Teaching for Understanding within the Affective Field

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Volume 1

Abstract

This case study evaluates an initiative – the Support Group Initiative (*Sgi*) – which aims to provide support to pupils perceived by Pastoral Care Teachers as having, or being at risk of developing, Social and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties (SEBD). The study examines the application of constructivist theory to the affective field, applying the *'Teaching for Understanding Framework'* (Perkins, 1998 in Wiske (ed.)) in the design and delivery of the approach in a quest to develop further in pupils, *intra-* and *inter-personal intelligence* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006). The study draws from a range of fields, particularly those pertaining to constructivist theories of learning, theories of intelligence, values and the development of moral understanding, motivational theory and social inclusion. It explores the nature of the problem, examining the concept of SEBD and the explanations forwarded for it and makes a case for the need to teach for understanding and for transfer.

The study explores the extent, if any, to which pupils develop further *intra-* and *inter-personal intelligence* and the impact which this has on a range of outcomes related to pupils' capacities to regulate their behaviour with good judgement in a range of contexts, inter-personal relationships, empathy, self-esteem and confidence, and dispositions towards learning and school. It examines the efficacy of the approach, exploring the variables which affect pupil outcome, and gives consideration to the implications of the study in terms of imperatives within Scottish Education and its contribution to knowledge transformation.

The study employs an eclectic approach, drawing from both qualitative and quantitative methods and from a wide range of stakeholder accounts (principally, *Sg* pupils, parents, *Sg* Leaders, senior management and teaching staff) and documented evidence, interrogating the data through a process of triangulation. Qualitative data were analysed via. content analysis and quantitative data via. both parametric and non-parametric statistical techniques.

The thesis argues that one of the major impediments to inclusion is the lack of a shared understanding as to its meaning. Further, the distinctions made between inclusion and exclusion may not hold true – that 'inclusion' may often be experienced by young people as 'exclusion' and that practices which may be perceived by some as promoting exclusion may have the potential to promote inclusion.

The findings indicate that the *Sgi* had (with qualifications) impacted upon a range of pupil outcomes. Whilst it is evident that class teachers are more reticent, cautious and generally more negative in their observations than other stakeholder groups, there is

sufficient evidence to indicate that, to varying extents and dependent upon context, *Sgi* pupils, as a whole, are becoming more reflective and are gaining *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* such that it impacts upon the range of outcomes identified in par. 2 (above), although these outcomes are not achieved for all pupils.

Whilst it is evident that the *Sgi* had not impacted upon pupil attainment (as measured in National tests), there is a statistically significant improvement in discipline measures (a downward trend) relating to referrals to senior management[1] and duration of suspensions which is in contrast to the statistically significant deterioration (an upward trend) for other pupils within the same cohorts within the school. Whilst the differential in these measures between *Sgi* pupils and other pupils within the same cohorts remained of high statistical significance, the populations became more homogenous. The improvement in the vast majority of pupils initially categorised as being of 'high/extreme' concern was particularly marked. The deterioration in attendance from the first year of secondary schooling (S1) to the second (S2) was of less statistical significance for the *Sgi* population than for other pupils within the same cohorts within the school.

The *Sgi* was generally positively received (although, once again class teachers were more cautious in their responses) with the vast majority of pupils considering that it had either met or exceeded their expectations and parents expressing support for the initiative. The approach was considered by Support Group Leaders and senior management to be generally efficacious (although some caveats were expressed) and well led within the school. The evaluation identified a range of considerations, such as the frequency with which the support groups meet, account of which should be taken in the operation of the *Sgi.*

A wide range of variables had impacted upon individual pupil progress, from those relating specifically to the pupil (and the immediate circumstances pertaining to the pupil); the initiative itself and its operation within the school; to those relating to the ethos of the school and its systems and practice; and those which pertain to the exo- and macro-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Amongst these, the ethos of the support group and, in particular, the quality of relationships between the Support Group Leader and group members, and effective partnership working between home and school emerged as key.

The *Sgi* was regarded by all stakeholder groups as promoting inclusion within the school, impacting not only upon pupils but also, to an extent, upon the values, beliefs and practice of teaching staff.

[1] with the exception of *Sgi* cohort 2001

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Teaching for Understanding within the Affective Field

Part 1

Introduction to the Study

Chapter 1
Introduction to the Study

The principal focus of this thesis is the evaluation of an initiative - the *Support Group Initiative* (*Sgi*) - which aims to develop further in pupils, *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006). The *Sgi* was instigated and developed by the author in her role as former Assistant/Depute Headteacher[1] in collaboration with a team of teachers who had volunteered their services as Support Group Leaders (*SgLs*), drawn principally from Guidance/Pastoral Care[2] and Behaviour Support staff. The context of the study is a secondary school in the West of Scotland, situated within an area of multiple deprivation which, during the period of the study (1998 - 2003), was the second highest most economically disadvantaged local authority nationally (SENSP, 2003, Fig. 4.1). Further, two of the wards serving the school feature in the 100 most deprived wards in Scotland on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) (Ibid., Appendix 6).

The *Sgi* is an intervention to provide support for pupils in their second year of Secondary schooling (S2) who are perceived by their Pastoral Care Teachers as having, or being at risk of developing, social and emotional behavioural difficulties (SEBD). The intervention draws upon a wide range of theories, integrating two distinct fields - the cognitive field, exploring constructivist theory, and the affective field (concerned with the social and emotional development and well-being of children). The focus of the study reflects the aims of the initiative which, in turn, was informed and inspired by the literature (c.c. Ch 2 & 3). The study therefore examines the application of constructivist theory (*'Teaching for Understanding' (TfU)*) (Perkins *et al.*, 1998, in Wiske (ed.)) to the affective field.

The study also takes place, however, within the context of a continuing quest for Social Inclusion which is the third major strand of the thesis (c.c. Ch 4). As such, its scope is wide, reflected in the range of literature from which it draws.

This chapter serves as an introduction to the study. The initial section (1.1) describes the form which the study takes - drawing upon the paradigms of case study and practitioner/action research (Elliot, 1991; Somekh, 2006; Mills, 2007). The chapter also examines the concept of SEBD, exploring the reasons forwarded to explain indiscipline and pupil disaffection (1.2.1) and providing a brief overview of the policy context (1.2.2), focussing specifically upon school discipline (1.2.3) and the relationship between SEBD and juvenile criminality (1.2.4). In so doing, it explores the fundamental question, "What is the nature of the problem?".

The chapter outlines the rationale for the *Sgi* and the study (1.3), exploring theoretical models and approaches to SEBD (1.3.1), providing a brief introduction to the theories

[1] from hereafter, the term, 'Depute Head' will be used
[2] from hereafter, the term, 'Pastoral Care' will be used

underpinning the initiative (1.3.2), describing the focus of the study as expressed through the research aims and questions (1.3.3) and establishing the boundaries of the study (1.3.4).

1.1 *The Study*

The study is an evaluative (Watt, 1988; Bassey, 1999), theory-seeking and theory-testing (Bassey, 1999), explanatory (Yin, 1994, 2003) case study (Yin, 1994, 2003; Bassey, 1999; Gillham, 2000a; Cohen *et al.*, 2002). In keeping with the advice of Yin (1994) and Gillham (2000a), the former of whom makes a distinction between ethnography and case study methods, the study uses primarily, but not solely, qualitative methods:- .. *the case study strategy should not be confused with "qualitative research" .. . .. case studies can be based on any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence.* (Yin, 1994, p14) Whilst controversial[3], Yin advocates (in relation to explanatory case studies) the formulation of 'theoretical propositions' as an integral part of the design process of the study to guide the form and direction of it.

The participants of the study were sixty-nine pupils (representing four cohorts of S2 pupils) for whom the author had pastoral responsibility as Depute Head Teacher. The study focusses upon the personal accounts of these pupils and their stakeholders (c.c. Fig. 6.6), draws upon documented evidence (c.c. Table 6.1) and charts the pupils' progress on a range of measures (c.c. 5.2) from the pre-intervention period (the end of Primary 7/commencement of S1) to one to two years after intervention (the end of S3/4).

It is an embedded case study (Yin, 1994) in the sense that, whilst there is an holistic overview of the initiative itself, individual case studies, focussing upon the accounts of six Support Group pupils within the same cohort (cohort 2002 (session 2001-2002)) and their stakeholders, illuminate the issues in greater depth.

1.2 *Defining and Understanding the Problem*

1.2.1 *A focus upon the concept of SEBD*

Intervention is a response to a perceived problem. How that problem is initially understood, and the depth of understanding which is brought to bear upon it, will be an important factor in determining the nature of the solution. The problem, in this specific case, has been identified as the set of variables pertaining to the sub-set of pupils who are perceived either to have SEBD or are at risk of developing it. However, how might the concept of SEBD be defined? why is it regarded as a problem? and what are the explanations which are forwarded to account for it? - where it is perceived to be located,

[3] In the sense that some researchers, following an ethnographic tradition, would argue that the case should be approached in an open-minded manner with no 'a priori' theories

whether in respect of social, biological and psychological explanations pertaining to the individual child or in relation to wider systemic and sociological factors.

This section examines the various conceptions of SEBD used within the policy context and the literature. It also explores the need to try to understand the derivations of SEBD (Wilkin *et al.*, 2006); the relationship between SEBD and pupil disaffection, socio-economic factors, the nature of the school experience and anti-social behaviour; and the danger of conceiving of SEBD pupils as one homogenous group to whom a single solution can be applied (Munn *et al.*, 1997, 1998).

SEBD - an elusive concept

There is little consensus within the literature as to what constitutes SEBD and it is argued that it is not desirable to seek to define it (SEED, 2001a; Hamill and Boyd, 2000; Head, 2005; Thomas, 2005). Hamill and Boyd (2000) maintain that *the complexity and diversity of need makes a simple straight forward explanation impossible* (Hamill and Boyd, 2000, p20) and draw from the document, SCCC (1994), to identify some of the characteristics likely to be associated with children with SEBD:- low self-esteem, lack of motivation, lack of concentration, difficulties with learning, poor interpersonal skills and feelings of helplessness (SCCC, 1994, p2). Drawing from Cooper (1993), they suggest that SEBD is a manifestation of a complex interaction of contextual factors and those which are unique to the individual. Hamill and Boyd, drawing from Farrell (1995), acknowledge that, in respect of some children with SEBD, there may be a significant inherited or constitutional explanation for their behaviour which may manifest itself, particularly in relation to boys, in criminal behaviour within their communities (Hamill *et al.*, 2002).

Thomas (2005) observes that whether emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) are explored either in relation to a 'deficit' model of the child or the social model of disability (c.c. Ch 4.2.1), the explanations forwarded reside in mindsets which *rest in thinking about difference, of deficit and disadvantage,* the underlying sub-text of which is that the *real causes of difficult behaviour lie in deficit and deviance in the child,* drawing from social and psychological explanations and leading to a child-focussed solution. (Thomas, 2005, in Clough *et al.*, pp. 60 - 65) The location of the problem as residing within the child is evident within this definition of SEBD in which the child is described as failing to adjust to the school or community environment, demonstrating an inability to respond appropriately to the disciplinary demands of the school, therefore risking exclusion from school:-

> *... the range of difficulties experienced by pupils who, for a variety of reasons, have not adjusted well to school or to living in the community. These difficulties vary in severity and frequency. The term includes those pupils who have persistent problems in responding appropriately to the disciplinary demands of school and whose disruptive behaviour places them at risk of being excluded.*

(HMI, 2001, pt. 2.1).

Likewise, in the context of England, Circular 9/94, in referring to EBD, states:- *Children with EBD are on a continuum. Their problems are clear and greater than sporadic moodiness and yet not so great as to be classed as mental illness.* (DfE, 1994, p4)[4] . According to this document, children classified as having EBD would have *frequency, persistence, severity or abnormality and cumulative effect of the behaviour in context.* (DfE, 1994, p8)

There is no sense in which these explanations give rise to any suggestion that national policy; the structures and systems, ethos, policies and practice of the school; and the wider external factors which impinge upon the school and upon family circumstances may be factors in the equation. The document, however, acknowledges that there may be a 'variety of reasons' to account for the child's difficulties arising from *a complex interaction of biological, psychological, sociological and environmental factors* (HMI, 2001, pt.2.3).

The former (Scottish) definition reflects a 'common-sense' rather than a clinical view of SEBD which would be likely to accord with the views of many practising teachers. It is the frequency with which pupils present challenging behaviour which is the issue in defining the target group of pupils who might be regarded as experiencing SEBD. The document describes the special needs of SEBD pupils as giving rise to a continuum ranging from *mild* to *severe* with suggested provision ranging from mainstream school to supported learning (part or full time) within a special school or out-of-school setting.

Lloyd *et al.* (2001) note that the relationship between exclusion, recording and special provision is confused. Wilkin *et al.* (2005), observe that pupils with special educational needs were no more likely to be excluded than other pupils but the study raised some issues about difficulty in differentiating between 'naughtiness' and a pupil's inability to behave appropriately. They caution for the need to try to understand the derivations of a pupil's SEBD - the extent to which it constitutes a 'special educational need' or is occasioned by disaffection, poor motivation or disinterest in school - on the basis that it is important to match the solution to the nature of the difficulty and to understand the extent to which it impinges upon the child's ability to exert self-control.

A clinical perspective

A more clinical perspective is provided by Oatley and Jenkins (1996) who, in describing childhood psychopathology as being a *study of mental states in which people can no longer cope successfully with their lives* (p222), make a distinction between the experiencing of extreme emotion and the presence of a disorder. The psychiatric diagnosis of a disorder is characterised by the experiencing of symptoms over time. People described as having a disorder fulfil the criterion stated above - they can no longer function at levels which

[4] cited in Cole in Clough *et al*, 2005, pp. 31 - 44

would be considered within a normal range. Psychologists, on the other hand, prefer to see the problems presented by the child as being on a continuum. Whichever perspective is adopted, two main patterns emerge:

- *externalising disorders* - characterised by anger, hostility, aggression, stealing and lying;
- *internalising disorders* - characterised by emotions of sadness or anxiety, and a tendency towards withdrawal.

(Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, p222)

In respect of the *Sgi,* the criteria for *oppositional defiant disorder* and aspects of *conduct disorder* (c.c. App 1), both of which exemplify *externalising disorders,* are adapted to the school context as a means of identifying pupils who might potentially benefit from intervention.

A focus upon emotions

Bowers (2005) argues that the 'E' in 'EBD' has largely been overlooked in Government responses to the problem. The author observes:

> *What we think about a situation (that is how we perceive it) will affect how we feel - and how we feel will strongly affect our thoughts. There's nothing essentially 'disturbed' about a felt state (emotion); it simply flows from thoughts about people, problems and situations.*
>
> (Bowers in Clough *et al.*, 2005, p90)

From this, he infers that emotional difficulties are allied with *disturbed (or difficulty-inducing) thinking,* thus children with EBD may experience differently or with greater intensity the emotions felt by other children who do not experience the same *disturbed (or difficulty-inducing) thinking,* manifesting itself in extreme and/or abnormal emotional reactions and, sometimes, in an absence of emotions which would be regarded as normal. (Ibid., p90) He argues that the link between anti-social behaviour/SEBD and anger may be very tenuous as anger may mask a complex interplay of other feeling states (for example, a sense of shame leading to aggression) (Ibid., pp. 96 - 98). He observes:- *difficulty in integrating emotions, in achieving balance and understanding shades of feelings, is precisely what many young people labelled 'EBD' experience.* (Ibid., p98) Bowers is therefore arguing that it is not sufficient to focus upon the thinking processes of the child or even to enable children to become emotionally literate. Children need to develop insight into their emotions such that they can begin to understand the motivational forces upon their behaviour.

The relationships between SEBD and pupil disaffection, socio-economic background and the school experience

Social and emotional behavioural difficulties in pupils often manifest themselves in relation to disaffection from learning and school, and in pupil indiscipline. Munn *et al.*, (1998) forward three causes for indiscipline resting upon those rooted within the individual child; neo-biological explanations and sociological explanations founded upon policy, systems and practice.

Hamill and Boyd (2000), as do many other commentators, note the relationship between pupil disaffection and socio-economic background, drawing from Cooper (1993) who suggests that young people with SEBD are likely to have experienced a range of factors associated with inadequate parenting such as inconsistent and ineffectual parental discipline; parental indifference, hostility or rejection; and parental cruelty or neglect.

Kinder *et al.* (1996, 2000) explore explanations for pupil disaffection from the perspective of the pupils themselves: - peer influence; family related factors; the quality of teacher/pupil relationships; and an inappropriate, inflexible curriculum which does not meet the needs of the individual pupil.

Hamill *et al.* (2002) observe that there is a strong link between disruptive behaviour and inappropriate curricula. The authors express concern about a lack of differentiation in instruction and note that in schools in which classes are set by ability, the most vulnerable pupils often perceived themselves to be in 'ghetto' classes which presented additional barriers to their learning.

Likewise, Kinder *et al.* (1995 - 1998)[5] and Kendall *et al.*, (2001) demonstrate a causal link between pupil disaffection and the nature of the pupils' educational experience. They note that, whilst what was regarded as 'difficult' behaviour differed from context to context, the challenge relates to the capacity of the young person to sustain any gains in behaviour either within mainstream classes or on being integrated back into mainstream after a period of alternative provision, the latter of which (in many studies) is described as highly problematic (Munn *et al.*, 1998, 2000; Cullingford, 1999; Kendall *et al.*, 2001; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Wilkin *et al.*, 2005). *Motivation was seen as the key - young people had to want to achieve.* (Kendall *et al.*, 2001, 7.3.1) In particular, young people who had had difficulty in the past in establishing trusting relationships with adults were particularly difficult to engage.

Cullingford (1999) traces the development of disaffection from learning and school and exclusion from society (as experienced by young offenders) through the influences of the family; the young person's experience of the school system in relation to a range of psychological, social and systemic factors (for example, the failure of the young person to distinguish between the private and public personna of teachers, leading to feelings of 'being picked on'); and the effects of the peer group and gang culture. For such young

[5] cited in Kendall *et al*, 2001

people it is the *gradual realisation of the school as a monolithic set of rules and instructions, a place where people need to be de-personalized* (Ibid., p115) and the breakdown in relationships between the pupil and school which characterise the final stages of exclusion from school. These pupils have not learned to negotiate - *mutual collaboration is replaced by confrontation* - and reject the school and what it stands for. (Ibid., p90) It is not a rejection of school in an ideological sense - as a *structural representation of society* (Ibid., p101) - but of the constituent parts of it. The sense of humiliation arising from a sense of being patronised and from public failure is one of the key catalysts of disaffection which often precipitates the final acts which lead to permanent exclusion from school. The frustrations stemming from the early home experience spill out into aggressive, anti-social behaviour.

The Prince's Trust (2002) identifies similar concerns, describing the former experiences of permanently excluded pupils of mainstream school as frustrating and unfulfilling and their learning needs not always met:- *They felt they had become trapped in a negative cycle where problems with schoolwork cause them to feel disengaged and frustrated, which in turn led to bad behaviour.* (Ibid., p 55)

Headteachers (Munn *et al.*, 2004) attribute declining standards in behaviour to social changes and the disparity between the standards of behaviour set by the school and the home, reflecting a widening gap between school values and those of society. Staff in schools were concerned about declining standards of respect for others (as exhibited by pupils) and for the authority of the teacher. (Ibid., p24)

Head (2005), drawing from Hanko, observes that behavioural difficulties are a social construct, arising from the quality of relationships within the school and therefore related to *the quality of the day-to-day experience of pupils and their teachers.* (Hanko 2003, p126).

The GTC survey (Adams, 2005) examines many of the systemic factors which influence school discipline such as the environment for learning (with smaller class sizes being uppermost in the considerations of respondents), the nature of the curriculum, pupil support and changes in school structuring or conditions but it also explores other factors such as the need for mutual respect amongst all parties and for high quality leadership.

A synthesis of themes

Whilst this synthesis of themes can, of necessity, only provide a 'flavour' of some of the explanations forwarded, it is evident that it is a multi-faceted complex problem requiring a range of solutions which need to be matched specifically to the nature of the difficulties - there is no 'quick fix' (Munn *et al.*, 1997) or 'one-size-fits-all' magic bullet (Hamill *et al.*, 2002). Herein lies the difficulty. Munn *et al.* (1998) caution against the tendency to perceive 'difficult' pupils as being a single, homogenous group to whom the same solutions can be applied. Table 1.1 exemplifies the principal themes to emerge within this discussion, categorised in relation to those perceived to be internal or external to the

child. It should be noted that the categorisations are not mutually exclusive.

