these targets? What support has been helpful in the past? What changes would you like to see?

How do you support the class teacher who has the ORS funded student in their class?

The case

What principles guide your approach to teamwork in your school – generally and specifically in relation to this team around the ORS child?

How would you describe your role in the team that supports the inclusion of X?

Can you describe how your leadership impacts on the way in which this team works together? What is your role in ensuring the team works effectively?

How would you describe the class teacher with regards to the ORS funded student?

Talk to me about what it has been like to have this ORS funded student on your school roll. What concerns did you have when X was first enrolled? What barriers were there to her inclusion? What steps did the school have to take to ensure inclusion? What has been the outcome for the school?

Who is primarily responsible for the learning and social experiences of the ORS child?

Please describe the process involved in deciding how the teacher, itinerant teacher, and teacher aide should work together to support the child.

Who takes the lead in this process?

The specialist itinerant teacher

What support was available to the school? Whatwas helpful about the support available to the school in this case? Describe any changes would you like to see?

How would you describe the role of the specialist itinerant teacher? Describe what contribution she has made to X's inclusion? What has worked well about this support for the school? What changes would you like to see?

INTERVIEW GUIDELINES FOR FAMILY OF THE DISABLED STUDENT

Thank you for your interest in this study. You will be familiar with this the project from reading the information sheet. This interview will be recorded, with your permission, and then transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription for editing.

I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, family and principal work together to support the learning your child. I want to talk about how you see your role in this process and how individual's roles come together to enhance the student's day to day life at school alongside their peers.

Background

Tell me about X. His/her age, your family and their place in it. What are they like as a person, a little bit about their disability- type, impact.

Why did you choose to place your child in their mainstream setting?

Tell me about their school experience- History to date. What do they say about school? What do they like/dislike? Interests? Academic progress? Progress in other areas? Friendships and relationships? What are good things about his/her school experience? What things would you like to see changed?

The support team

Who is involved in your child's support team?

Do you see yourself as part of the team? (If yes) how would you describe your role on the team?

How happy are you with this role? What works well for you? Are there any changes you would like to see?

How would you describe the work/role of the various people in the team? What do you value most about their work? In what areas would you like to see changes?

- Teacher
- Teacher aide
- Specialist itinerant teacher

How would you describe the way in which the team works together? Examples of collaboration? How would you describe the team's role in and contribution to your child's life at school? At home?

What do you value most about the team?

What changes would you like to see?

The future

As you look ahead, how do you picture their progress through school? What are your hopes?
Do you have any concerns about what might happen as X progresses through?

APPENDIX B: CODING FRAME

Interview transcripts were analysed according to the following cataories:

Catagory	example
Practical management issues	Physical adaptations to school buildings Extra equipment
Attitudes of participants	Ability of school to meet her needs Benefits of inclusion
Comments related to the team	Size or diversity of the team
Roles and responsibilities	Comments about participants own role, and understanding of role of others; accountability
Examples of collaboration	Working with another/others on the team to solve a problem
Things that worked	Assistive technology

APPENDIX C: LETTER TO THE SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Rebecca Banks

██████████
████████
███

To the Board of Trustees of xxxx School,

My name is Rebecca Banks and I work with ████████ as a Special Education Itinerant teacher (SEIT) in the Franklin area. I am studying to complete a Masters in Educational Psychology with Massey University and I am currently planning a Thesis project.

This project has grown out of my work as a SEIT supporting ORS (ongoing resourcing schedule) funded students in mainstream settings. This project aims to examine in more depth the collaborative professional relationship between the teacher and the specialist itinerant support teacher in order to understand how these roles can enhance the learning of a diverse group of students in a classroom, and in so doing support the development of inclusive schools.

I would like this project to be a case study of successful inclusion of a student with special/complex learning needs within a mainstream setting. I have discussed this with my ██████ SEIT Colleagues and it became clear that one of your students and the support team would be just such a case.

I am writing to you to ask for permission from the board to conduct this project in your school. If you agree, I will negotiate with your principal how you would like me to approach potential participants for their informed consent to take part. Participants would include the class teacher, the ORS funded support teacher (specialist itinerant teacher), the teacher aide, the principal, and the family of the ORS funded student (about 6 or 7 individuals in total).

Three open questioning style interviews would be conducted with each participant in the first half of 2013. These would last no more than an hour and I would negotiate with the participant a convenient time and place to hold it. Appropriate document will also be collected and analysed with the permission of the school and the participants. These may include any of the following – the school Charter; relevant school policies; ORS applications; meeting minutes;

teacher planning; IEPs; assessments of student progress; and student work products. Participants will have the opportunity to review and edit their interview transcript before the final report is published. Neither the school nor any participant will be identified in the final report or in any other presentations or publications based on the project.

Possible benefits of the project to participants, the school and the outreach service include fostering an understanding of the inter-professional relationship between the class teacher and the specialist itinerant teacher and their individual roles in maximising student's presence, participation and engagement in the mainstream class. It is hoped that through the project 'good practice' (which has had a positive impact on the student outcomes) will be highlighted, and institutional structures which act as barriers to such 'good' inter-professional practice will be identified so they can be minimised or counteracted. It may provide a positive model/case study of the successful inclusion of a student with complex learning needs within a mainstream setting.

Thank you for your time in considering my proposal. If you have any further questions regarding this project please don't hesitate to contact me, or my supervisor, ██████████████ (see contact details below). I look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Banks

████████████

█████████████████

The role of the Specialist itinerant Teacher: A

Case Study.