Table 1.1: The explanations cited within the literature to account for SEBD, pupil disaffection and pupil indiscipline

Explanations	Exemplifications (cited in ..)
Within Child: Psychological	Externalising and internalising disorders (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996) Disturbed (or difficulty inducing) thinking/Difficulty in integrating emotions (Bowers, 2005) Low self-esteem, feelings of/learned helplessness (SCCC, 1994; Cullingford, 1999) Lack of motivation/disaffection (SCCC, 1994; Cullingford, 1999; Wilkin *et al.*, 2005; Lloyd *et al.*, 2001) Deviance within the child (Thomas, 2005) Sporadic moodiness (DfE, 1994) The emotional fragility of some young people making them more susceptible to exclusion (Cullingford, 1999)
Within Child: Biological/ Special Educational Needs	Inherited or constitutional difficulties (Hamill & Boyd, 2000, drawing from Farrell, 1995) Learning difficulties and poor concentration (SCCC, 1994, Cullingford, 1999) SEBD as constituting SEN (Wilkin *et al.*, 2005)
Within Child: Social	Difficulty in establishing trusting relationships (Kinder *et al.*, 2000) Poor interpersonal skills (SCCC, 1994) Difficulties in conforming to the standards of school life or the community (Cullingford 1999, HMI, 2001) The effects of peer-influence and gang culture (Kinder *et al.*, 1996 & 2000; Cullingford, 1999)
Policy, Systems and Practice	Inappropriate, inflexible curricula (Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002) Lack of differentiation or personalisation (Hamill *et al.*, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002) The negative effects of setting (Hamill *et al.*, 2002) Inconsistent discipline (Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000) The school experience as frustrating & unfulfilling (The Prince's Trust, 2002; Kendall *et al.*, 2001) The environment for learning (eg. class sizes) (Adams, 2005) Changes in the structuring of the school (Adams, 2005) The quality of Pupil Support (Adams, 2005) The school as an impersonal institution which does not meet individual needs (Cullingord, 1999)
Ethos Related	Quality of teacher/pupil relationships (Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000) Quality of the day-to-day experience of pupils and teachers (Head, 2005) Mutual respect and high quality leadership (Adams, 2005)
Sociological	The relationship between socio-economic factors and pupil disaffection (Hamill & Boyd, 2000) Dysfunctional family life and inadequate parenting (Cooper, 1993; Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000; Cullingford, 1999) Changes in social norms and the widening gulf between the norms of the school and society. (Munn *et al*, 2004)

1.2.2 *A focus upon the policy context*

The discourse to follow explores why social exclusion is perceived as part of the problem in relation to pupils with SEBD but also serves as an introduction to the policy framework which supports or militates against social inclusion.

The potential vulnerability of young people

Pupils with SEBD are particularly at risk from social exclusion as they are less likely to engage with learning (Munn *et al.*, 1998) and are more likely to experience difficulties in their interpersonal relationships, both of which may have long-term consequences for their life chances.

On a day on which the Glasgow Herald reported, "27 children locked up in Scots jails"; "Children taken into care increases by 50%"; "School boy faces jail sentence after admitting stabbing fellow pupil"; and "Teenager dead in flat for 10 days before being found", it is easy to despair. (Glasgow Herald, 28.08.06) Yet, the same edition proclaimed "Exam results: excellent". This is testimony to the paradox of modern day living and highlights the extent to which schooling is only part of a much wider social phenomenon.

The Scottish Executive policy update on 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' (SEED, 2004g) draws upon the Institute of Psychiatry UK national survey to indicate that adolescent mental health in the UK has declined significantly within the last twenty-five years and notes other indicators of troubled childhoods and of troubled, risk-taking behaviour in the community. 'Happy, safe and achieving their potential' (SEED, 2005a) cites the following chilling facts:

- *an estimated 100,000 children and young people live with the domestic abuse of a parent or carer, and between 40% and 60% of these are also attacked;*
- *just over 17 children in every 1000 are now born to drug misusing mothers;*
- *just over 11,200 children and young people are looked after by local authorities.*

(Ibid., Foreword).

This is paralleled by the findings of the Social Exclusion Unit (Crown Office, 2006) chronicling the 3 million children classified as 'vulnerable'; 386,000 children 'in need'; 61,000 children 'in care' and 26,000 children on the Child Protection register in England. The OECD survey (UNICEF, 2007) placed the United Kingdom (amongst the twenty-one prosperous nations) as having the 2nd highest proportion of children (aged 11, 13 and 15) living in single-parent families and living in step-families; the highest rating of 'risk-taking' behaviour; and the highest rating of children perceived to be of poor health and identifying with negative indicators of well-being (amongst other findings). The Millennium Cohort Study (Centre for Longitudinal Studies, 2007) established that, at the age of three, Scottish children from homes in which the parents were graduates were one

year further ahead on a range of social and developmental measures than children from less privileged backgrounds.

It is within this social context that schools have to operate. As has been observed by Ainscow *et al.* (2006), the Government has been very active in promoting policies on social inclusion in its quest to eradicate social exclusion and to promote social mobility. This is also true of the Scottish Executive[6] .

Social Inclusion is defined by the Scottish Executive as being concerned with .. *reducing inequalities between the least advantaged groups and communities and the rest of society by closing the opportunity gap and ensuring that support reaches those who need it most.* (Pirrie *et al.*, 2006, 2.3) As such, it needs to be perceived within a wider context - that of Social Justice, which is informed by theories of discrimination; and Social Capital, drawing from the theories of Jacobs, Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam, resting on the concepts of networks, trust and reciprocity.

The Drivers of Change

This study (from its inception to writing up) has spanned almost a decade, during which there have been substantive changes in Government and Scottish Executive policy, heralded by the advent of New Labour and the formation of the Scottish Parliament with its devolved powers to education. The two principal drivers which have characterised this period are the drive for improved educational outcomes and the focus upon social justice and equality (as expressed through the quest for Social Inclusion). Within these principal themes a set of sub-themes has emerged, some of which may conflict, creating tensions within the system and making the resolution of problems and the removal of barriers to learning difficult to attain. Amongst these sub-themes are:-

- a concern for children's rights [7] , pupil participation (Mowat, 2004; Ross *et al.*, 2007, SEED, 2007) and the 'voice' of the child (SEED, 2004e; SEED, 2004f, Ross *et al.*, 2007);
- a concern for social justice and equality[8] paralleled with a focus upon accountability[9] ;
- related to the above, a growing concern about and focus upon the performance of vulnerable and low-performing groups[10] , including widespread concern about the under-achievement of boys (SEED, 2001e);
- a focus upon inclusion[11] paralleled with a standards agenda and quest for

---

6 as exemplified in the range of policy documents (to follow)

7 SOEID, 1995; HMSO, 1998 ; HMSO, 2000; SEED, 2000b; SEED, 2002a

8 SEED, 1999b; HMI, 1999; SEED, 2000a

9 SOEID, 1998b; HMIE, 2002b; HMIE 2005b; HMIE, 2006b; HMIE, 2006c

10 Borland et al., 1998; LTS, 2003; SEED, 2001c; SEED, 2002c; SEED, 2001d; HMIE, 2002a; HMIE, 2005c; HMIE, 2006a; HMIE, 2006b; SEED, 2006b; HMIE/Care Commission, 2007

11 SOEID, 1998a; SEED,1999a; SEED, 2000a; HMI, 2001; HMIE, 2002a; HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003; HMIE, 2004a; SEED, 2004c; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006

'excellence'[12] ;

- a broadening of the definition of inclusion and movement away from the concept of integration and the 'deficit' model of children's needs[13] ;
- growing concerns about pupil indiscipline[14] paralleled with a drive to reduce school exclusions[15];
- a focus upon pupil support and the well-being of pupils[16];
- a focus upon partnership with parents (SEED, 2006a), upon inter-agency working, upon the establishment of Integrated Community Schools (SEED, 2001b, 2002b, 2003c) and a movement towards integrated children's services[17] ;
- a recognition of the importance of high-quality initial teacher education (SEED, 2005b) and ongoing continuous professional development (SEED, 2001f; SEED, 2003d);
- the importance of high-quality and distributed leadership (SEED, 2005c; HMIE, 2006b; HMIE, 2007b);
- a shifting landscape of centralisation/de-centralisation (as reflected in above policies/reports).

This is a highly ambitious agenda which places very high expectations upon schools and upon local authorities in their support and challenge role.

A focus upon Children's Rights

The emerging importance of children's rights, as set out within the Children's Acts (SOEID, 1995 and SEED, 2000b), should be perceived as being part of the 'bigger picture' of Social Justice; the Human Rights Acts 1998 and 2000 (HMSO, 1998, 2000); and the rights embedded within the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child' (UNICEF, 1989). The commitment to children's rights has been strengthened by the appointment of Kathleen Marshall as Children's Commissioner and highlighted by the movement towards greater pupil participation through such mechanisms as pupil councils (Mowat, 2004; SEED, 2007).

The 'Salamanca Statement' (UNESCO, 1994), arising from this movement of children's rights, is a global response to the quest for inclusion proclaiming a commitment to *Education for All* (UNESCO, 1994, p viii)). A review of the Salamanca Statement, ten years on, encompasses a broader definition of inclusion focussing upon overcoming barriers to learning - arising from the social model of disability - rather than upon the impairments of the individual child - the medical or deficit model (EENET Newsletter 8, 2004) - which is reflected within the 'Additional Support for Learning Act' (ASL Act) (SEED, 2004d).

12 SEED, 2003d; SEED, 2003e; SEED, 2004a & b; HMIE, 2006c

13 SEED, 2004c & d; HMIE, 2006e; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006

14 Munn *et al.*, 1997, 1998, 2004; SEED, 2001a; SEED, 2004f; SEED, 2004g; HMIE, 2005a; Adams, 2005; HMIE, 2006d; Wilkin *et al.*, 2006

15 HMI, 2001; SEED, 2002a; SEED, 2003a

16 HMIE, 2004b; Wilson *et al.*, 2004; HMIE, 2005a; SEED, 2005a

17 SEED, 2000d; SEED, 2001g; HMIE, 2004c; HMIE, 2006a

The ASL Act

'Assessing our Children's Needs: The Way Forward' (SEED, 2004c) advocates a process of staged-intervention to support children requiring additional support, introducing 'Co-ordinated Support Plans' (CSP) and the use of a series of other mechanisms of support as an alternative to the 'Record of Needs '(RoN), later to be endorsed within and introduced through the ASL Act 2004. (c.c. 4.2.1). The ASL Act brings together under one umbrella of 'Additional Support Needs' (ASN), Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the disparate range of legislation and policies to support vulnerable groups, recognising that support needs may be transient in nature, and embracing a much broader conception of 'needs', placing a greater emphasis upon partnership between all parties.

The push for social justice and inclusion is embodied within a wide range of Government and Scottish Executive policies and reports. 'Social Inclusion: Opening the Door to a Better Scotland' (SOEID, 1998a) makes a commitment to young people, perceiving them to be the *best way to achieve a significant, long-term difference to the incidence of social exclusion* (Ibid. 6.1), leading to the establishment of the Social Inclusion Network and Social Inclusion Partnerships.

A focus upon vulnerable groups

However, over time, there is an increasing focus upon vulnerable and low-performing groups, drawing attention to the *significant number of young people who leave compulsory education without the intellectual and social skills which are necessary for adult life.* (HMIE, 2002a, Introduction by Graham Donaldson, HMSCI). The concern for low performing and vulnerable groups is reflected in a wide range of reports, policies and guidelines embracing:-

- special education needs/additional support needs[18] ;
- children at risk of abuse or neglect (SEED, 2001c);
- 'Looked after and Accommodated Children' (LAAC)[19] ;
- itinerant groups (LTS, 2003 ; HMIE, 2005c);
- children absent from school through ill-health (SEED, 2001d);
- gender-related under-achievement (SEED, 2001e);
- those (aged 16+) not in education, employment or training (the NEET[20] group) (HMIE, 2006a ; SEED, 2006b).

'Improving Scottish Education' (HMIE, 2006b) also draws attention to the needs of those

[18] HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003; HMIE, 2004a; SEED, 2004c & d; HMIE, 2006e; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006

[19] Borland *et al.*, 1998; SEED, 2001c; HMIE/Care Commission, 2007a

[20] the Scottish Government has advised the discontinuation of this acronym on the basis that it may be open to abuse (TES, 14.09.07)

who do not thrive in the school system, recognising that *many of the factors associated with poor performance lie outside the ... school,* highlighting a need for multi-partnership working. (HMIE, 2006b, Commentary by Graham Donaldson, HMSCI). The report, as does 'Missing Out' (HMIE, 2006a), testifies to the need for early identification, intervention, and monitoring and tracking of progress of those within the lowest-attaining 20% (3.3). 'Missing Out' identifies four principal barriers to learning:- the learning environment, family circumstances, health or disability and social or emotional factors (Ibid., Section 3). 'More choices, more chances' (SEED, 2006b) takes a much broader sweep and looks at the dilemmas and challenges posed by the NEET group from the perspective of a multi-agency approach, examining the problem in relation to both the pre-16 and post-16 sectors, thus broadening beyond the school context.

Tensions within the system

However, the push for social justice, pupils' rights and inclusion has been paralleled by an equally strong push for 'standards' (exemplified through the target-setting agenda (SOEID, 1998b) and the national priorities (NPs) (SEED, 2000a)[21] , arising from the consultation document, 'Improving our Schools' (SEED, 2000c), deriving from the 'Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000' (SEED, 2000b)); accountability (HMIE, 2006c) and quest for excellence (SEED, 2003e; 2004a & b).

The tension between inclusion and accountability is highlighted throughout the literature as being irreconcilable, particularly within the context of a 'quasi-market' of competition between schools where pupils are perceived as 'score enhancers' or 'score detractors'[22] , with a concordant narrowing of the curriculum, focussing upon 'teaching to the test' (Fullan, 2003; Ainscow *et al.*, 2006; MacBeath *et al.*, 2006, 2007). However, two of the foremost arguments forwarded to support inclusion are that the development of practice which may improve the learning experience of specific groups of pupils may also be of benefit to all pupils (thus promoting achievement and attainment (NP 1)) and that all pupils can learn the values of tolerance and respect from the diversity of an inclusive school (promoting inclusion and equality, and citizenship (NPs 3 & 4)). (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006).

1.2.3 A focus upon school discipline

> *A concern only for the well-motivated, well-behaved and conforming pupil is to diminish the notion of teacher professionalism which would ultimately diminish all of us.*
>
> (Munn *et al.*, 1998, p170)

This section examines the role of school discipline, explores the range of policy

[21] in particular, National Priority 1

[22] MacBeath *et al.* (2007), citing Berliner (2006)

developments relating to school discipline from the 1970s onwards and examines patterns of school exclusions from 1999-2006. It sets out some of the findings drawn from the series of discipline surveys conducted over the past decade within Scotland, noting the tensions between meeting the needs of pupils with SEBD and those of the generality of pupils.

Head (2005) argues that the Scottish Executive policy, 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' is founded upon a false premise - that 'better learning' will automatically arise in response to 'better behaviour' (c.c. 4.2.2). Whilst it may be the case that, in all circumstances, better behaviour may not arise as a consequence of better learning, the converse cannot be held to be true. It is evident that social and emotional behavioural difficulties which prevent children from being able to engage in their learning act as a barrier not only to their learning but to the learning of their peers. Thus, if the Scottish Executive is to realise its ambition of education which *brings out the ability and nurtures the talent that is in every child* (Jack McConnell, Speech to Headteachers, 2002), attention needs to be paid to creating an effective climate for learning through positive discipline, and the challenges posed by indiscipline need to be addressed.

Munn *et al.* (2000) argue that the push towards reducing exclusions within Scottish schools should be pursued within the context of a determined government[23], working to reduce social inequalities in society and that school discipline can only be effectively examined and understood within this wider societal framework. They note that discipline serves two roles within schools - *it is a means to an end, effective learning;* and *an end in itself, an outcome of schooling.* (Ibid., p1). Thus, according to the authors, concern about indiscipline within schools raises wider fears about a breakdown in society. Likewise, 'Improving Scottish Education' HMIE (2006b) cautions that *indiscipline should not be treated in isolation from the curriculum and from learning experiences.* (Ibid., 3.4)

Policy developments relating to school discipline

Concern about indiscipline in Scottish schools is not new. Gatherer (2003), drawing from a 19th century description of the 'tawse' or belt, describing it as *a long, thick strap of horse-hide .. cut into fingers at one end* (Gatherer, 2003, in Bryce and Humes (2nd ed.), p1024), acts as a reminder that indiscipline has always been a central feature of Scottish schools. However, school discipline has increasingly become the focus of controversy and media attention, reflected in a wide range of Scottish Executive consultations, policies and initiatives to address the problem. The raising of the school leaving age in 1972-73; the restructuring of schooling to form the Comprehensive system in the 1970s; the banning of corporal punishment in state schools (later to be followed by the private sector); the powers given to schools to exclude disruptive pupils (SED, 1975); and the reconceptualisation of the education of children with learning difficulties (commencing with the Scottish equivalent of the Warnock report (SED, 1978), leading to the

[23] the author's emphasis

presumption of mainstreaming (SEED, 2002a) (arising from the 'Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act' (SEED 2000b)) and culminating in the ASL Act (SEED, 2004d)) may all have acted as catalysts in this process.

The Pack Report (SED, 1977) was one of a series of studies commissioned to examine truancy and indiscipline, followed by the three longitudinal studies undertaken at Moray House/Edinburgh University (1990, 1996 and 2004) (Munn *et al.*, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2004), the study commissioned by the General Teaching Council (Adams, 2005) and the most recent study undertaken by Wilkin *et al.*, 2006. These studies have informed decision making and helped to shape the direction of policy.

Scottish Executive responses to Indiscipline

Significant developments have been:

- the establishment of the Ethos and Anti-Bullying Networks[24] ;
- the promoting positive discipline initiative;
- the establishment of the Discipline Task Group leading to the report, 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' (SEED, 2001a) and to a team of National/Regional Development Officers working in partnership with local authorities and schools;
- the piloting of a wide range of initiatives to promote positive discipline [25] ;
- the 'Alternative to Exclusion' grant scheme and the 'Excellence Fund' to support the development of initiatives;
- the establishment and rolling out of Integrated Community Schools;
- the National Review of Guidance.

Subsequent to the publication of 'Better Behaviour-Better Learning', a series of reports emanating from the Scottish Executive Education Department (SEED) and HMIE has charted the progress of developments (HMIE, 2005a; SEED, 2006d; Scottish Government, 2007), the last of which outlines an action plan to take forward further, strategies to improve school discipline, building upon 'evidence led' practice and establishing networks to facilitate the dissemination of good practice, facilitated by the national 'Positive Behaviour Team'.

However, all of the above changes are dependent upon an effective and efficient pastoral/personal care system such that ... *all Scottish pupils feel fully supported to derive the greatest benefits from their education, enjoy and participate fully in their schools and are well prepared for life as adults.* (HMIE, 2004b, p5) 'Happy, safe and achieving their potential' (SEED, 2005a), premised on the basis that 'teachers make a difference' and based upon a vision of caring school communities, sets out 'The Standard for Personal Support in School', informed by the HMIE report on personal support for pupils (HMIE, 2004b) and the SCRE study on the topic (Wilson *et al.*, 2004), both of which formed part of the

[24] the latter superseded by 'Respectme'

[25] http://www.betterbehaviourbetterlearning.scotland.gov.uk

National Review of Guidance.

Is it the case that standards of discipline is Scottish schools have declined and, if so, how does it manifest itself?

The Empirical Evidence

In studying the empirical data, it becomes evident that the concerns about indiscipline are founded, although Munn *et al.* (2004) caution that they may be reporting upon a decline in teacher morale leading teachers to perceive indiscipline more readily (Ibid., p6). The decline manifests itself not only in relation to perceptions of school discipline, as accounted for by a range of stakeholders within a range of studies, but also through examination of the statistics for school exclusions where it is found that, in the course of a year (2005-2006), there had been an increase in exclusions from Scottish schools of 2%, in line with a trend since 2002/2003, evident both in the Primary and Secondary sectors (Scottish Executive National Statistics Publication, 2007). Pupils registered for free school meals, LAAC and pupils with ASN all had exclusion rates above the norm and, within the latter group, those who had been categorised as having SEBD accounted for the highest proportion[26] of exclusions. The proportion of exclusions accounted for by boys fell from 81% (1999/2000) to 78% (2005/2006) which, within the context of rising exclusions, would indicate that growing concerns about the conduct of girls (as reflected in the media) may also be founded. (Ibid.)

The initial surveys of indiscipline conducted by Munn *et al.* (Munn *et al.*, 1998) establish that it was the *'drip, drip' effect of seemingly trivial behaviours* (Ibid., p169) which proved to be most problematic to teachers in terms of effective classroom management. They also establish that pupils classified as being 'difficult' by teachers and Headteachers demonstrate behaviour which was no different from their peers - the issue was the frequency with which it was exhibited.

In the last of the three surveys (Munn *et al.*, 2004), of great concern is the finding that, within the context of the Secondary school and over the time period of the surveys, the standard of discipline, both within the classroom and around the school, deteriorated. Headteachers reported behaviour as seemingly worse and of a more serious nature. Almost 60% of teachers regarded the situation as either 'serious' or 'very serious' (in comparison to 36% in a previous survey (1990)), with teachers being generally more pessimistic in their views than Headteachers. Of particular concern is the increase in violent behaviour (both verbal and physical and towards both staff and pupils) with incidents of physical aggression towards teachers (whilst small in number) demonstrating a statistically significant rise. However, the researchers observe that the reported increase in aggressive behaviours may possibly be indicative of a small number of troubled youngsters - the 'difficult minority' - rather than of a general decline in behaviour. Boys

[26] 422 and 981 per 1,000 pupils respectively in the Primary and Secondary sectors

feature to a much greater extent than do girls. The authors paint a picture of the majority of pupils behaving well but of a minority of pupils or classes proving to be particularly difficult, attributed largely by teachers to social inclusion policy. The authors conclude by drawing attention to the need to give consideration to the quality of relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves. They suggest that the Scottish Executive is correct in focussing upon discipline as a priority but highlight the need to raise awareness of national and local policy and funding initiatives.

The HMIE report on the delivery of the National Priorities (HMIE, 2005b) describes the climate and relationships as 'good' or 'very good' in almost all schools but note that, even within the context of schools in which relationships and climate are generally good, low level disruption interrupts learning in specific departments or classes. One third of Secondary teachers surveyed do not regard discipline to be well managed in their schools (NP 2). HMIE observe that, whilst staged intervention approaches are improving the quality of support to vulnerable pupils, in around half of Local Authorities there are weaknesses in the support provided to pupils and variations in the level of exclusions recorded by Local Authorities (NP 3).

'Improving Scottish Education' (HMIE, 2006b) endorses the positive findings of HMIE, 2005b and notes that most schools have made good progress in relation to promoting positive behaviour and effective learning, within an inclusive culture, but caution, .. *meeting the needs of some children should not be at the expense of meeting the needs of all.* (Ibid., 3.4), thus according with the views of the GTC survey and reflected in this quote from Hamill *et al.* (2002):- *There is no doubt that the needs of the minority and of the majority seem to many teachers to be irreconcilable.* (Hamill *et al.*, 2002, p44).

It is clear that the concerns of the teaching profession (as described in Munn *et al.*, 2004) regarding indiscipline are shared within the GTC survey (Adams, 2005). This study, examining the environment for learning, the curriculum, pupil support, relationships and professional development as they impact upon pupil behaviour notes that, *Most pupils behave. Most teachers are effective and committed to their task. Most schools deliver high quality learning opportunities to most pupils,* it also cautions, *But 'most' is increasing perceived by the profession and policy makers to be not enough.* (Ibid., p46).

A survey, conducted by the Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association in 2003 (N = 2458), established that around half of respondents considered that indiscipline had increased greatly within a five year period, attributing this change principally to changing pupil attitudes (43%) and anti-exclusion policies (24%).

McCluskey (2005) argues that the political focus upon reducing exclusions served to impoverish understanding of the complex nature of indiscipline in schools. Her study found that the expected differences between the 'generality of pupils' and those 'marginalised' were not as great as anticipated and that they shared similar views in their

attitudes towards school staff and their perceptions of the effectiveness of school discipline and behaviour management systems. The division between those disrupting and those whose education is disrupted was not as clear as is often portrayed - *pupils ... are both disrupted and disruptive to some extent* (Ibid., p172). The 'generality' of pupils, whilst not involved in serious disruption, are involved, to a greater extent than predicted, in minor acts of indiscipline (Munn *et al.*'s *'drip, drip, drip'*?), more prevalent in girls than is indicated by national statistics, leading to a questioning of the assumption that disruption is the provence of working-class boys. McCluskey does not argue that the 'disruptive minority' does not exist but that the 'sins of the many' are transferred to the few.

McCluskey raises concerns about discipline and behaviour management systems in schools which operate on the basis of the child's agency (choosing or not to behave), such as Assertive Discipline (Canter and Canter, 1992), within a context in which pupils generally have little agency:- *These approaches fail because they call upon a simplistic view of the child as having control over his or her situation, paying scant attention to the impact of personal circumstance.* (McCluskey, 2005, p 170) - a perspective with which this author entirely concurs.

Wilson (2006) in a literature review of the effects of class-size on a range of variables, including the effects upon pupil motivation and behaviour, draws from a range of studies to conclude:

> *Overall, research suggests a complex inter-relationship between pupil behaviour and their attitudes towards learning and their attainment. Class size may be one influential factor but the evidence is inconclusive.*
>
> (Wilson, 2006, Executive Summary)

Wilkin *et al.* (2006) agree with many of the findings of the earlier studies of Munn *et al.* in that pupils are perceived to be generally well behaved by the majority of stakeholders and that most indiscipline was at a low level. This is perceived to be more the case in Primary schools and by Headteachers. Pupils and additional support staff were least positive in their views. Indiscipline was regarded as more prevalent outwith the classroom situation, although disruption in class was more likely to be reported within the Secondary sector. It was most likely to be perpetrated by boys, children from dysfunctional homes or pupils with behavioural/developmental difficulties. The authors conclude that greater attention needs to be devoted to the problem of persistent low-level disruption and draw attention to an emerging phenomenon of children entering the school system with a lack of social skills or complex difficulties which lead to behavioural difficulties. They advocate that additional support staff should be more fully integrated into whole-school behavioural issues. On a more positive note, they observe that the effects of 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' are beginning to impact upon schools and that there had been no real decline in standards of behaviour nationally since

the previous survey in 2004.

This section has explored the implications of SEBD in relation to the school context but the consequences for young people can be far-reaching, as is outlined in the next section exploring the links with juvenile criminality.

1.2.4 The relationship between SEBD and juvenile criminality

Cullingford (1999) traces the development of criminal behaviour in young offenders back from their early experiences of home, through their experiences of school and the influences of the peer group and the community, observing that it is an incremental process :- *What at first is witnessed or observed gradually becomes absorbed and parodied.* (Ibid., p121).

Just as McCluskey (2005, 2006) points to the nebulous distinction between 'disrupted' and 'disrupter', Cullingford draws attention to the unclear boundaries between 'bully' and 'bullied', 'being abused' and 'abusing' and 'victim of crime' and 'perpetrator of crime', highlighting the complexity of and arguing for the need for a more sophisticated understanding of the issues.

The lack of delineation between the 'oppressed' and 'oppressor' is also manifest when examining referrals to the Children's Hearing system. Waterhouse *et al.* (2004) observe that of, of the 482 children whose records were examined within their study, two-thirds were referred both on the grounds of child protection and on offence grounds, the evidence being that, as children progress through the system, they move from being 'at risk' to being perpetrators of crime (whilst still in need of care and protection).

This correlation between 'abused' and 'abuser' has led to a focus on early intervention initiatives as advocated by Chief Superintendent John Carnohan[27] , exemplified within the proposed initiative by Edinburgh City Council to assess all three year-olds for anti-social behaviour as a means of identifying those most in need of intervention and support[28] . The proposal is premised on the belief that risk factors which may ultimately lead to persistent offending are in evidence in early childhood (Community Services Scrutiny Panel, 2007, 3.5). In keeping with Cullingford's findings, they note that 73% of persistent young offenders experienced difficult parental or family relationships[29] , lacking role models of moral behaviour, becoming unemotional and disengaged in their relationships and failing to learn the skills of empathy (Ibid., 2007). Children diagnosed with conduct disorder, correlated strongly with social and educational disadvantage and forming a very high proportion of prospective juvenile offenders (90%) (6.4), develop short-term concrete thinking which prevents them from adopting pro-social and flexible responses to

[27] Head of the violence reduction unit at Strathclyde Police (source: Glasgow Herald, 20/03/07)

[28] drawing from the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (2005/2006)

[29] drawing from the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (2005/2006)

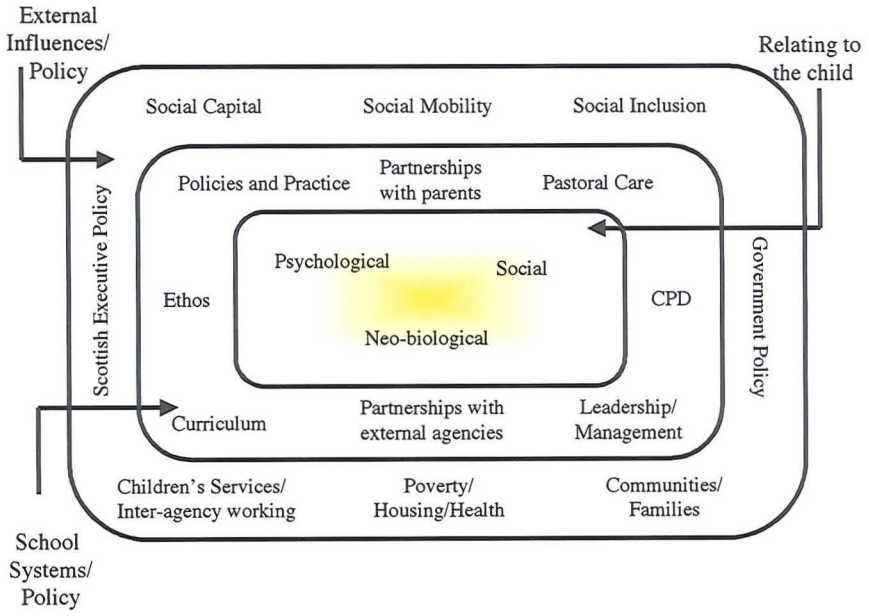
problem-solving[30] . This is often coupled with a failure to develop a sense of responsibility for their actions. (3.12)

However, the consequences of poor life prospects and a descent into criminality impact not only upon the young person but upon society as a whole and have implications for the future prosperity, health and well-being of the nation. Failure to address these problems at an early stage will make heavy demands on public services and the public purse at at later point. It is evident that the same sets of factors which underlie juvenile criminality also underlie disaffection from school and are often forwarded as underpinning social and emotional behavioural difficulties, thus SEBD is perceived both as a response to a range of inter-related and complex circumstances but also as contributing towards disaffection and criminality. It is also evident that the causes run much deeper than simply poverty and socio-economic status *per se,* indicating that addressing poverty, social mobility and inequities in society, whilst important, will in themselves be insufficient to provide an effective solution.

1.2.5 A synthesis

In bringing together the themes of the previous discussion, it is evident that the explanations forwarded to explain SEBD, pupil disaffection and juvenile criminality are wide ranging and the arguments forwarded, at times, contradictory. Fig. 1.1 categorises these explanations in respect of those pertaining to the individual child; those pertaining to the systems, policies, practice and ethos of the school; and the forces external to the school which operate upon it.

Fig. 1.1: The explanations forwarded to account for SEBD, pupil disaffection and the consequences arising from them (adapted from Mowat, 2007, box 3.1)



[30] drawing from McGhee, Mellon and Whyte, 2004

This conceptualisation of the problem could be likened to the ecological systems theory forwarded by Bronfenbrenner (1979) in which the external forces (within the *mesosystem, exosystem* and *macrosystem*) act upon the individual (operating at the level of the *microsystem*) but also in which the developing person is perceived as acting upon that environment, shaping and restructuring it. Thus, it is a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the environment, arrived at through a process of mutual accommodation. (Ibid., p21 - 26) (c.c. App 2) This is in keeping with MacLeod and Munn (2004) who note *a growing consensus towards interactionist explanations of SEBD which take account of individual, family, social, environmental and broader structural factors.* (Ibid. p171[31])

It therefore follows that if the problems associated with SEBD, pupil disaffection and the consequences arising from them (both in terms of the individual and of society as a whole) are to be addressed, the problem needs to be tackled on all fronts. It is in this respect that this author would argue very strongly for an holistic approach and the Support Group Initiative should be perceived in this light - as one of a series of strategies and insights brought to bear upon the problem. This thesis argues that it is not helpful to adopt entrenched positions in relation to perceptions of 'deficit' or 'social' models of disability as it may lead to a narrowed understanding of the nature of the problem, thus restricting the range of possible solutions. Potentially fruitful avenues of support for pupils may be dismissed out of hand, to the detriment of pupil welfare. As argued by Warnock (2005a), pupils, formerly designated as having special needs, cannot be regarded as one homogenous group for whom a 'one-size-fits-all' approach can be adopted, and this is particularly true of pupils with SEBD.

1.3 The rationale of the Sgi and of the Study

1.3.1 Exploring theoretical models and approaches to SEBD

There is a very wide range of initiatives, underpinned by different theoretical perspectives, which are brought to bear on the problem of SEBD and pupil disaffection. This section acts as an introduction to the theoretical basis of the *Sgi* (explored further in chapters 2 & 3).

When the problem is conceived as lying within the child or the individual circumstances pertaining to the child, the solutions forwarded will tend to be pupil-orientated:- programmes directed towards emotional literacy, anger management, positive thinking, communication skills, counselling, therapy (individual or group), creative programmes and medication. Many of these approaches may have emanated from theory and practice associated with psychotherapy as described in Oatley and Jenkins (1996, pp. 355-362).

Munn *et al.* (2000, Fig. 1.2) provide a typology of the theories and methods which are used

[31] drawing from Cooper, 1996

to address SEBD, drawing from psychodynamic (feelings and processes); person-centred (self-esteem and self-actualisation); humanistic (Maslow's theory of needs, 1943); behavioural (focussing on observable behaviour); and cognitive behavioural (the relationship between beliefs/attitudes and behaviour) paradigms. They observe that teachers often draw from an eclectic mix in selecting appropriate methodologies to suit their specific circumstances.

Head (2005) describes three predominant approaches towards working with pupils with SEBD, the last of which is less commonly found:

- the individual level:- approaches such as Successmaker[32], IEPs and therapeutic approaches such as solution-focussed therapy;
- curricular strategies:- approaches focussing upon literacy and numeracy;
- adapting more generalised theories of learning to the context of pupils with SEBD:- programmes such as Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment (Head and O'Neill, 1999).

The *Sgi* draws from a range of theoretical perspectives but is most closely aligned to cognitive behavioural therapy. In relation to Head's categorisation, the *Sgi* straddles two of the categories:- it is a therapeutic approach, focussing on the individual level, but it also draws from, adapts and applies more generalised theories of learning within the context of collaborative group work.

A range of approaches has been developed within Scottish schools to address SEBD, some at national level, others at local authority level and yet others at the school or individual teacher level. Some are delivered by external agencies, outwith mainstream provision; others by external agencies working within mainstream schools; and yet others are in-house initiatives developed and delivered by staff internal to the school. The *Sgi* falls within the latter category. Solomon and Rogers (2001)[33] argue that if gains in learning are to be transferable beyond the intervention[34], this is best undertaken within the setting in which the gains are sought - gains in self-efficacy are not necessarily transferable across different contexts (MacLeod, 2006).

1.3.2 The conceptualisation of the Sgi

This chapter commenced with the observation that the solutions brought to bear upon a problem rest upon the quality of understanding of that problem. How therefore was the problem conceived in relation to the *Sgi*? Such understanding was emergent in nature. Initially, the problem was largely conceived in pragmatic terms - the pupils standing in the corridors outside classroom doors, the queue of pupils outside the author's door

[32] an individualised computer programme to foster literacy and numeracy
[33] cited in MacLeod (2006)
[34] in this case, learning related to the aims of the *Sgi*

waiting to be disciplined. However, through engagement with the literature and reflection upon practice, the conceptualisation of the *Sgi* began to emerge and evolve. It began with a series of tentative statements -"life is not fair", "helping pupils to cope with adversity" - and contemplation.

Such contemplation led the author to a belief that it was only through impacting at a deeper level - through the belief and value systems held by pupils, through developing emotional literacy and an understanding of how values, beliefs and emotions affect motivation which, in turn, impacts upon behaviour - that change could be effected - that is, through teaching for understanding and for transfer (c.c. Ch 2). Interpersonal relationships lie at the heart of SEBD which, in turn, are dependent upon empathy, being able to appreciate different perspectives and to develop a sense of responsibility and compassion towards others, through a moral framework which guides decisions. Drawing from theories of motivation, having a sense of self-esteem which is stable and not contingent upon the regard of others; a sense of self-efficacy and positive dispositions towards learning and school are all important if personal goals are to be attained.

The Support groups are intended to provide a forum in which pupils can explore, in depth, a wide range of issues applicable to their daily lives - their relationships with family and peers, their experience of school and understanding of the professional roles which teachers play within that process. The approach is not concerned with inculcating a set of establishment values but helping pupils to make explicit their own values, beliefs and motivations such that they can examine them and perhaps reappraise them through collaborative discussion within a safe and supportive environment.

The initiative is informed by a wide range of theoretical perspectives drawing from:-

- social constructivist theory - teaching for understanding;
- situated learning - teaching for transfer;
- thinking skills and dispositions, and metacognition;
- theories of intelligence and of emotional intelligence;
- the development of a sense of personal identity (the concept of 'theory of mind');
- values and the development of moral understanding;
- theories of motivation;
- insights gained from the school improvement and effectiveness movements, educational management and school leadership.

It is important to understand that the conceptualisation and understanding of the initiative was emergent in nature. Whilst initially inspired by the work of Perkins and Gardner, over time, and through engagement with the literature, attendance at events and conferences and experiential learning, initial thinking was refined and deeper understanding grew.

The *Sgi* applies the principles which underlie *'Teaching for understanding'*, as defined in 'Project Zero' (Perkins, 1993; Gardner,1993b) to the Affective field, using the *'Teaching for Understanding Framework'*:

- *generative topics* (topics which reveal deep insights);
- *understanding goals* (the nature of understanding to which one aspires);
- *understanding performances* (the means by which understanding is developed and demonstrated);
- *ongoing feedback* (formative assessment) (c.c. 2.3.2)

The initiative is predicated upon two theoretical propositions which may or may not prove to be founded:

> That through the application of the *'Teaching for Understanding Framework'* (Wiske (ed.), 1998), pupils can develop further, *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006), gaining insight into their interpersonal relationships.

Gardner (1999) defines *intra- and inter-personal* intelligences respectively as:

> *The capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself - including one's own fears, desires and capacities - and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life.*
>
> *The capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people, and, consequently, to work effectively with others.*
>
> (Gardner, 1999, p43)

Further,

> Through developing further, *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006) and gaining insight into their interpersonal relationships, there will be an impact upon:
>
> - their capacities to regulate their behaviour with good judgement in a range of contexts
> - their capacities to form and maintain effective interpersonal relationships
> - their capacities for empathy
> - their confidence and self-esteem
> - the development of more positive dispositions towards learning and school.

These two theoretical propositions represent the aims of the initiative, guide the direction

of the study (Yin, 1994, 2003) and underpin the first two research questions.

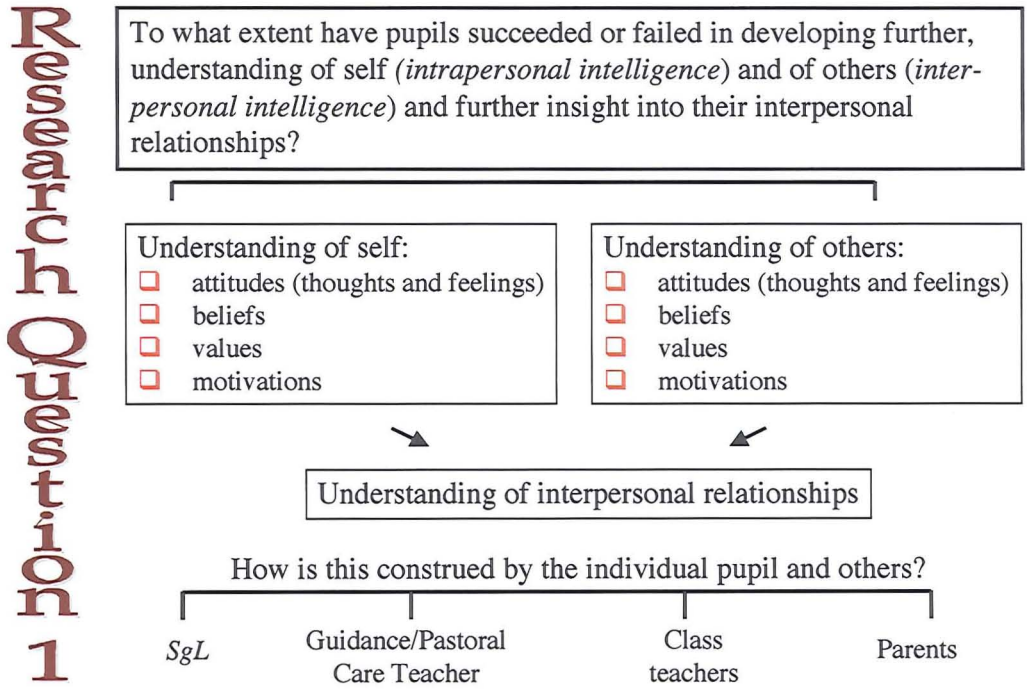
1.3.3 The focus of the study as expressed through the research aims and questions

The principal focus of the study is to evaluate the approach and to explore the variables which make a difference in explaining pupil outcome (as perceived by the pupils themselves and the stakeholders pertaining to them (c.c. Fig. 6.2)). This is triangulated with statistical data related to attendance, discipline sanctions and attainment in National Tests in English, tracking Support Group pupils from the end of Primary 7 to the end of S3/4; and from documented evidence (such as Children's Panel Reports). The thesis explores the extent to which the school's policies, systems, practice and ethos foster or inhibit the realisation of the aims of the initiative.