INFORMATION SHEET FOR SPECIALIST ITINERANT TEACHER, CLASS TEACHER, TEACHER AIDE, AND PRINCIPAL

Researcher Introduction

My name is Rebecca Banks and I am currently planning a research project as part of my Masters in Educational Psychology.

Project Description and Invitation

The project has emerged from my work as a specialist itinerant teacher (SEIT) working to support students with disabilities in regular schools who receive ORS funding (On-going Resourcing). I am interested in how the ORS funded support teacher, classroom teacher, family of the ORS funded student and principal work together to support the learning of a student who has ORS funding for high needs. I would like to invite you to participate in this research project. This information sheet explains the project so you can decide if you would like to accept.

Participant Identification and Recruitment

This school has been identified through consultation with Franklin area Specialist Itinerant Teachers as a school that is successfully working to be inclusive for students with disabilities. The principal has provisionally agreed to the project being carried out in the school. Participants will include the ORS funded support teacher (SEIT), the class teacher, the teacher aide, parents/caregivers of the ORS funded student, and the principal.

Project Procedures

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form which shows that you understand the study and wish to participate.

I will interview you 2-3 times about the way in which the team works together to support the ORS funded student. Interviews will be at a time and place that suits you. I will ask you questions

about how you work with the ORS funded child, and with the rest of the support team, particularly the specialist itinerant teacher. Some examples of the kinds of questions I will ask you are attached here for you to look at. I may ask some other questions, but these will all be related to the project topic. Should the line of questioning develop in such a way that you feel hesitant or uncomfortable you can decline to answer any particular question(s).

I will also be looking at relevant documentation including relevant school policies, meeting minutes, IEPs, ORS applications and material relating to assessment and teaching for the ORS funded student.

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription and you can choose to remove material that you do not wish to have included in the final report and/or change or rephrase what you have said.

All interviews are confidential to myself and my supervisors. You will receive a summary of the study's results, and you are welcome to request a copy of the full thesis should you wish.

The data from the study (interview transcripts) will be securely stored so that the only I can access it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately except that, as required by the University's research policy, any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be kept in secure storage for five years, after which time it will be destroyed.

The results of this project may be discussed with Auckland based specialist itinerant teachers during professional meetings, and they may be written up for conference presentations and/or professional publications (such as journal articles). The study is anonymous and confidential, no real names of people or places are used in any written material from the project.

Participant's Rights

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:-

Researcher: Rebecca Banks ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Supervisors: Dr Jude MacArthur ▮▮▮▮▮▮▮

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 12/070. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

The role of the specialist itinerant teacher: a case study.

INFORMATION SHEET FOR THE FAMILY

Researcher Introduction

My name is Rebecca Banks and I am planning a research project for my Masters degree in Educational Psychology.

Project Description and Invitation

The project relates to my work as a specialist itinerant teacher working to support ORS funded students in mainstream settings. My project looks at how the ORS funded support teacher (SEIT), classroom teacher, and principal work together with you to support your child's learning. I would like to invite you to participate in this research. This information sheet explains the project for you so you can decide whether or not to participate.

People taking part in the project apart from you include the ORS funded support teacher (specialist itinerant teacher), your child's class teacher, the teacher aide, your school principal. Your child's school has been identified by the Franklin area Specialist itinerant teachers (SEITs) as a school that is working to be inclusive for children with disabilities. This makes it a good school to carry out the research in. Your school principal has indicated that he/she is interested in the study and supports it being carried out.

What will happen if you agree to participate?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to sign a consent form which shows that you understand the study and wish to participate.

I will interview you at a time and place that suits you. The interview should take no more than an hour. I will ask about your child's school experience, what works well, and any difficulties you have encountered. I will also ask you about how the support team works to support your child (the people you see at your child's IEP meetings), and about your role on the team. Some examples of questions are attached to this information sheet, although I may ask other related questions as well. If you feel hesitant or uncomfortable about any question you can choose not to answer it.

I will also be looking at relevant documentation including relevant school policies, meeting minutes, IEPs, ORS applications and material relating to assessment and teaching for your child.

Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. You will be given a copy of the transcription and you can choose to remove material that you do not wish to have included in the final report and/or change or rephrase what you have said.

All interviews are confidential to myself and my supervisors. You will receive a summary of the study's results, and you are welcome to request a copy of the full thesis should you wish.

The data from the study (interview transcripts) will be securely stored so that the only I can access it. At the end of the project any personal information will be destroyed immediately. The University's research policy does require that any raw data on which the results of the project depend will be kept in secure storage for five years and it will be destroyed after this period.

The results of the project may be discussed with Auckland based specialist itinerant teachers during professional meetings, and they may be written up for conference presentations and/or professional publications (such as journal articles). The study is anonymous and confidential, no real names of people or places are used in any written material from the project.

What are my rights if I agree to be in the project?

You do not have to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions about the project, either now or in the future, please feel free to contact:-

Researcher: Rebecca Banks ███████ ███████████

Supervisors: Dr Jude MacArthur ██████████

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Northern, Application 12/070. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this

research, please contact Dr Ralph Bathurst, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee:

Northern, telephone 09 414 0800 x 9570, email humanethicsnorth@massey.ac.nz.

The Role of the Specialist Itinerant Teacher: A Case Study

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being sound recorded.

I wish/do not wish to have my recordings returned to me.

I agree/do not agree to the researcher having access to school records related to this case which may include:

- School documentation such as the school charter, relevant school policies and any guidelines laid out for staff about working with other people

- Classroom documentation such as IEPs, meeting minutes, assessments and planning documents relevant to the ORS funded student and any work samples deemed relevant by the participants

- Applications made on behalf of the ORS funded student for ORS funding and assistive technology

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: .... **Date:** ....

Full Name - printed ....