Research Aim/Research Question 1 (RA/RQ1)

The principal aim of RQ1 is to establish whether the *Sgi* had significantly impacted or not upon the further development of the personal intelligences (Gardner, 1993, 1999, 2006).

Fig. 1.2: Concept Map of RQ1 *(Is TfU happening?)*



RQ1 To what extent have pupils succeeded or failed in developing further,

understanding of:

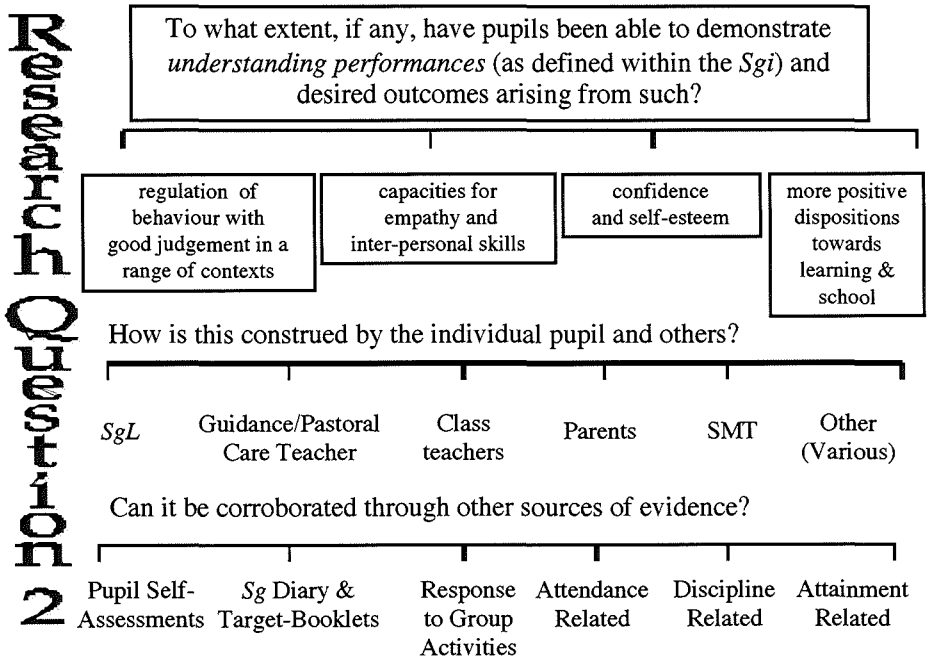
- self (*intrapersonal intelligence*):- attitudes (thoughts and feelings), beliefs, values and motivations? (RQ1.1)
- others (*interpersonal intelligence*):- attitudes (thoughts and feelings), beliefs, values and motivations? (RQ1.2)

and developed further insight into their interpersonal relationships (RQ1.3)? (exemplifications of *understanding goals* (Perkins, 1998 in Wiske (ed.)) as defined within the *Sgi*). (c.c. Fig. 1.2)

Research Aim/Research Question 2 (RA/RQ2)

RQ2 is predicated upon the outcome of RQ1 in that it seeks to establish the impact, if any, which the further development of the personal intelligences had upon the development of a range of *understanding performances* (Perkins, 1998 in Wiske (ed.)) (as defined within the *Sgi)* and desired outcomes arising from such.

Fig. 1.3 Concept Map of RQ2 *(Does it make a difference?)*



RQ2 To what extent, if any, have pupils been able to demonstrate the capacities:

- to regulate their behaviour with good judgement in a range of contexts? (RQ2.1)
- to develop further, empathy and interpersonal skills? (RQ2.2)

as reflected in:

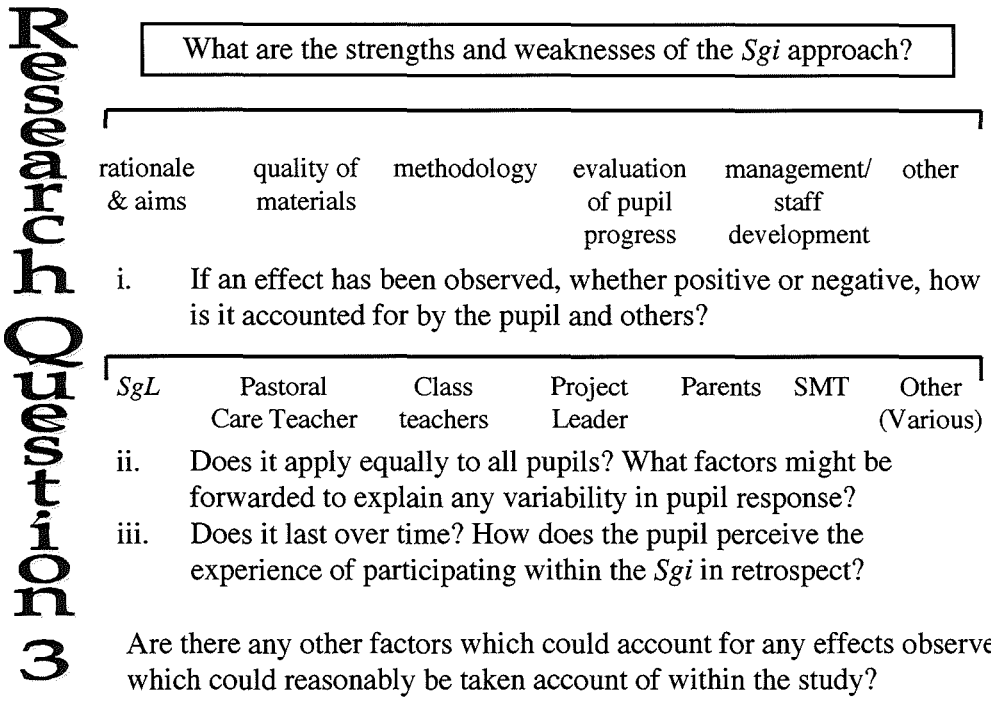
- the development of confidence and self-esteem in pupils (RQ2.3)
- the development of more positive dispositions towards learning and towards school (RQ2.4). (c.c. Fig. 1.3).

The *understanding performances* and desired outcomes which have been identified were devised through engagement with the literature and in contemplation of what might be described as *success criteria* for *Sgi* pupils in the processes of developing and demonstrating understanding. Whilst they clearly relate to the definitions of *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* (c.c. 3.1.2) and Goleman's conception of *emotional intelligence* (c.c. 3.2), they extend beyond these definitions.

Research Aim/Research Question 3 (RA/RQ3)

RQ3 What are the strengths and weaknesses of the *Sgi* approach? (c.c. Fig. 1.4)

Fig. 1.4: Concept Map of RQ3



The principal aim of RQ3 is to evaluate the efficacy of the *Sgi*, exploring the variables which make a difference to the outcomes for individual pupils. This research question subsumes the previous two questions but also addresses wider issues relating to the organisation, operation and management of the *Sgi* (including issues relating to staffing, staff training and development) and the extent to which the course materials and methodology are effective in realising the aims of the approach, drawing from the

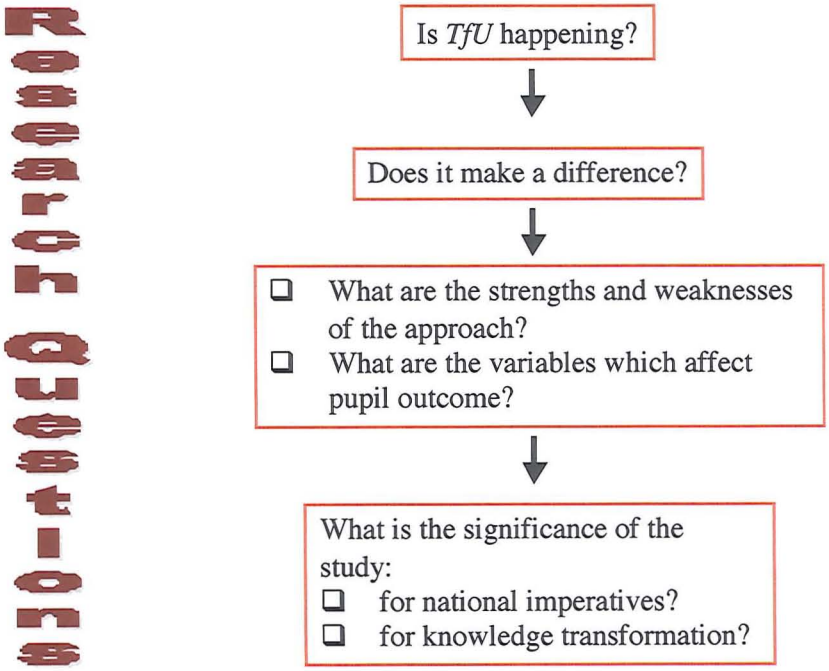
perspectives of a wide range of stakeholders. It brings together the findings from qualitative and quantitative data (c.c. Table 6.1), drawing from the holistic study of the *Sgi* population as a whole and the six individual case studies (c.c. Ch 10), and also examines the impact of the *Sgi* over time, following up a sample of pupils one to two years after intervention.

The most important function of this research aim is to establish the variables which affect pupil outcome both at the macro- and micro-levels of the *Sgi* (in terms of outcomes for the *Sgi* population as a whole and in relation to outcomes for individual pupils). In so doing, it may help to illuminate RQ4, to follow.

Research Aim/Research Question 4 (RA/RQ4)

The final research aim / question is concerned with the wider implications of the study. Chapters 1 and 4 explore the range of policy initiatives which are of potential relevance to this study, encompassing 'The National Priorities' (SEED, 2000a); 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' (SEED, 2001a); 'A Curriculum for Excellence' (SEED, 2004a); 'Ambitious , Excellent Schools' (SEED, 2004b); the 'ASL Act' (SEED, 2004d); ' A Climate for Learning' (HMIE, 2005a); ; 'Happy, safe and achieving their potential' (SEED, 2005a); and the concerns expressed about the NEET population in 'Missing Out' (HMIE, 2006a) and 'More choices, more chances' (SEED, 2006b), amongst others.

Fig. 1.5: Illustration of Research Questions in a simplified form



RQ4 What can be learned from the *Sgi* which could be applied to imperatives within Scottish Education and, in which ways does the study add to the bodies of knowledge within the fields, contributing towards knowledge transformation? (c.c. Fig. 1.5)

1.3.4 The Boundaries of the Study

Whilst acknowledging the importance of sociological theories, such as social capital and those pertaining to discrimination, the thesis concentrates principally upon an evaluation of the operation and the effects of the *Sgi* upon the pupils involved within the initiative. Given the breadth of the thesis, the degree to which some of the themes can be explored is, of necessity, limited but it is hoped that it is sufficient to cast light upon the issues, perhaps highlighting possible avenues of further investigation. (This thesis should be regarded as the beginning of a journey - not its destination.) Whilst there may have been other avenues which could have been explored, such as collaborative learning and the preponderance of boys with SEBD, issues such as these merit studies in their own right and could be the foci of future studies.

1.4 Conclusion

This study can be perceived at three levels:

1. as an evaluative study seeking to establish the worth of the *Sgi* (RQ 3)
2. as a theory testing case study which seeks to establish if theories derived from the cognitive field can be applied to the affective field and to establish the effect of such an application upon pupil outcomes (RQ 1, 2 & 3)
3. as a theory seeking case study, theorising beyond the specifics of the case to the bodies of knowledge, seeking to understand SEBD in all of its complexity (RQ4).

Chapter 1 set out to encapsulate the essence of the study, to describe the policy context, to explore the concept of SEBD, to examine school discipline in Scottish schools, to set out the research aims and questions and to establish the parameters of the study. Subsequent chapters take the reader further along this journey. The initial chapters – the Theory chapters (Ch 2 & 3) - examine the theories which underpin and shaped the direction of the development of the *Sgi*, reflected in the theoretical propositions which guide the study and in the research aims and questions. Chapters 4 & 5 – the Context chapters – describe and examine the context within which the *Sgi* developed, pertaining to the quest for Social Inclusion (Ch 4) and the development of the *Sgi* within the school (Ch 5.1), setting out to establish benchmark measures for the *Sgi* population (Ch 5.2). Chapter 6 explores the methodology of the study and the final Chapters (7-12) set out the findings (Ch 7 – 10) before discussing them, generalising to theory and establishing the significance of the study (Ch 11 – 12).

Teaching for Understanding within the Affective Field

Part 2

Theory

Chapter 2
The Cognitive Field: 'Teaching for Understanding'

Whilst the previous chapter explored the nature of the problem as it pertains to pupils perceived as having, or being at risk of developing, SEBD, this chapter focusses upon the barriers to learning which arise from the teaching and learning process itself, making a case for the need to teach for understanding (RQ1 & 2), drawing from constructivist theories of learning, in working with children perceived as having SEBD.

The principal focus of this chapter is to explore teaching for understanding; to explain why it is important and the impediments to its realisation; to explore how it might be realised through the application of the *'Teaching for Understanding (TfU) Framework'* (Wiske, 1998 (ed.)); to place the *'TfU Framework'* within the wider context of social constructivist theory; and to explain its relevance both to the *Sgi* and to the realisation of the research aims and questions, the first two of which parallel the aims of the initiative itself (c.c. 1.3.3).

2.1 *Why teach for understanding?*

This discussion draws from a range of theories of cognition, of learning (and, in particular, social constructivist theory) to explore what is meant by understanding and its significance to people's lives, making a case for the need to teach for understanding.

2.1.1 *Why is it so important?*

Understanding is central to our being, to our existence and to our survival as a species. From their earliest moments, people seek to make sense of the world, to 'make connections' which enable each individual to develop cognitive skills - to think, to be creative and to reason; and to grow physically, socially, and emotionally. Donaldson (1987), drawing from the experimental studies of Papousek on infants, observes:- ... *we may conclude that there exists a fundamental human urge to make sense of the world and bring it under deliberate control.* (Donaldson, 1987, p111)

Brooks (2004) observes that *living means perpetually searching for meaning* (Brooks, 2004, p12) and Dewey (1918)[1] maintains that the capacities to think and learn are evolutionary in nature and therefore are related to the survival of the species. Yet, the development of understanding is not only a cognitive process but a product of the social and cultural experiences which shape people's lives. Bruner (in Bruner and Haste, 1987 (eds.)) states:

> ... *we have come once more to appreciate that through such social life, the child*

[1] cited in Phillips and Soltis, 2004, p38

acquires a framework for interpreting experience, and learns to negotiate meaning in a manner congruent with the requirements of the culture. 'Making sense' is a social process; it is an activity that is always situated within a cultural and historical context.

(Bruner and Haste (eds.), 1987, p1)

The entry of the child into his culture is facilitated through language - the key symbolic system and common currency of the culture which determines the boundaries of the child's understanding. Thus, Bruner (1986)[2] observes that the process of sense making is constrained by the culture into which children grow and that culture in itself is a product of people's capacity to make sense of their world (Bruner, 1986, p159).

Gardner (1995) stresses the cultural aspects of understanding, noting that what counts as understanding is determined by the experts of the time - understanding is therefore context related, in time and in place. He observes that, within each culture, children develop their own theories of the world and of the people with whom they come into contact, which is a function of the interaction between biological inclinations and the child's own mental constructions. (Ibid., p7)

Within the context of education, Boix Mansilla and Gardner state, *The quality of students' understanding rests on their ability to master and use bodies of knowledge that are valued by their culture.* (Boix Mansilla and Gardner, 1998, in Wiske (ed.), p162) Further, Gardner maintains that what constitutes understanding differs from discipline to discipline, making it difficult to generalise about the concept, apart from at a high level of abstraction. (Gardner, 1995, p118)

This concept of people making their own meanings (understandings) lies at the heart of social constructivist theory. Brooks and Brooks (1999) describe it as a process of synthesising new knowledge with that which has previously come to be understood, either interpreting discrepant data or perceptions into current ways of understanding or generating a new set of rules leading to new understandings (Ibid, p4), thus enhancing or generating new cognitive structures, enabling the individual to reconceptualise previous ideas. The child internalises and reshapes new information, taking his/her understanding onto a new plane which can generate further understandings - a transformative process (Ibid., p15). Thus, in a constructivist classroom, evidence of learning would not be sought in the recitation of known facts but in the child's capacity to *generate, demonstrate and exhibit* new knowledge and understanding (Ibid., p16). Knowledge is not perceived as a body of disjointed facts waiting to be garnered by the child but as an interaction between the subject (the child) interpreting the data, and the object (the data). According to Piaget and Inhelder (1971), it comes from a unity of the two (Brooks and Brooks, p5). Meyer (2006)[3] attests that it is not possible to separate out perception from the perceiver or to determine what it means to learn 'something', only to say that a learning experience has occurred.

[2] cited in Brooks and Brooks, 1999, p13

[3] drawing from Marton and Booth, 1997, p113

In order to understand the nature of *social constructivism,* it is necessary to study its roots both in terms of the 'social' dimension and the 'constructivist' dimension. To Piaget (1959; 1953; 1971)[4], constructivism is the means by which people develop an understanding of their world. Piaget explains constructivist theory in terms of the biological concepts of *assimilation, accommodation* and *equilibration.* In Piaget's view, the child, in interacting with his world will be able to *assimilate* concepts with which he is familiar. However, when the child encounters unfamiliar phenomena, he will experience a sense of *disequilibrium* which will act as a catalyst to promote *accommodation* of the new phenomena, which, as this cycle repeats itself, will lead to a further process of *assimilation.* (Donaldson, 1987; Phillips and Solstis, 2004 (4th ed.)).

Critics of Piaget's theory indicate that it does not provide the rationale for the processes which he describes. How does the mind of the child sense that it is in a state of disequilibrium, given Piaget's assertion that reality is a mental construct? - reality is at it is perceived by the individual - it is unique to each and every person. They forward alternative theories, such as the role of language and prior experience in fostering new cognitive structures (Bruner, 1964, Chomsky, 1977)[5] . Donaldson (1987) draws from a range of studies to forward alternative explanations for Piaget's findings. However, the concept of the mind as being concerned with organising and synthesising new data is an important one and is the underlying tenet upon which constructivism is based. Where Piaget differs from the theories of Vygotsky and other social constructivists lies in their appreciation of the social and symbolic dimensions in fostering the development of cognitive structures.

Bruner (1973), drawing from the work of Spearman (1923), forwards a theory of learning through which people classify new knowledge by a process of pattern-making, creating *mental models* or *formal schemata,* and form hypothesis which can then be tested and from which inferences can be drawn - *going beyond the information given*[6] . This enables the individual to examine data retrospectively and prospectively (generalising from theory) and is regarded by Bruner as a creative process, generating new knowledge and understanding:- *It is the person's manner of grouping and relating information about his world, and it is constantly subject to change and reorganization.* (Bruner, 1973, p222)

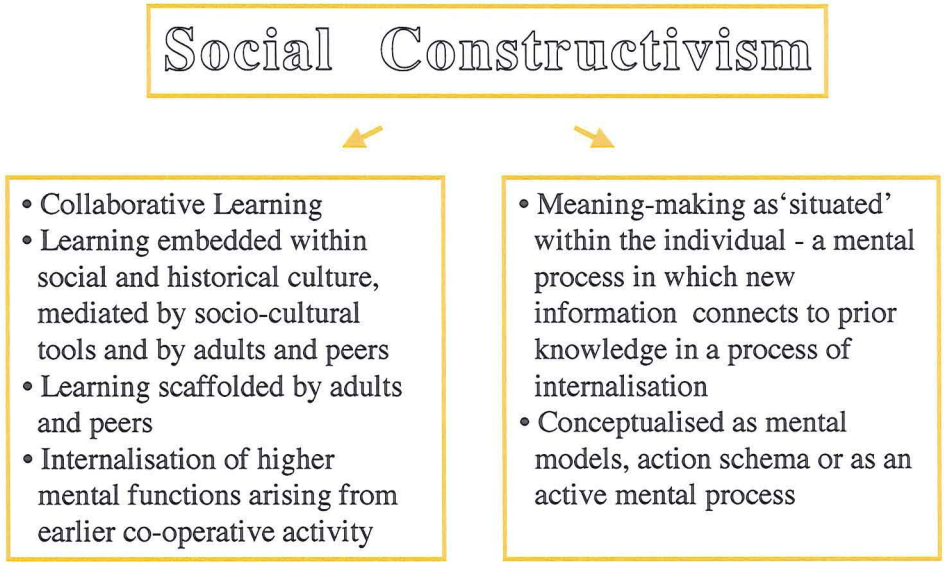
Thus, the process of forming *mental models/formal schemata* draws upon the ability to infer information and to predict probabilities arising from the assimilation of the new information with previous knowledge and understanding, exemplifying the process of 'going beyond the information given'.

Drawing from the previous discourse, the principal elements of *social constructivism,* as perceived by Dewey, Bruner and Vygotsky, are illustrated in Fig. 2.1. However, there are those who would challenge the concept of understanding as arising solely from conscious

[4] cited in Donaldson, 1987
[5] cited in Brooks and Brooks, 1999, p27
[6] the title of the text

mental processes. Claxton (1998) describes three types of mental processing:- an unselfconscious, instantaneous reaction; the more deliberative thought processes associated with problem-solving and analysis; and the more ruminative, meditative processes associated with day-dreaming or creativity, the latter of which he describes as 'slow thinking' with which he feels Western cultures have lost touch - *only active thinking is regarded as productive* (Ibid., p4). According to Claxton, such a mindset has led Western cultures to restrict the range of approaches which they bring to bear upon the every-day problems and dilemmas of modern life. Thus, Claxton is advocating the need to tap into the slower and more intuitive ways of knowing.

Fig. 2.1: An exploration of Social Constructivist Theory



Perkins (Brandt, 1986), however, counters that the unselfconscious, instantaneous reaction (that 'Eureka moment') only is made possible by the highly conscious thought processes which have preceded it. Whilst not denying the possibility of unconscious thinking, he argues that there is no *extended unconscious thinking* (Ibid., p14). To take Claxton's example of the concert pianist who does not have *time to figure out what to do next* (Ibid., p2), the apparently flowing performance has only arisen by means of painstaking and rigorous practice. This is not to deny the value of contemplation, but contemplation without previous conscious effort to build knowledge and understanding is unlikely to lead to meaningful insights.

A synthesis

This section has argued that understanding is 'central to our being' and *is a social process ... situated within a cultural and historical context* (Bruner and Haste (eds.), 1987, p1). It draws from Piaget's theory of accommodation and Bruner's conceptualisation of formal schemata to examine the cognitive processes which underlie learning (as currently understood), noting also, alternative explanations.

2.1.2 *Where does the problem lie?*

It has been established from chapter 1 that the school system is failing some children. There is a growing body of evidence to indicate that failure to learn may arise from conceptual barriers to learning which emanate from the teaching and learning process itself (Gardner, 1995; Perkins, 1992, 1993, 1998, 2004, 2006 in Meyer and Land (ed.), forthcoming in Meyer *et al.* (ed.)). Teachers, rather than perceiving the curriculum and its means of delivery as being deficient, instead perceive the deficiencies as lying within the child - the child is unintelligent, disaffected and/or lazy. Within this section, some of the impediments to understanding (RQ1) and transfer of knowledge (RQ2) are explored and the distinctions between knowledge and understanding analysed.

Brooks and Brooks (1999) observe that schooling, for many teachers, is based upon a false premise that there is a fixed body of knowledge with which students must become familiar, valuing the pupils' capacity to *demonstrate mastery of conventional understandings* rather than to form their own understandings. (Ibid., p7) This premise is enhanced by the prominence of a standards based agenda (common to both sides of the Atlantic) in which the emphasis is placed upon demonstrating competence in relation to pre-determined standards rather than upon learning *per se*, which, according to Katz (1985)[7], results in little retention of knowledge.

Wiggins and McTighe (2005) identify the two principal impediments to meaningful learning as being a 'coverage' and an 'activity' - 'hands on without being minds on' - based approach, attesting that, common to both approaches is a lack of a coherent overview of the purpose of the teaching and means of ensuring effective learning. Such teachers perceive learning *as* the activity rather than the consequence of seeking meaning from the activity (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005, p1). Insufficient attention is devoted to ascertaining what the learner needs to know (facts, concepts, principles) and be able to do (processes, procedures, strategies) in order to accomplish the task and achieve the learning goal. (Ibid., p15 and 19) For this reason, Wiggins and McTighe advocate a process of 'backward design' commencing initially with the desired learning outcomes, leading to the identification of acceptable evidence of learning and finally to the planned learning experiences and instruction (Ibid., p18, fig 1.1).

Understanding, according to Wiggins and McTighe, is conceived as being a process of 'making connections' and integrating knowledge in order to make sense of things (Ibid., p7). It is *a mental construct, an abstraction made by the human mind to make sense of many distinct pieces of knowledge.* (Ibid., p37). They state:-

> *..there are **different kinds** of understandings, that knowledge and skill **do not** automatically lead to understanding, that student **misunderstanding** is a far bigger problem than we may realize, and that assessment for understanding requires*

[7] cited in Brooks and Brooks, 1999, p8

*evidence that **cannot** be gained from traditional fact-focussed testing alone.*

(Ibid., p7[8])

Thus, if teaching is to be successful, teachers need to anticipate, bring out into the open and confront pupil misconceptions (Ibid., p10). Misconceptions arise as a response to unsuccessful transfer - where the 'connections' which pupils have made do not hold to be true. Misconceptions may lie deep and are an opportunity to explore pupils' understandings and for the teacher to reflect upon the 'taken for granted' or hidden assumptions which he/she holds about the subject matter and epistemology (Ibid., p51).

Differentiating knowledge from understanding

But, what characterises understanding rather than knowledge? One of the difficulties in separating out these two concepts is that they are often loosely defined and used inter-changeably. The authors identify characteristics of understanding which delineate it from knowledge, reproduced in Fig. 2.2:

Fig. 2.2: A classification of knowledge and understanding (reproduced from Wiggins and McTighe, fig. 2.1, p38)

Knowledge	Understanding
• the facts • a body of coherent facts	• the meaning of the facts • the "theory" that provides coherence and meaning to those facts
• verifiable claims • right or wrong • I know something to be true	• fallible, in-process theories • a matter of degree or sophistication • I understand why it is, what makes it knowledge
• I respond to cue with what I know	• I judge when to and when not to use what I know

Perkins (forthcoming) makes a distinction between *knowledge as possession* (of facts and information); *knowledge as performative* (as understanding - being able to work with knowledge); and *knowledge as proactive* (beyond understanding - *being able to apply knowledge with understanding; serious energetic engagement with knowledge, and alertness to where it applies)* (Perkins, forthcoming in Meyer and Land (eds.)). His advocation of the latter is based on the nature of the world with which the learner engages:- *education should prepare learners for encounters with a complicated and challenging world that does not reliably tell them what they should do.* (Perkins, forthcoming, in Meyer and Land (eds.), *p24*)[9].

Whilst it is evident that understanding is dependent upon having a body of factual knowledge and skill, the converse is not necessarily the case. Wiggins and McTighe (2005) describe understanding as *the ability to thoughtfully and actively "do" the work with discernment, as well as the ability to self-assess, justify, and critique such "doings".* (Ibid., p41)

[8] the initial authors' emphases

[9] The page numbers given in italics relate to the extract from the book

This conception of understanding therefore is dependent both upon *thinking skills* and *metacognition* (c.c. 2.2.1). Understanding, however, according to the authors, is both a process (as previously described) and a product - the end-result of having understood. Ultimately, the authors define the difference between knowledge and understanding as being:- *a matter of conceptual clarity whereby we distinguish between a borrowed expert opinion and an internalized flexible idea.* (Ibid., p49) However, perhaps the most important aspect of understanding for these authors is the concept of transfer - being alert to the potential applications of knowledge beyond the initial case and setting - its generalisability. The concept of *transfer*, and the related concept of *situated knowledge*, is the focus of discussion in 2.2.

Gardner: A developmental perspective

Gardner (1995) draws from a wide evidence base of studies of students of the sciences, social sciences and humanities[10] to identify the persistence of children's naive theories of the world, despite instruction, as being part of the problem. According to Gardner, there are three distinct stages which characterise learners:

- *intuitive (natural/naive/universal) learner:*

  able to learn language and use symbolic systems and to create serviceable theories of the world and people within it. *Such understandings are often immature, misleading or fundamentally misconceived.* (p9)

- *scholastic learner:*

  seeking to engage with the *literacies, concepts and disciplines* but who revert back to the *intuitive level* when confronted with real life situations. Such learning often results in students responding with the 'correct' answers to pre-ordained questions which may or may not be understood.

- *disciplinary expert:*

  who have come to an understanding of the epistemology of the discipline and have mastered concepts and skills such they they can *apply them flexibly and appropriately in a new and at least somewhat unanticipated situation. (p9)*

  (Ibid., p6-7)

The persistence of 'naive' theories is in conflict with the assertion of Piaget that the older child's more sophisticated ways of knowing supersede those of the earlier stages. Whilst many of these students have achieved academic success, they have failed to understand the concepts at a deeper level - a discrepancy which Gardner describes as the difference between performance and learning. He argues that earlier forms of understanding need

[10] Gardner, 1995, Ch 8 & 9, pp. 143 - 184

to be integrated with later stages if learners are ultimately to develop a deep understanding of the subject disciplines (Gardner, 1995, pp. 118/148).

Meyer (2006) identifies, however, that the preconceptions which students bring to the learning process are not only founded on cognitive processes but are derived also from the emotions, implying that it is insufficient to take account only of the previous knowledge, skills and understanding of the student in designing learning tasks (a view which is shared by Perkins who draws attention to the importance of intrinsic motivation in learning (Perkins, 2006)). Meyer observes that the process of making sense for teacher and pupil may differ - there is a clash of cultures which may impede learning.

Gardner (1993b) identifies a series of obstacles between what schools are trying to achieve and educating for understanding. They lie on a continuum from the notion that recall equates to understanding; the fallacy that by 'covering' a topic, it will have been understood; the inability of even educated youngsters to be able to relate the 'problem' to the disciplines to which they have been exposed; the constraints under which teachers work; and constraints arising from the need to learn to think in ways consistent with the subject discipline. In his view, *If you don't have a curriculum that nurtures understanding, if you don't have teachers who help kids look at things in different kinds of ways, the assessments are worthless.* (Gardner, 1993b, p24)

Perkins: Fragile/troublesome knowledge

Perkins (1992) mirrors the concerns of the previous commentators:- *An abundance of research shows that youngsters generally do not understand very well what they are learning. They suffer from deep-rooted misconceptions and stereotypes. And they are often just plain bewildered by difficult ideas ...* (Perkins, 1992, p75). He attributes this largely to the nature of knowledge held by the learner and poorly developed thinking skills. Perkins (2006) examines three principal sources which might account for the former, arising from *fragile* (Perkins, 1992) or *troublesome* (Perkins, 2006) *knowledge*, concepts and epistemology.

Fragile/troublesome knowledge which manifests itself in gaps in student knowledge, partially understood knowledge or misconceptions and stereotypes arises from:-

- *Ritual Knowledge*

  Knowledge of a routine nature. This is the type of learning often associated with drilling in which children learn to respond on cue to set questions or problems but with no real understanding of the concepts and/or rationale underlying the processes.

- *Inert Knowledge*

  Knowledge which is only forthcoming when prompted or probed but is not

employed at times when it might be appropriate to do so - it fails to transfer to other contexts:- *History instructors grumble that some cognitive Bermuda triangle in the corridor between the English and history classrooms has sucked away students' knowledge of writing.* (Perkins, 2004, p15)

- *Conceptually difficult Knowledge/Naive Knowledge*

  Students go through the motions of ritual responses to posed problems but their intuitive beliefs and interpretations (based upon self-constructed models which may persist despite instruction - *naive knowledge* (Perkins, 1992)) re-surface when confronted with qualitative (not framed in the ways in which students are familiar) problems or real life situations.

- *Foreign or Alien Knowledge*

  Knowledge which conflicts with the student's current understandings (of which the student may be unaware). For example, *presentism* in History in which students look through the lens of the 21st century to understand historical events; and clashes in understanding between different faiths and cultures.

- *Tacit Knowledge* (Meyer and Land, 2003)[11]

  Knowledge which is present but which is at a subliminal level. Whilst this can be of value to learners, the disadvantage is that students' tacit understandings may not be accurate and teachers' tacit understandings may not surface such that students can engage with them.

Perkins also identifies that the means by which people categorise knowledge into concepts or clusters of associated concepts can also be problematic as may the capacity of the student to act on such knowledge. The subject disciplines not only represent the bodies of knowledge which are associated with them but the 'ways of knowing' (epistemology) within the discipline, for example, the seeking of proofs in mathematics or testing of hypotheses in science. Being familiar with the epistemes of the discipline enables the student to engage with it at a deeper level. Perkins and Grotzer (in press)[12] make the claim that students' misunderstandings within the disciplines do not only arise from the concepts themselves but from a fundamental lack of understanding of how the discipline works, compounded by the lack of attention given to this dimension by teachers (Perkins, 2006).

[11] cited in Perkins (2006) in Meyer and Land (eds.)
[12] cited in Perkins (2006) in Meyer and Land (eds.)

Meyer and Land (2003): Threshold concepts and epistemes

Meyer and Land (2003)[13] identify what they describe as *threshold concepts* and *threshold epistemes* which are pivotal to understanding within and mastery of the disciplines, serving as gateways to further understanding (Perkins, 2006, in Meyer and Land (eds.)). For example, without an understanding of addition, learners are unable to master other computations such as subtraction, multiplication or division. Thus, identification of *threshold concepts* and *threshold epistemes* within the subject disciplines and the organisation of learning around them, facilitate understanding and learning. (Perkins (forthcoming) in Meyer *et al.* (eds.)).

Perkins notes that pupils are not generally encouraged to think strategically with their knowledge or to put it to constructive use. He maintains that many teachers *do not press the learners to think well beyond what they already know* - a reference to Bruner - thus learning is shallow (Perkins and Blythe, 1994, p7). He cites the following as being factors which have contributed to the present state of affairs:- a *trivial pursuit* theory of learning in which learning is perceived as *a matter of accumulating facts and routines* and an *ability counts most* theory of achievement which discounts the effects of effort (Perkins, 1992, p20). (c.c. 3.4.1)

In considering the *trivial pursuit* theory of learning, Perkins defines the problem as lying within the curriculum:- *A good deal of the typical curriculum does not connect - not to practical applications, nor to personal insights, nor to much of anything else.* (Perkins, 1993, p32) - and, the solution? Perkins (1992) asserts that it is not only the means of delivery of the curriculum which is important but the nature of the curriculum itself - *Our most important choice is what we try to teach.* (Perkins, 1992, p75). This view conflicts with much of the literature on social constructivism in which process is often regarded as more important than subject-matter:- What's *needed is ... a curriculum full of knowledge of the right kind to connect richly to future insights and applications.* (Perkins, 1993, p32)[14]

A Synthesis

This wide-ranging discussion has focussed upon the many ways in which knowledge fails to embed or to be used flexibly within appropriate contexts which are key issues if the aims of the *Sgi* are to be realised (related to RQ1, 2 & 3.4), highlighting, once again the need to teach for understanding and for transfer.

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13 cited in Perkins (2006) in Meyer and Land (eds.)

14 Perkins, D. (1986); Perrone, V. (1991a) in Perkins, D. (1993)

2.2 *The problem of transfer*

2.2.1 *A focus upon situated learning, thinking skills and dispositions, and metacognition*

Situated Learning

The concerns expressed about 'troublesome knowledge' (Perkins, 2006) in its various guises, about the failure of knowledge to embed and the nature of the curriculum are not new. The American philosopher, John Dewey, in the early 20th century, identified the remoteness of the curriculum from the everyday life of the child as being problematic in facilitating learning. Dewey asserts,

> *If we identify ourselves with the real instincts and needs of childhood, and ask only after its fullest assertion and growth, the discipline and information and culture of adult life shall all come in their due season.*
>
> (Dewey, 1915, pp. 54-55)

The above quote symbolises for this author the essence of Dewey's philosophy of education. Dewey primarily advocates a 'child-centered' approach - *the child is the starting-point, the center, and the end* (Dewey, 1956, p9). He conceives of the mind as being dynamic in nature - as being a process *in* and *of* development and describes the principal role of the teacher as being to 'give direction' to the child's learning. He conceives of the intellect, not as an end in itself, but as a means of defining motivation - *the direction which our activity, immediate or remote, shall take.* (Dewey, 1915, p93). His perception of the curriculum as being divorced from the realities of children's lives means that the intellect cannot function in the sense of defining the direction of children's activities, leading to a lack of engagement in learning.

Dewey advocates a process of *internalised attention* by which learning arises from the child's reflection and innate curiosity - the child is actively engaged in seeking meaning - but this requires attention to be paid to the means of .. *leading the child to realise a problem as his own, so that he is self-induced to attend in order to find out the answer.* (Dewey, 1915, p151) Without this pre-requisite to learning, he maintains that *reflective attention* is not possible. In order to create the right conditions to promote *reflective attention,* Dewey advocates that instruction should be centered around *themes with broad possibilities , accessible at many levels of complexity with natural connections to other subject areas* (Perrone, 1998, in Wiske (ed.), p20), a clear parallel with *generative topics.*

Dewey conceives of the child as a social entity and suggests that the type of social interaction which naturally occurs when children engage in more practical activities leads to an active collaboration in which *a spirit of free communication, of interchange of ideas ...* becomes the dominating force. (Dewey, 1915, p13)

What Dewey is also describing and advocating is the concept of *situated learning* which Perkins (1992) defines as *a culture of needs and practices that gives the knowledge and skill being learned context, texture and motivation.* (Ibid., p68) Dewey argues for the school to be seen as an *organic whole,* arising from the 'connectedness' of life to schooling, making sense of the school experience. His vision of the school is as a microcosm of society and of learning as being of intrinsic worth and value - not solely as a preparation for future life.

> *The aim then, is not for the child to go to school as a place apart, but rather in the school so to recapitulate typical phases of his experience outside of school, as to enlarge, enrich , and gradually formulate it.*
>
> (Dewey, 1915, p99)

Thus, for Dewey, the solution rests in revising the curriculum and in its means of delivery, helping children to 'make the connections' between their daily lives and schooling (and vice versa).

The concept of *situated learning* also underlies the philosophy of education held by Jerome Bruner whose educational programme 'Man: A Course of Study' (MACOS) (Bruner, 1967) took a central theme which was then developed within a social studies programme, seeking answers to fundamental questions such as, 'What is human about human beings?'; 'How did they get that way?'; and 'How can they be made more so?'(Ibid., p74). In his later work, he embraces the the notion of education as being a function of culture, facilitated through social interaction (c.c. 2.1.1). Bruner and Haste present a complex theory of language, social interaction and cognition mutually modifying each other in a process of inter-subjectivity. They draw from the work of Vygotsky to claim that the development of cognitive structures promotes the use of the instruments of language and culture but that these latter phenomena, in turn, promote cognitive growth. The child's development is *mediated by, and stimulated by, interaction with others* (Bruner and Haste (eds.), 1987, p8).

A focus upon Thinking Skills

Much of the discourse pertaining to transfer takes place within the context of the discourse relating to the teaching of thinking skills. The field of *thinking skills* is very wide and draws upon a range of philosophies. The concept of *situated learning* is central to much of the debate - the extent to which *thinking skills* are regarded as being embedded within subject disciplines (Perkins and Salomon, 1989; Gardner and Boix Mansilla, 1994; Willingham, 2007) or are capacities which are transferable from one context to another. *Thinking skills* approaches tend to mirror one or other of these philosophies - those which are taught discretely (eg. Feuerstein's 'Instrumental Enrichment'[15] or the 'Thinking

[15] A programme which was devised to work with socially and culturally disadvantaged children of immigrant families in Israel who, according to standard IQ tests, were under-performing in relation to their peers (Feuerstein *et al.*, 1980)

Through Philosophy Programme'[16]) ; and those which are *infused* within subject disciplines (eg. 'CASE' or 'CAME')[17] or are infused across the curriculum - (eg. 'Activating Children's Thinking Skills' *(ACTS))*[18] . Wilson (2000) outlines a range of approaches to the teaching of thinking skills, classified in this manner. (Ibid., pp. 33- 35)

Perkins (Brandt, 1986) puts forward the view that thinking skills can be advanced through discrete programmes and through infusion approaches if the commitment of individual teachers and management is forthcoming and if sufficient 'bridging' - a process by which the teacher makes clear the connections between and application of the new knowledge/skills to the new context - takes place. Swartz (2001) advises that immediate transfer activities should follow a specific thinking skills lesson and that the skills should be re-inforced at later points within the curriculum.

Why is transfer of knowledge and skills important? Many of the goals and aspirations which we would wish for our students relate to their capacity to apply their learning meaningfully in their everyday lives. This accords with the emphasis within Scottish Education on lifelong learning, embedded within the National Priorities, and reflected in this quote from Swartz and Parks (1994):

> *.. good thinking is essential in meeting the challenge of living in a technologically oriented, multicultural world .... Our students must be prepared to exercise critical judgement and creative thinking to gather, evaluate, and use information for effective problem solving and decision-making in their jobs, in their professions and in their lives.*
>
> (Swartz and Parks, 1994, p3)[19]

Reference has already been made to the *fragile* knowledge which many students hold and Perkins *et al.* maintain that this can be attributed in part to poor transferability of knowledge and skills and the difficulties which occur when people, faced with new and novel situations, try to apply known strategies inappropriately, failing to recognise the uniqueness of the situation - a manifestation of negative transfer which militates against effective learning.

Theories of Transfer

Perkins (1992) identifies two theories both of which inhibit the effective transfer of knowledge and skills - the first, the *Bo-Peep theory - leave them alone and they'll come home ...* - implying that transfer will occur automatically; and the second, the *lost sheep theory*

[16] applied and evaluated in Clackmannanshire (Strickey, 2003), influenced by Lipman's 'Philosophy for Children Programme' (Lipman, Sharp and Oscanyon, 1980) and the work of Fisher (1995, 1998)

[17] *Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education* (Adey and Sheyer, 1994). This programme and its successor (CAME) *Cognitive Acceleration through Mathematics Education* are both based upon the philosophies of Piaget and Vygotsky.

[18] This programme builds upon the work of Swartz and Parks (1994)

[19] cited in Kirkwood, 2005, p2

which maintains that transfer is not possible because of the contextual basis of knowledge and skills.

Why should it be the case that positive transfer is so difficult to effect? - are disciplinary knowledge and skills so context specific that transfer is not possible? has new knowledge failed to embed because of poor foundations (building upon a base of *fragile knowledge)*? has new knowledge failed to become internalised because of a lack of opportunity or failure to consolidate new knowledge and skills through putting them into practice? has the means of teaching failed to model the desired goals which are compatible with transfer? (eg. medical students failing to retrieve knowledge gained from text book study when working with patients).

It is likely that all of the above are factors in the failure of knowledge/skills to transfer but Perkins and Salomon (1988, 1989) ponder why it seems to be the case that some knowledge/skills seem to transfer more readily than others. They describe two processes:

- *low transfer* - the knowledge/skills to be acquired are routine in nature and the contexts for transfer are similar
- *high transfer* - greater reflection is required (and the active seeking of connections) in order to assimilate the new knowledge/skills and the differential between the contexts is wider.

(Perkins and Salomon, 1989, p22)

High transfer can occur *retrospectively* - reflecting upon past experience to abstract key characteristics which inform the current situation; and *prospectively* - reflecting upon the present in order to abstract key characteristics which can be applied in the future.

Low transfer is akin to normal learning processes whereas *high transfer* is a much more purposeful and thoughtful act. Perkins advocates that, in order for *high transfer* to occur, teachers should use both *bridging* and *hugging* (the teacher models the approach being advocated). For these processes to become internalised, students should be encouraged to develop these strategies within their own learning processes. He also advocates the use of *problem-based* or *enquiry learning* which leads to more flexible and generative applications of the knowledge later. These three strategies to promote the transfer of knowledge and skills are described by Perkins (1992) as *The Good Shepherd Theory* - the nurturing role of the educator.

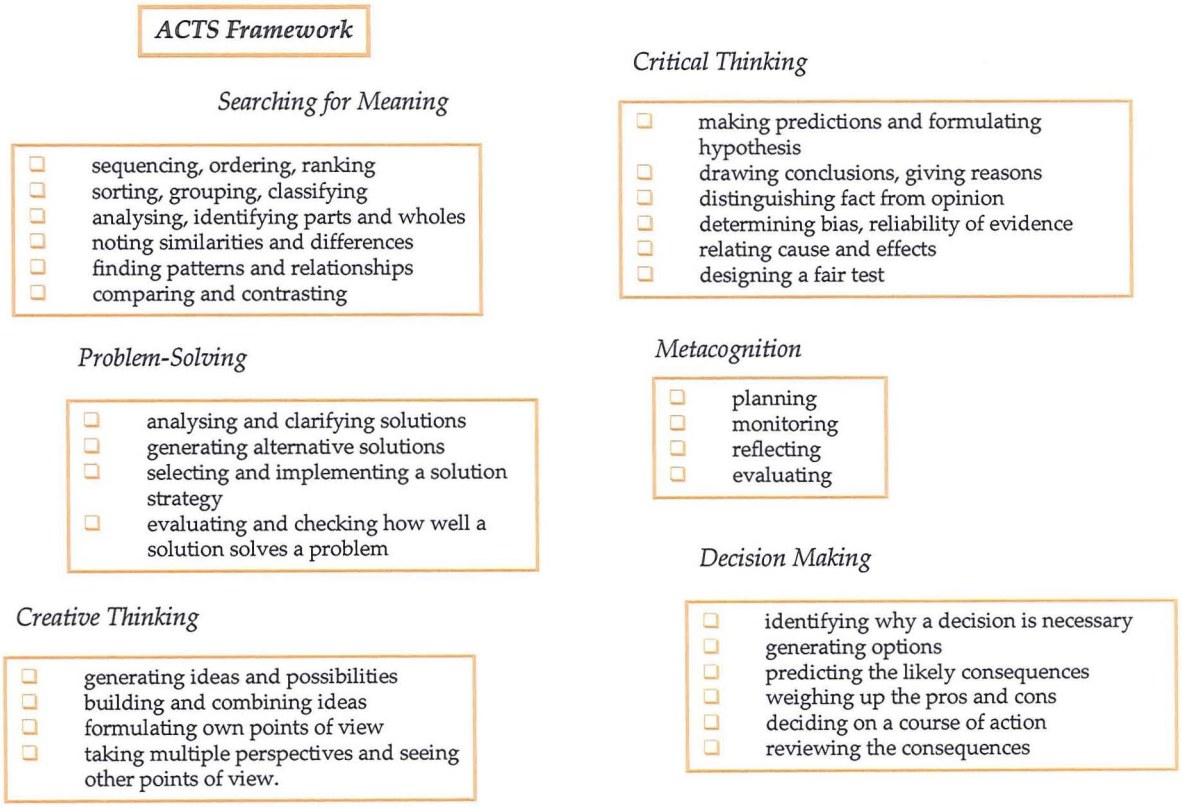
Metacognition

Willingham (2007) observes that, within the context of problem-solving scenarios, students often focus upon the 'surface structure' rather than the 'deeper structure' of the scenario, thus failing to recognise the applicability of problem-solving strategies (Ibid., p11). He identifies the importance of *metacognition, employ(ing) the right type of thinking at the right time.* (Ibid., p15)

Swartz (2001) makes a distinction between *teaching for thinking* (through the use of *higher order questions)* and *teaching of thinking*, the latter of which is a deliberate attempt by teachers to make thinking strategies explicit through a variety of means and to encourage student reflection, for example, making thinking 'visible'[20] through talking through thinking processes. The encouragement of student reflection upon their thinking processes is the development of *metacognition* which cannot be separated meaningfully from the development of *thinking skills*. Thus, the teaching of thinking should promote an internal dialogue in students which helps them to monitor and regulate their own learning. The capacity to exercise *metacognition* is dependent upon the child's ability to *get beyond cognition - in order to look at what cognition is* (Nisbet and Shucksmith, 1984, p4), requiring the processes of learning to be brought to a conscious level - what Nisbet describes as his *seventh sense.*

McGuinness (2006), building upon the work of Swartz and Parks (1994), integrates thinking skills and metacognition within a single framework - the 'ACTS' framework - an infusion approach to teaching thinking skills across the curriculum (c.c. Fig. 2.3). This framework is integrated with the *'TfU Framework'* in the design of the *Sgi.*

Fig. 2.3: The 'Activating Children's Thinking Skills Framework' (reproduced from Mowat, 2007)



With kind permission of Carol McGuinness
Teaching and Learning Research Briefing no. 18, ESRC

[20] 'Visible Thinking' is one of a range of projects to promote thinking dispositions currently underway under the auspices of 'Project Zero', Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Thinking Dispositions

Swartz (2001) draws upon the literature, including the work of Dewey (1933), to note the importance of motivation as a factor in the internalisation of thinking skills. Some commentators would argue that the fostering of *thinking dispositions* (Resnick, 1987; Lipman, 2003[21]), such as open-mindedness, are of equal, if not greater importance, than the development of thinking skills. Lipman conceives of *thinking dispositions* as representing the degree to which the child is disposed to use thinking skills and Resnick uses the term not to denote inherited traits but 'habits of mind' which dispose the child well to thinking. Costa and Kallick (2000) (eds.) identify sixteen *habits of mind* which they identify as fostering effective learning, amongst them *remaining open to continuous learning.* Perkins, 2000 (in Costa and Kallick (eds.)) makes a distinction between thinking performances of the kind often required in academic settings and those required in real-life:

> *... our thinking is not just a matter of the thinking we can do when we know a peak performance is demanded. It also is a matter of our sensitivity to occasions and our inclination to invest ourselves in them thoughtfully. High mental ability alone may serve us well when we're sitting at a desk, our pencils poised, but good habits of mind keep us going in the rest of the world.*
>
> (Ibid., intro ix)

Swartz and Parks (2001) argue that it is through the development of thinking skills that these dispositions are developed.

However, being disposed positively towards thinking is not necessarily sufficient in itself. As previously described, students require the metacognitive capacity to know in which circumstances it is appropriate to employ varied strategies and the ability to reflect upon and self-regulate their learning. Kirkwood (2005) identifies *metacognition* as being .. *an essential element of developing good thinking and fostering transfer* (Kirkwood, 2005, p151) thus, integrating these three related concepts. Resnick (1987) cautions, however, that *dispositions for higher order thinking require sustained long-term cultivation* - 'quick-fix' interventions won't do. (Resnick, 1987, p42)

A Synthesis

This discussion has drawn from and integrated a range of fields. It is evident that understanding is dependent not only upon having a solid foundation upon which to build - knowledge - but also upon having the capacity to work flexibly with that knowledge, utilising thinking skills; knowing when and in which circumstances specific thinking skills should come into play and being able to forward plan and monitor progress (metacognition); being disposed to do so (thinking dispositions); and being able to apply the knowledge and understanding so gained appropriately to a range of contexts

[21] cited in Kirkwood, 2005

(transfer) all of which are essential if the aims of the *Sgi* (reflected in the RQs) are to be realised.

2.2.2 *Why Constructivist Theories are applicable to the Sgi*

It is evident that understanding lies at the heart of the *personal intelligences* (RQ1). The definitions given of *intra- and inter-personal intelligence* in chapter 1 both commence with the words, *the capacity to understand* (c.c. 1.3.2). In this author's view, Behaviourism, with its theories of *classical* and *operant conditioning* (Watson, Thorndike and Skinner[22]) is an entirely inadequate basis for developing the *personal intelligences,* yet it underlies some of the most prevalent approaches towards behaviour management, such as *Assertive Discipline* (Canter and Canter, 1992)[23] with its advocacy of 'catch them doing it right' and of unrelenting and undiscriminating praise (c.c. 3.4.1) or 'consequences':

> *Children are rewarded for mindless obedience; the names of students who fail to obey are written on the blackboard for all to see; questions or objections are dismissed as irrelevant. All problems in the classroom are attributed to the students, and punishments imposed on them are said to result from their "choices".*
>
> (Kohn, 1999, p165)

There are few exemplifications of applications of constructivist approaches within the Affective Field[24] and the discourse around constructivism focusses largely upon the application of constructivist approaches within or across the subject-disciplines. It was not envisaged that the *'TfU Framework'* would be utilised in contexts other than the subject disciplines (c.c. 12.2.2), yet it was evident to the author that the framework had the potential to be utilised in this manner. The previous discussion establishes that there are many impediments to effective learning which may arise directly from the learning and teaching process. How much greater are these problems likely to lie in relation to the more nebulous and ephemeral areas of human behaviour and the emotions in which it is even more difficult to identify and pin down barriers to learning? This implies an even greater need for and emphasis upon teaching for understanding, helping children to 'make the connections' between their learning and practical applications within their daily lives.

Why the *'TfU Framework'* rather than the wide range of constructivist approaches which abound? The flexibility and simplicity of the design of the framework and its stress upon the fundamental importance of understanding as being the key goal attuned with the author's experience and insights into teaching and learning. This is not to imply that other constructivist approaches may not potentially be of value when applied within the Affective Field (nor does it imply that goals other than *understanding goals* are not of relevance to the *Sgi*).

[22] cited in Phillips and Soltis, 2004, pp. 21-32

[23] cited in Khon, 2001

[24] Head and O'Neill's paper on the introduction of Feuerstein's 'Instrumental Enrichment' to Kittoch School (Head and O'Neill, 1999) is one such example

2.3 *The Teaching for Understanding (TfU) framework*

The *'TfU Project'* (Wiske (ed.), 1998) was developed by a team at Harvard University under the auspices of *Project Zero,* led by David Perkins, Howard Gardner and Vito Perrone. The project seeks, in collaboration with schools, to foster understanding, focussing upon the inter-connectedness of subject matter, thinking skills and the culture of the classroom.

2.3.1 *What is the conception of understanding within the 'TfU Framework'?*

The key principle to emerge about the nature of understanding is that it is an active, rather than a passive, mental process - a performance rather than a representation (a 'mental model' or 'action schema' (c.c. 2.1.1)):- *Understanding is being able to think and act with what one knows.* (Perkins, 1998, p40) An *understanding performance* is not only the means by which students develop their understanding but also how it is demonstrated. Conceiving of understanding as a process as well as a product is a key principle of the *TfU* approach. Gardner (1995) describes an *understanding performance* as a flexible capacity with wide and novel applications (which has parallels with Perkins's (forthcoming) concept of pro-active knowledge):

> *Such performances occur when students are able to take information and skills they have learned in school or other settings and apply them flexibly and appropriately in a new and at least somewhat unanticipated situation.*
>
> (Gardner, 1995, p9).

Understanding is concerned with the extension of current knowledge and understanding, has applications beyond the classroom and is generative in nature:

> *Teaching for understanding - the view that what students learn needs to be internalised, able to be used in many different circumstances in and out of classrooms, serving as a base for ongoing and extended learning, always alive with possibilities.*
>
> (Perrone, 1998, in Wiske (ed.), p13).

Gardner (1995) illustrates the role of *metacognition* in understanding:

> *A sufficient grasp of concepts, principles, or skills so that one can bring them to bear on new problems and situations, deciding in which way one's present competencies can suffice and in which ways one may require new skills or knowledge.*
>
> (Gardner, 1995, p18).

A fundamental aspect of understanding is that it is concerned with 'making connections':

Connections are sought between students' lives and the subject matter, between principles and practice, between the past and the present. (Perkins, 1993 , p27)

We want students ... to develop coherent networks of concepts, to use what they learn in school to understand the world around them, and to develop an interest in lifelong intellectual pursuits.

(Simmons, 1994, p22).

But, how should understanding be gained? The answer lies in the ways in which students are encouraged to 'work with their knowledge' by means of *Socratic thinking:*

Understanding is a matter of being able to do a variety of thought-demanding things with a topic - like explaining, finding evidence and examples, generalising, applying, analogising and representing the topic in a new way.

(Perkins and Blythe, 1994, p5)

Perkins (1992) perceives the most fundamental means of achieving better learning as the ability of the learner to combine conceptual understanding, reflection and strategising. It is evident, therefore, that understanding is concerned with deep rather than surface learning (Entwistle, 2000):- *Understanding is about ... deep and not surface knowledge, and about greater complexity, not simplicity.* (Perrone, 1994, p13) He identifies four key principles inherent in *understanding performances.* These are that understanding is identified through *generative performances* (as previously described); different *understanding performances* require different kinds of thinking; understanding is open-ended and is a matter of degree; and teaching for understanding requires careful definition of what to teach. (Perkins, 1992, pp. 77 - 79)

In synthesising the previous discourse, several key principles have emerged which illuminate the performance perspective of understanding (c.c. Table 2.1).

2.3.2 *The 'TfU Framework': a description*

The underlying philosophy of the *'TfU Project'* is that it is possible to conceptualise teaching for understanding and to derive a common framework which can be applied across a range of contexts and disciplines. It encapsulates the definitions of understanding to which reference has previously been made and establishes principles of practice which can be understood and applied by teachers. The four key elements of the *'TfU Framework'* (Wiske, 1998, in Wiske (ed.)) are described in Fig. 2.4 and their characteristics identified.

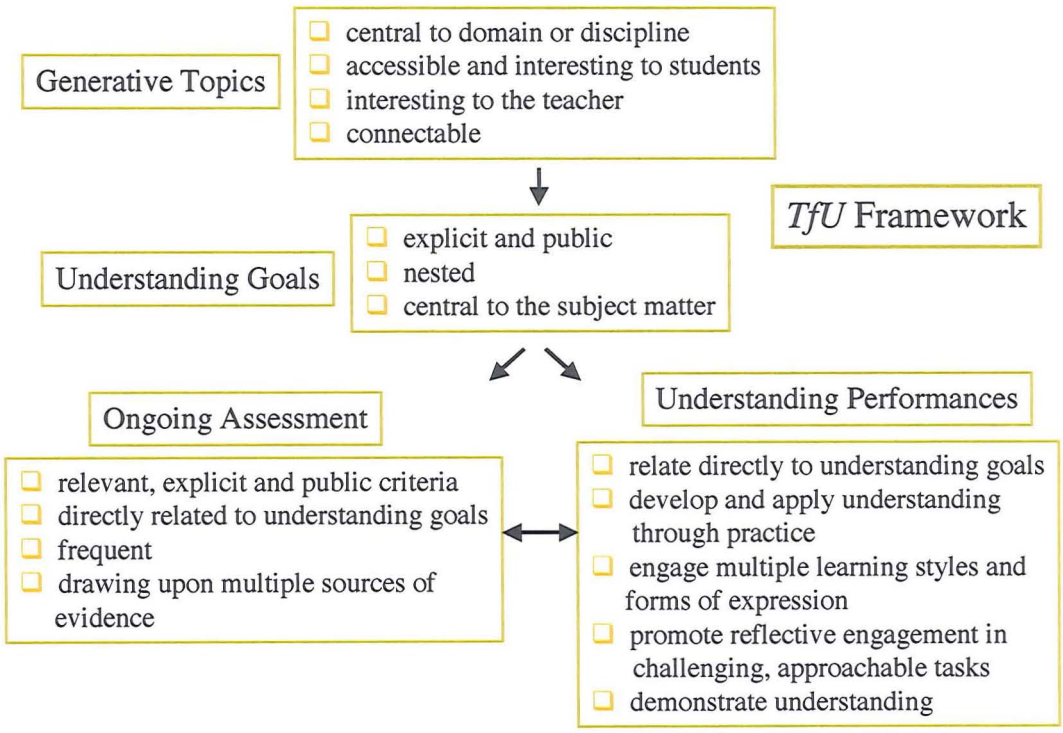
Generative Topics are topics of study which have within them the potential for meaningful investigation and which relate to the experience of the learner. They allow for varied entry points into the topic, taking account of the range of learning styles and intelligence profiles of the students and their social and cultural backgrounds, promoting active

Table 2.1: Synthesis of discussion as to the nature of understanding as forwarded in the *'TfU Framework'*

The Performance Perspective of Understanding
Understanding as:

- an active mental process;
- a flexible performance capacity;
- both a process and a product;
- pro-active and sense-making - seeking connections between and amongst things, building upon prior knowledge and understanding;
- internalised - a constructivist perspective;
- a reflective process demanding engagement in subject-matter at a deep level, drawing from the domain of thinking skills;
- generative and creative;
- transcending narrow subject boundaries;
- life-enhancing;
- fostering metacognition;
- arising from cultural processes deriving from interaction, collaboration, mediation and other social processes;
- arising from an enriching, generative curriculum - requiring careful definition of 'what' is to be taught as well as 'how';
- being context specific;
- open-ended and a matter of degree.

Fig. 2.4: *'TfU Framework'* derived from Wiske, 1998 (ed.), Ch 3 (p61 - 86)



engagement in learning. Most importantly, they must have the capacity to promote understanding within the subject discipline, making meaningful connections to wider knowledge and understanding, thus some activities which might be engaging to students may not necessarily be generative.

Understanding Goals are concerned with establishing the nature of the understanding which one wishes the learner to develop and communicating this information clearly to the learner.

Understanding performances are derived directly from *understanding goals* and are the means by which the learner will develop and demonstrate mastery of the *understanding goals*. Perkins and Simmons (1998)[25] construct four levels of *understanding performance* ranging from *content* (at the level of knowledge and routine procedures); *problem-solving* (applying strategies and seeking solutions); *epistimic* (requiring justification and explanation); and *inquiry* (open-ended investigation, hypothesising, and creating new knowledge).

Ongoing assessment is concerned with formative assessment and has much in common with the *Assessment is for Learning* national programme, derived from the research of Black and Wiliam (1998).

The conception of understanding within *TfU* is one in which knowledge itself becomes a reflective tool, generating further understanding. This contrasts with the view of disciplinary knowledge as being a body of facts detached from the modes of enquiry in which they initially developed. The *'TfU Framework'* shifts from this latter epistemology in the following respects:

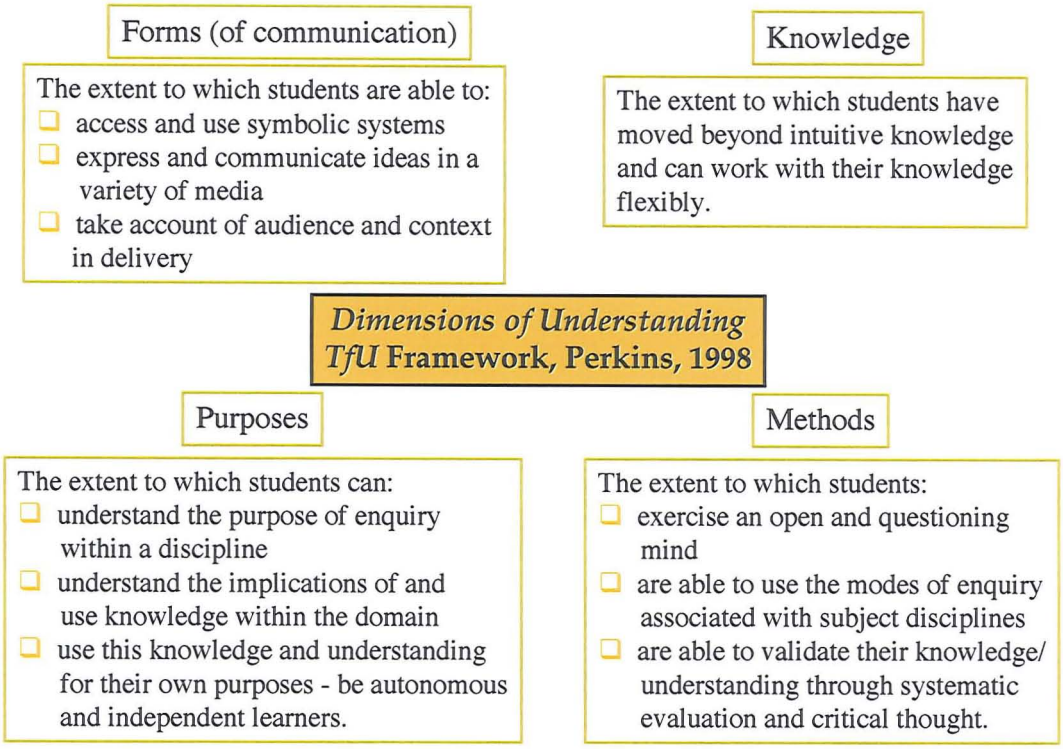
- a shift of perception from knowledge as a body of facts to richly connected conceptual frameworks of examples and generalisations
- it requires of the learner the ability to perceive the underlying modes of enquiry upon which the discipline is based
- it requires of the learner an understanding of the purposes to which knowledge can be put and the consequences of such
- it requires of the learner the ability to communicate their knowledge and understanding.

(Boix Mansilla and Gardner, 1998, in Wiske (ed.))

These conceptions are the four *dimensions of understanding* illustrated in Fig. 2.5.

[25] cited in Perkins, 1992

Fig. 2.5: The Dimensions of Understanding derived from Wiske, 1998 (ed.), Ch 6 (pp. 172-182)



2.3.3 *The influences underlying the 'TfU Framework'*

Dewey's advocacy of a child-centred approach in which children engage in authentic learning tasks, in which the role of the teacher is to 'give direction' to the child's learning, fostering the intrinsic motivation of the child, drawing upon constructivist principles of learning in which the child is actively engaged in a process of meaning making, drawing upon the symbolic system of language within a cultural and social context (c.c. 2.1.1), underlies many of the principles which underpin the *'TfU Framework'*.

Bruner argues for the need for learners to understand the 'ways of thinking/working' which are implicit within subject disciplines and therefore of the need for teachers to expose children, even at an early stage, to the epistemology of the subject.

> *We begin with the hypothesis that any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development.*
> (Bruner, 1960, p33)

Drawing from Piaget's conception of education as being concerned with *learning to gain the truth by oneself at the risk of losing a lot of time and of going through all the roundabout ways that are inherent in real activity* (Piaget, 1976, p106), he conceives of the child not as an assimilator of facts and knowledge, but as an active problem-solver, interacting with his world in a reflective and analytical way, making sense of it.

Bruner, in turn, was influenced by Vygotsky who conceives of the child drawing upon the tools and symbolic systems associated with his/her culture and upon social interactions mediated by adults. Cultural tools are the means by which the child looks at and interprets his/her world and which have the capacity to 'unlock' the personality of the child. Of all the cultural tools available to a society, that of language is regarded by Vygotsky as the most crucial as it is the medium of thought. As such, the extent to which the child has a rich language base will determine the capacity of the child to think critically and creatively (Vygotsky, 1987[26]).

Vygotsky believes that learning occurs on what he describes as two 'planes' - that of the *social plane* (interpersonal) and that of the *individual plane* (intrapersonal) when learning becomes internalised:- ... *initially these (higher mental) functions arise as a form of co-operative activity. Only later are they transformed by the child into the sphere of his own mental activity.* (Vygotsky, 1987, p259 in Daniels, 2001, p48) Learning is therefore mediated through cultural tools (physical and psychological) and/or through social relationships and, in particular, the role of the adult in the mediation process is crucial (Vygotsky in Daniels, 2001, p18). The adult *mediates* the learning of the child through the process of 'scaffolding', which Vygotsky describes as a process of *demonstration, leading questions and by introducing the initial elements of the task's solution* (Moll, 1990, p11 in Daniels, 2001, p59), the concept of 'scaffolding' being one in which the adult supports the child through the learning process with the prospect that the child will be able to operate independently when the 'scaffolding' is removed.

Vygotsky advocates that the principal concern should be not so much in measuring what the child has currently attained but in ascertaining the potential of the child. This he achieves through the process of the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)* which is a measurement of the difference between the child's *actual developmental level* (what he/she is able to do independently) and the *level of potential development* (what he/she is able to do with adult assistance or through collaboration with peers). Vygotsky is concerned with determining the *'buds' or 'flowers' of development rather than the 'fruits' of development.* (Vygotsky, 1978, p84 - 90) Thus, Vygotsky states - *The only 'good learning' is that which is in advance of developmen*t (Vygotsky, 1978, p84 - 90[27]).

Sizer (1984)[28], in his educational reform programme (realised through the *Coalition of Essential Schools),* advocates ' less is more', maintaining that schools should focus pedagogy upon *significant, universal and personally challenging issues* within a curriculum which fosters *thoughtful habits of mind.* (Levin, 2001 (ed.), p242)

Fig. 2.6 synthesises the discourse relating to the influences upon the development of the *'TfU Project'*, drawing from the works of Piaget, Dewey, Bruner, Vygotsky and Sizer.

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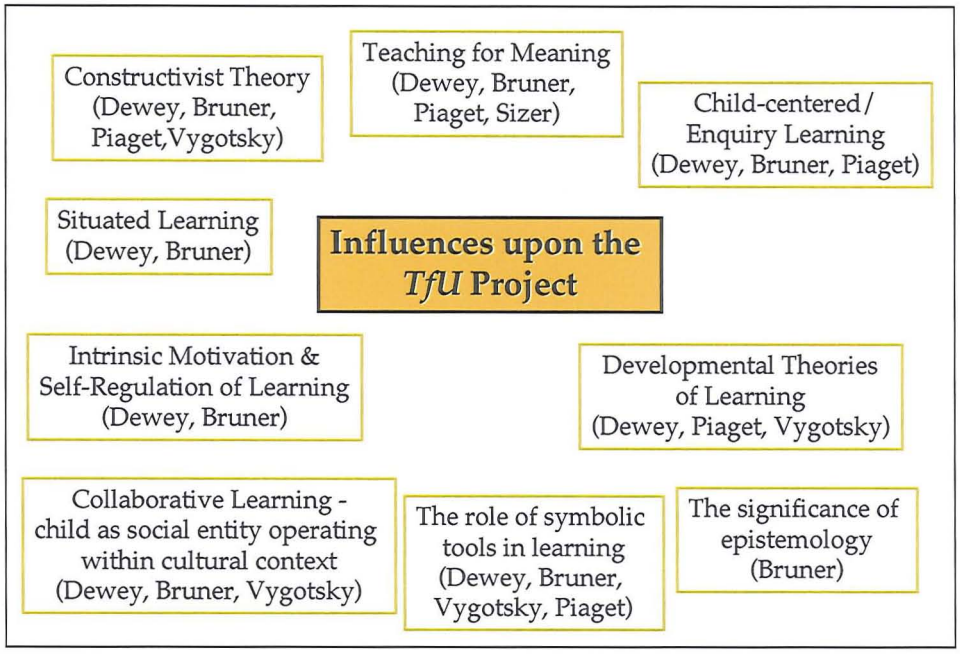
26 cited in Doyle (2004)

27 Vygotsky (1978) in Pollard (ed.), 2002, p113

28 cited in Levin (ed.), 2001, p109

Fig. 2.6: The influences underlying the '*TfU* project'



2.3.4 *The claims made for the 'TfU Project'*

In order to contextualise the claims made for the *'TfU Project'*, reference needs to be made to the research questions which were posed in the initial collaborative study (Project Zero), working within the subject disciplines of English, Mathematics, Science and the Humanities (Hammerness *et al.*, 1998, in Wiske (ed.))[29] .

The research questions were:

- how well did students achieve the 'understanding goals' their teachers set?
- did students in some classes develop deeper understandings than others? If so, how do the classes compare?
- what might account for any differences in student performances within and across classrooms?

In order to be able to demonstrate that students had developed and been able to demonstrate understanding in relation to the *understanding goals* set, the research team, in collaboration with teachers, devised performance criteria deriving from the four dimensions of understanding - knowledge, methods, purposes and forms of communication (c.c. Fig. 2.5) - structured at four levels, (Boix Mansilla and Gardner, 1998, in Wiske (ed.)) (c.c. Table 2.2), clearly resonating with Gardner's developmental stages (c.c. 2.1).

[29] c.c. Wiske, M.S. (ed.) (1998), Ch 8

Table 2.2: The four levels of understanding derived from Wiske, M.S. (ed.), 1998, Ch 6

Naive	The intuitive level
Novice	Based upon instruction
Apprentice	Based upon the models of enquiry within a discipline - able to develop conceptual frameworks, to work within them flexibly and to communicate knowledge effectively
Master	Able to generate new knowledge and to work flexibly across disciplines

The principal findings from the study (which are accompanied by a caveat that the research team cannot demonstrate a causal effect but can illuminate issues for further investigation) can be summarised as follows:

- in varying circumstances, some students succeeded in demonstrating a 'master' level of understanding
- the variables which impacted upon student performance were identified as teachers' experience, the nature of the student population, the school context and the nature of the subject-matter (eg. syllabi are more tightly and rigidly constructed in some subject areas than others (eg. Mathematics) allowing less scope to teach for understanding)
- the *TfU framework* was identified as a valuable way of conceptualising student understanding and may provide a valuable tool in formative assessment and in helping teachers to evaluate the quality of their teaching.

Subsequent to the study, the approach has been disseminated world-wide through the auspices of *Project Zero* and is currently being instigated in Scotland, working in partnership with 'Tapestry'.

2.3.5: The implications of the 'TfU Project' in relation to how teachers teach and how learners learn

One of the difficulties in establishing the implications of the *'TfU Project'* is that there is no one definitive pedagogy against which it can be compared - *There is no privileged method of teaching and learning* (Meyer, 2006, p172). There are wide differences in the conceptions of teaching and learning between the European 'didactics' tradition and the Anglo/American curriculum tradition (Meyer, 2006; Hudson, 2006). However, within these traditions, there are conflicting paradigms. Even amongst programmes with a specific focus upon understanding ('Understanding by Design', Wiggins and McTighe; 'Teaching for Understanding', University of Barcelona[30] ; 'Teaching for Understanding', Project Zero) there are fundamental differences in philosophy, emphasis and approach.

Hudson (2006) characterises the Anglo/American tradition as being dominated by curriculum organisation and systems in which the curriculum is perceived as a manual

[30] Larrain *et al.*, building upon the work of John Elliot, Cambridge University

for practice. Within this tradition, the social and cultural world is seen as an 'objective structure', the role of the teacher being to transmit this structure to students, leading to a reductionist approach to teaching and learning. It is concerned with 'how students learn' and the nature of what students should know and be able to do (Hudson, 2006, pp.136-137).

In contrast, Hudson identifies the European didactics tradition as being concerned with the acquisition of 'Bildung' (*a 'state of being' .. characterised by a cluster of attributes ... such as 'educated', 'knowledgeable', 'learned', 'literary', philosophical', 'scholarly' and 'wise'* (Hudson, 2006, p136)) which is developed within a social and cultural context. Didactics is concerned primarily with the 'what of instruction and education' rather than the 'how' (Hudson, 2006, p138 drawing upon Klafki (1995, 2000)). Within this tradition, the teacher exercises greater autonomy not only in relation to methods but also in relation to content and rationale. The teacher is *at the heart of the teaching/studying/learning process.* (Hudson, 2006, p140).

This author would argue that Hudson's analysis fails to take sufficient account of the cross-fertilisation of ideas and philosophies from the European tradition to the Anglo/American tradition (and vice-versa), which is exemplified in the influence of Piaget, Vygotsky and Feuerstein on one hand, and Dewey, Bruner and contemporary thinkers, such as Gardner, on the other. Perkin's advocacy of *generative topics* is in keeping with much of the European tradition. Meyer (2006) identifies a common theme to emerge within both traditions - that of student-centred, in contrast to teacher-centred, learning.

Alexander (2006) (3rd ed.), in making a case for the centrality of talk in learning, describes six predominant approaches to teaching across the world. (c.c. Table 2.3)

Table 2.3: Summary of modes of teaching (Alexander, 2006, p29)[31]

Teaching as:	
Transmission	Inculcating information and skills deemed socially/economically necessary
Initiation	Giving learners access to the culture's stock of high-status knowledge and enabling them to use its modes of enquiry and ways of making sense
Negotiation	Seeing knowledge as being in the process of being created rather than handed down; treating teachers and pupils as joint enquirers
Facilitation	Respecting and nurturing individual differences; responding to developmental need rather than societal imperatives; and to the pupil's readiness. facilitating rather than directing
Acceleration	Moving forward collectively towards common goals, bridging the 'natural' and 'cultural' lines of development
Technique	A focus upon the act of teaching, emphasising structure, graduated tasks, economy, conciseness and pace

[31] drawn from the text with some modifications

Within the Scottish context, the model of teaching and learning which has previously been advocated has been that set out in 'Achievement for All' (SOEID, 1996) - 'direct teaching' and setting by ability. This model of teaching and learning draws principally from the 'transmission', 'initiation' and 'technique' modes described by Alexander although it has elements of 'facilitation' and 'acceleration'. According to Alexander, such teaching proceeds mainly through 'rote', 'recitation' (the posing of questions or providing pupils with clues to work out the answer) and 'instruction/exposition' (Alexander, 2006, p30). It would be regarded by many as conservative and akin to what is generally regarded as 'chalk and talk', certainly not a student-centred approach. The model of teaching advocated within the *'TfU Project'*, however, draws more from the 'initiation', 'negotiation' and 'facilitation' modes as described by Alexander.

What characterises *TfU* classrooms therefore? The principal characteristics are the focus upon enquiry in *generative topics*; the high degree of focus of teachers and pupils upon *understanding goals* and outcomes; the more participative and active learning environment; the greater dialogue between teacher and pupils and between pupils and pupils; the emphasis upon collaborative learning; the emphasis, through *Socratic questioning*, upon probing and deepening understanding; the range of expressions of understanding through *understanding performances*; the use of *ongoing assessment* (formative assessment practices) to further learning; and, most importantly, the creation of a climate which fosters learning and validates learners.

However, at a deeper level, the *TfU* classroom is one in which the very nature of what has to be learned is open to negotiation by teacher and pupils, raising fundamental questions as to the nature of knowledge and its value (Wiske, 1994, p19). It is a journey, a voyage of discovery embarked upon by teachers and students where the destination is not always known in advance. This collaborative journey with pupils fundamentally changes the 'rules of engagement' within the classroom as the teacher takes on the additional roles of facilitator and leaner, acting as a role-model for pupils, creating a reciprocal relationship which enables students to understand that the process of learning is effortful and does not always proceed smoothly. It is the focus upon the active engagement of the student in the learning process and the fostering of independent learning which are the hallmarks of the approach.

It is clear, however, that *TfU* places demands both upon the teacher in terms of delivering the teaching programme and upon the teaching programme itself. Perkins is not advocating a teaching programme based entirely upon the *'TfU Framework'*. The onus is upon the teacher to create balanced programmes of study which provide opportunities for more 'in-depth' learning but also promote basic skills development. Nor is Perkins necessarily advocating the multi-disciplinary approaches which were popularly associated with progressivism in the 1960s such as Bruner's *MACOS*, project-based learning and 'discovery learning' (Montessori, 1955[32]).

[32] described in Fogarty, R. (2001), in Costa (ed.)

However, it is important to recognise that these outcomes will only be achieved through the dedication, commitment, knowledge, understanding, skills and dispositions of teachers in realising the aims of the programme, which is dependent upon high-quality continuous professional development and support, and upon the willingness of pupils to engage - *Constructivism .. is a choice that not only teachers but learners make. It takes two to tango.* (Perkins, 2006, in Meyer and Land (eds.), p3[33])

A Synthesis

The 'TfU framework', drawing from constructivist theory, provides a flexible means through which teaching for understanding can be conceptualised and operationalised. A performance perspective of understanding underpins the framework. Underlying it are conceptions about the nature of knowledge, epistemology, the purposes to which it can be put and means of communication. The role of the teacher is that of facilitator and learner, fostering the active engagement of children in their learning.

2.4 *The application of constructivist theory to the Sgi*

The *Sgi* programme was developed around the 'TfU framework' - identifying for each unit of work the *generative topic, understanding goals* and *performances* and means of *ongoing assessment.* The *understanding goals* (c.c. Fig. 2.7) are allied to the aims of the approach as reflected in RQs 1 & 2.

Fig 2.7: Extract from 'Support Group Leaders' Guide to Activities '

Understanding Goals: pupils should gain an understanding of:

- the types of behaviour which are likely to promote effective learning and good teamwork within the Support Group
- the concepts of attitudes (thoughts and feelings), values, beliefs and motivations and the inter-relationships between them

Thinking Skills

- *creative thinking:* generating new ideas; brainstorming, making analogies
- *seeking meaning:* classifying and analysing information
- *critical thinking:* evaluating opinions

Other Objectives

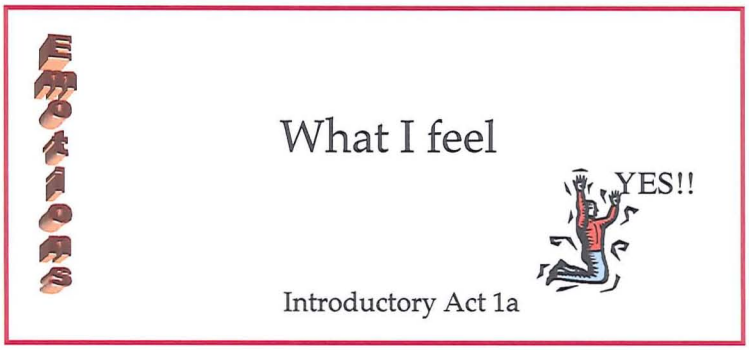
- to agree a Support Group Pledge

[33] of chapter

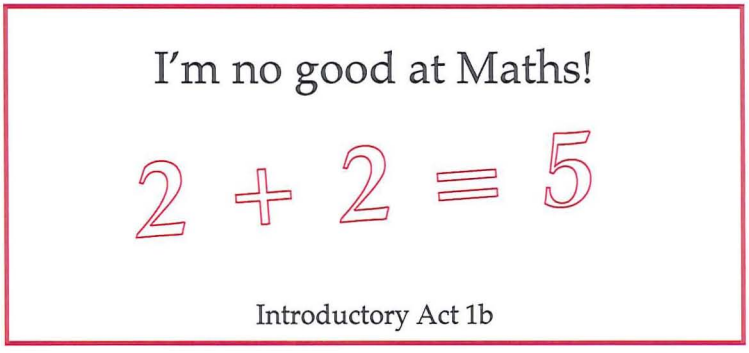
Fig. 2.8: An exemplification of an activity from the *Sgi* programme (Mowat, 2007)

Introductory Activities 1a & 1b

- Using the set of cards (Act 1a) select "What I feel". Starting with the Support Group Leader, each group member should give an example of an emotion.

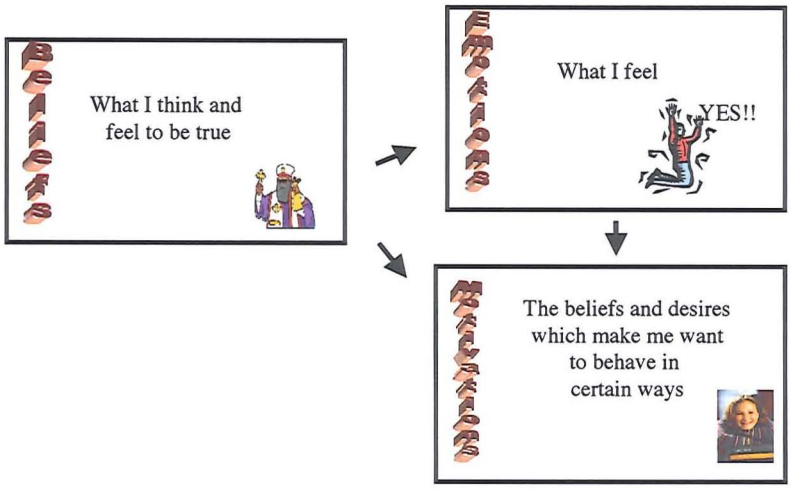


- Take each of the other cards and do the same.
- Using the set of cards (Act 1b) each member of the group should take a card in turn and say whether it is an emotion, attitude, value, belief or motivation. The others in the group should then say whether they agree or not and put forward different suggestions, explaining their reasons.



Pupils are then asked to construct a chart (using cards which can be manipulated, illustrating the concepts of 'emotions', 'attitudes', 'values', 'beliefs', 'motivations' and 'actions) (RQ1), drawing connections between these concepts (on the proviso that there is no one 'correct' answer) (c.c. Fig. 2.9):

Fig. 2.9: An exemplification of an activity from the *Sgi* programme (Mowat, 2007)



The value in the exercise is two-fold - in relation to the process and product, exemplifying the dual nature of *understanding performances*. In relation to the former, pupils are developing further their conceptual understanding (RQ1) through collaborative learning, through developing *thinking skills* and through the *SgL* and other pupils within the group scaffolding their learning; they are also developing their interpersonal and communication skills (RQ2.2) (obtaining *ongoing feedback* from the *SgL)*. In relation to the latter, the desired *understanding goal* (product) is that, through the processes described, pupils will arrive at a deeper understanding of the concepts in question and their inter-relatedness. These concepts are the crucial building blocks in helping children to develop the *personal intelligences* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006) (RQ1).

However, this exercise fulfils a further function - it enables pupils to develop a symbolic system (Vygotsky, 1978), which enables them to take part in a discourse around these concepts, engaging with them at a deeper level, furthering their understanding (the concepts of *generative topics* and *situated learning*). Furthermore, the *SgL* is acting as a *mediator* (Feuerstein, 1980) in the learning process, *scaffolding* the thinking of pupils, acting within their *Zone of Proximal Development* (Vygotsky, 1978).

The illustrations should enable the reader to 'make the connection' between the influences which underlie the *'TfU Project'* and the *Sgi*, almost all of which are exemplified within it. It illustrates both Dewey's/Piaget's movement from the concrete to the abstract and (hopefully) Bruner's assertion that *any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage in development* (Bruner, 1960, p33).

Chapter 3
The Cognitive Field - The Affective Field

The central theme of this chapter is related to Bruner's question, "What is human about human beings?" (Bruner, 1967) The previous chapters have identified principles and concepts which underlie the *Sgi*, such as those which relate to an individual's sense of identity - values, beliefs, thoughts and feelings (which form attitudes) - which work together in a process of inter-subjectivity to underlie motivations and behaviour (as identified by McLean, 2003, p8) (related to the realisation of RQ1 & 2). This chapter builds upon the previous chapters to explore the relationship between the cognitive and affective fields, examining Gardner's *Multiple Intelligence Theory (MI)* (Gardner, 1993a, 1999, 2006) (c.c. 3.1), focussing specifically upon the *personal intelligences* (RQ1), relating them to the concepts of *theory of mind* (c.c. 3.1.2) and *emotional intelligence* (c.c. 3.2). This leads into a discussion focussing upon values and the development of moral understanding (RQ1) (c.c. 3.3) and, finally, a discussion of motivational factors in learning (RQ2.4) (c.c. 3.4).

3.1 Multiple Intelligence Theory (MI Theory)

This discussion places MI Theory within the wider context of theories of intelligence and the *personal intelligences* within the context of MI Theory.

3.1.1 The conceptualisation of MI Theory

Within this discussion, conceptions of intelligence are examined and tensions and dilemmas within the field are explored, bringing out the ways in which Gardner's theory is distinctive and of significance.

Gardner's principal claim (1983)[1] is that, rather than there being one single, measurable, general intelligence (*g*)[2] which is innate and immutable, there is a profile of intelligences, each with its own strengths and constraints, which is unique to each individual and which can be drawn upon, nurtured and developed. He identifies three principal means by which intelligence is currently conceived:- *intelligence as a species characteristic* (by which human intelligence is delineated from that of other species); *intelligence as individual difference* (in the psychometric tradition); and *intelligence as fit execution of an assignment* (through which an individual demonstrates behaviour which might be construed as 'intelligent') (Gardner, 2006, pp. 32-33).

Gardner (1997) poses the question:- *Given what we know about the brain, evolution, and the*

[1] in Gardner (1993a) (2nd ed.)

[2] the concept of *g* is elaborated upon and qualified at a later point in this discourse

differences in cultures, what are the sets of human abilities we all share? (Checkley, 1997, p10) His concern is not with measuring individuals against each other on a psychometric scale nor with abstract conceptualisations of 'intelligence' as apart from the context in which the 'intelligence' manifests itself, but with identifying meaningful roles which people could play in society, taking account of the cultural context (Gardner, 2006, p44). He derives his theory through interrogating each potential intelligence in relation to eight criteria drawn from a diverse range of disciplines.

Why is it the case that Gardner and other psychologists have felt the need to redefine intelligence? Gardner maintains that, in the light of new understandings of brain function and scientific and technological changes, there is a need to move away from the 'traditional' views of intelligence and to put forward a new conception of the human intellect.

Gardner is not alone in positing a *pluralist* approach towards the concept of intelligence. Sternberg (1997) claims that a narrow concept of intelligence, focussing upon memory and analytical ability, serves students poorly - *we may be inadvertently disenfranchising multitudes of students from learning.* (Sternberg, 1997, p1) Sternberg (1985) puts forward a more embracing concept of *successful intelligence,* incorporating, in addition to memory, three *domains of ability - analytical, creative* and *practical* (the latter encompassing *social and emotional competencies)* (Lopes and Salovey, 2004, in Zins *et al.* (eds.)). Intelligence, according to Sternberg, is defined as:- *... one's ability to achieve success in life, given one's personal standards, and within one's sociocultural context* (Sternberg, 1999, p259 - 275) which is a much broader concept than that of conventional *IQ* with its emphasis upon logical-abstract reasoning.

In a more recent synthesis of the literature, Pretz and Sternberg (2005) relate intelligence to:

- *efficiency of basic cognitive processes (speed of perception and focused brain activity)*
- *metacognitive control and flexibility of cognitive processes (attention, cognitive control, strategy flexibility)*

(Pretz and Sternberg (2005) in Sternberg and Pretz (eds.), p314)

They posit that *more intelligent behaviour is caused by better-orchestrated brain functioning, which is reflected in faster responses,* although the causality of the relationship between these two phenomena is unclear. (Ibid.)

It is now recognised that intelligence does not exist in a vacuum - it is expressed within the context of tasks, domains and disciplines (Gardner, 1993a). Gardner maintains that to be successful within a domain or discipline requires the individual to draw upon a range of intelligences and that, concordantly, each intelligence can be applied to a range of different contexts.

Gardner, in keeping with many other psychologists, is critical of the tradition of *psychometric testing,* based upon the concept of *g,* arising from the work of Binet, Stern, Terman and Yerkes, and Spearman in the early 20th Century. The principal concerns relate to the fact that they test only a narrow range of competencies - principally linguistic and logical reasoning; it is difficult to eliminate cultural bias either within the assessment instrument or within the test setting; and, of greater concern is their validity - is it really the case that a 'snapshot', outwith an authentic context, taken in time, could predict future performance? Feuerstein *et al.* (1980) reject such tests, considering that they measure only what the child is capable of performing at that point in time, preferring instead to focus upon measuring the potential of the child (the *Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD))* by means of the *Learning Potential Assessment Device (LPAD).*

Gardner (1993a) maintains that the imperative is to gain a deeper understanding of what constitutes intelligence as it is only through this means that more authentic means of developing and testing it - what he describes as *intelligent fair* - can be devised.

What makes Gardner's work distinctive? Gardner (1999) identifies two key factors:- the first being that *MI* theory is all encompassing - it sets out to define the human intellect; the second being its stress upon the uniqueness of each individual as represented in the profile of intelligences (in contrast to the position of individuals on a bell-curve relative to the 'performance' of others in a *psychometric test).*

Gardner (1983) defines intelligence as being:- .. *the ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings.* (Gardner, 1993a (2nd ed.), p xiv) There are two features of note within this definition:- the first being the emphasis upon intelligence as being culturally related; the second being the inclusion of 'products' - artefacts, musical compositions ... - which, in earlier conceptions of intelligence were not represented. Given that different cultures value different skills and attributes[3] and that culture is both a dynamic process and a product of this process, what will 'count' as an intelligence may vary in space and time. Thus to be 'intelligent' in the 21st century, in a technological age, may require of an individual, adaptive, problem-solving capacities in which the ability to memorise and regurgitate information is of less value than it might have been in a less technological age.

The focus upon 'products' gives an equivalence to skills and attributes which had previously been commonly referred to as talents , such as bodily-kinesthetic ability, in comparison to, for example, mathematical ability. However, one might ask, why is this important? It is important because it brings out into the open, and therefore to scrutiny, the assumptions, values and beliefs which, in Western societies, underlie theories of what it is to be intelligent and which have shaped the form which schooling has taken over the previous century.

In two later definitions, Gardner (1999, 2006) redefines intelligence as:- *a biopsychological*

[3] Nisbet in Entwistle (ed.) (1985) draws upon Mead's (1930) observations of the Manus's aptitudes in the sea

potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value to a culture (Gardner, 1999, p34) and *a computational capacity - a capacity to process a certain kind of information - that is founded on human biology and human psychology* (Gardner, 2006, p6).

The key difference between the 1983 and 1999 definitions is the description of an intelligence (in the latter) as being something which is in embryonic form rather than something to be measured in the 'here and now'. It has a biological/genetic basis (and Gardner suggests that some 'intelligences', such as musical intelligence, may have greater heritability than others) and may or may not flourish depending upon the values and opportunities inherent within a specific culture and the decisions which are made by the individual and those influential to the individual's development (reflecting a trend of *contextualisation* within the field (Gardner, 1993a)). The 2006 definition is more in keeping with the earlier definition with its emphasis upon 'capacities'.

Perhaps an even more important question to pose than "What makes Gardner's work distinctive?" is to pose the question, "What makes his work significant?"

Gardner encapsulates what lies at the heart of *MI theory* as follows:

> *From my perspective, the essence of the theory is to to respect the many differences among people, the multiple variations in the ways that they learn, the several modes by which they can be assessed, and the almost infinite number of ways in which they can leave a mark on the world.*
>
> (Gardner, 2000, preface)[4]

He is therefore advocating a flexible, imaginative approach which takes account of individual difference, drawing upon the range of intelligences as seems appropriate.

However, there is no shared and agreed understanding of the nature of intelligence and how it manifests itself. It could be argued that Gardner's theories arise from earlier traditions such as those exemplified in *the interactive approach,* concerned with matching learning and teaching approaches, as described by Tomlinson (1985) (such as Pask's identification of *holists* and *serialists*[5]) and exemplified subsequently in a wide range of theories in support of learning styles[6] in which there are no claims made in relation to intelligence.

Gardner (1999) describes three debates which have dominated the discourse regarding the nature of intelligence and *psychometric tests*:- is there an overriding general intelligence (*g*) or is intelligence constituted of a range of autonomous faculties? to what extent is it possible to produce a test which is not biased? and to what extent is intelligence modifiable - a function of nature or nurture?

4 in Armstrong, (2000) (2nd ed.)
5 in Daniel (1975) cited in Tomlinson (1985)
6 critiqued by Coffield (2005)

In reflecting upon this highly complex field, this author would tentatively suggest that the dichotomy between the 'generalists' and the 'pluralists' may not hold true. Gardner does not rule out that there may be some form of *g* in operation (as it is currently, narrowly conceived), and indeed, he states:- *MI theory questions not the existence but the province and explanatory power of g.* (Gardner, 1999, p87) Thus, he is questioning the current state of knowledge and understanding of the concept of *g* and also the claims made for it - do they hold true? Even in tests which are designed to be 'culture free' (if such a phenomenon exists), does the ability to order symbols have any predictive capacity on an individual's capacity to problem-solve in real life situations? He draws attention to the possibility of positive correlations being established between some of the intelligences which he has identified and also of the possibility of some intelligences transcending others in their generative ability to act as a catalyst to foster other intelligences (Rauscher *et al.*, 1995)[7] . However, he reaches the conclusion that, according to current understandings, it is not known the extent to which these possible correlations exist and can be substantiated.

The finding that the greatest predictor of success in Scottish National Qualifications at Higher level in 2002 across all subjects was not a candidate's previous performance in that specific subject but the aggregate of his/her performance across all subjects, accounting for nearly half the variation in Higher results, was explained by the researchers in the following manner:- *This is because it is a better indicator of all-round or general ability* (SQA, Research Bulletin, 2003, p2). In lay terms, the concept of *'all round or general ability'* equates to that of *g*.

This author would maintain that, even if it were possible to construct *IQ* tests which are bias free (in respect of gender, race, ethnicity etc.), the decisions which guide what constitutes intelligence (and therefore what should be measured) are embedded within culture and therefore *IQ tests* can never be regarded as culture free. This accords with Gardner's view of intelligence being a cultural construct.

Gardner rejects the 'nature/nurture' debate which has dominated much of the previous discourse in relation to intelligence and instead stresses the *constant and dynamic interaction, from the moment of conception, between genetic and environmental factors.* (Gardner, 1999, p87)

Neuroscience may, in the future, offer increasing insights into the processes of learning but, at present, the science is in its infancy and there are claims and counter-claims made for its findings to date. Hall (2005), observes that a new consensus is gradually arising in which it is accepted that there is continued *plasticity* in brain function (the modifiability of brain structures) and the possibility of *sensitive periods* (which may extend into, at least the teenage years) which may facilitate certain types of learning. This may lend weight to the concept of intelligence as being a dynamic process and therefore modifiable.

[7] cited in Gardner (1999)

A Synthesis

Intelligence is a highly contested concept. Sternberg and Gardner, amongst others, forward alternative conceptions which challenge the psychometric tradition, rejecting the concept of intelligence as being a single, innate and fixed trait which can be reliably measured such that future performance can be predicted. Intelligence, according to Gardner, is a *biopsychological potential* which functions within a cultural setting (Gardner, 1999, p34) and, indeed, what constitutes intelligent behaviour may be determined by what is valued within that setting.

3.1.2 *The Personal Intelligences*

This discussion teases out the relationship between the *personal intelligences* and the child's sense of identity (c.c. RQ1), focussing specifically upon the development of a *theory of mind* (Astington, 1994; Astington and Baird, 2004), and placing the *personal intelligences* within the wider context of the emotions.

Whilst Gardner maintains that the two *personal intelligences* are distinct from each other and can be justified in terms of the criteria against which each intelligence has been measured[8], he makes the case that the development of each is dependent upon the other:

> *... these two forms of knowledge are intimately intermingled in any culture, with knowledge of one's own person perennially dependent upon the ability to apply lessons learned from the observation of other people, whilst knowledge of others draws upon the internal discriminations the individual routinely makes.*
>
> (Gardner, 1993a (2nd ed.), p241).

Indeed, Gardner (Ibid., p243) suggests that a sense of identify arises from a *fusion of one's intrapersonal and one's interpersonal knowledge.* Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, describe the process as being *self-in-relation-to-other ... The self is that aspect of the personality that allows us to know how to interact with others.* (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, p180) Thus, according to Oatley and Jenkins, it could be said that *interpersonal* intelligence is dependent upon *intrapersonal* intelligence and, in turn, *intrapersonal* intelligence derives from a process of *social referencing*. The two personal intelligences, by this account, are, in effect, mutually modifying each other.

The development of both personal intelligences is rooted within cultural and historical forces - Gardner states that culture plays a determining role:- *.. it is through the learning - and use - of the symbol system of one's culture that personal intelligences come to assume their characteristic form.* (Gardner, 1993a, p275)

[8] Gardner (1993 (2nd ed.)), notes, for example, that the neurological pathways for processing *intrapersonal intelligence (one's inner state)* are different from those processing *interpersonal intelligence (communicating inner states to others).*

This perspective is backed by Astington (1994),

> *People everywhere try to explain their own actions and to understand the actions of others in terms of the moral code of their society. This suggests that there is general recognition of the self, and of the self as distinct from others and from the physical world. That is to say, self-awareness is a universal human characteristic.*
>
> (Astington, 1994, p33)

Prior to exploring both *intrapersonal* and *interpersonal* intelligence in greater depth, it would be of value to place them within the wider context of exploring the nature of 'feeling states' or emotions.

There is a vast literature dedicated to exploring the nature of 'feeling states' / emotions going back in time (Aristotle (384-322BCE); Descartes, 1649; Darwin,1872; James, 1890; Freud, 1895), through the 20th century (Harlow and Hess (brain science); Arnold and Tomkins (psychological perspectives); Isen and Bower, (the effects of emotions); Goffman and Hochschild (the dramaturgical perspective[9]) and explorations of emotions through literature (George Elliot) (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, Ch 1). However, from the perspective of this thesis, the most important consideration is to explore how children develop awareness and insight into their emotions and those of others as these are the foundations of the *personal intelligences* and interpersonal relationships.

Brewer (2001) stresses the individual nature of children's development - this individuality is, in her view, *an inherent part of our ability to survive, flourish and evolve further as a species.* (Brewer, 2001, p10) Whilst some children will reach certain stages of development before others, the pattern of development is universal.

Astington (1994) makes an important distinction between young children's capacity to express emotions and to experience beliefs and desires; and their understanding of these states and ability to attribute these states to others. Why, however, is this capacity to understand one's own and the internal states of another important?

Brewer (2001) observes that people think, feel and act according to their perceptions of the world. In order to function effectively within that world and to interact appropriately with others, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the perspectives of others and the motivations behind their actions. (Ibid., p15) The capacity to perceive the world from a range of perspectives and to understand the *intentionality* of others is only possible when the child has reached a stage of development whereby he can differentiate self from others and, in the words of Brewer:- *.. he has worked out (ie. has come up with the theory) that people have minds, and he understands that it is the thoughts and ideas in those minds which govern people's behaviour.* (Ibid., 2001, p38).

---

[9] a theory based on the premise that *we literally give dramatic presentations of ourselves to each other* (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, p31)

This theory is described as a *theory of mind (ToM)* and is believed by many psychologists to be a very important 'stepping stone' in a child's development. Without a *ToM,* a child is locked into his own world, lacking the capacity for empathy and the ability to form effective interpersonal relationships.

ToM is described by Astington and Baird (2004) as *the means by which researchers referred to children's understanding of people as mental beings, who have beliefs, desires, emotions, and intentions, and whose actions and interactions can be interpreted and explained by taking account of these mental states* (Ibid., p7). Thus, it is an important element in children's capacities to make sense of their world.

Wellman (2004) describes *ToM* as a core human cognition system, a developmental process which, along with language, *shapes human thought and learning* (Ibid., 2004), is common to all cultures and languages and is important for children's social interaction and functioning. It rests on three core concepts - intentionality, beliefs and desires - which he describes as a *learning mechanism* which enables the child to attend to mental states thus generating further learning.

Naito (2004) describes *ToM* as *an ability to impute mental states to people's behavior* (Ibid., p10). He draws attention to cultural and individual differences in the development of a *ToM* (for example, children from Eastern cultures and from underprivileged families within Western cultures are slower to develop a *ToM*) and he infers that its emergence goes through an extended transitional phase which differs across cultures and amongst individual children and that it may consist of *a set of multifaceted, cooperatively independent constructs* rather than a unitary capacity.

The role of maternal *attunement* (the extent to which the mother is emotionally in tune with the child) is regarded as being a key element in the development of a *ToM* (Astington, 1994; Oatley and Jenkins, 1996). Snow (1987) draws attention to the role of the parent in promoting empathy and surmises that the process may begin at an earlier stage than can be observed from the child's actions through the process of *intersubjectivity* (Trevarthen, 1977) in which the mother interprets and *attunes* (Stern, 1985) to the child's emotional states, relating to the quality of *attachment* (Ainsworth *et al.*, 1978) between mother and child[10] . Ainsworth *et al.* (1978) identify the *sensitivity* of the mother to both positive and negative signals from the baby as being an important factor in this process (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, p199). In their experiments with infants and mothers[11] , they identify three styles of *attachment - secure, ambivalent* and *avoidant* (Ibid., p194). However, other researchers (for example, Kagen, 1987) argue that there may be alternative explanations for the child's response to the mother's absence related to the temperament of the child (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996).

Attachment Theory stems from the work of Bowlby and is conceived as *an evolutionary*

[10] all references cited in Snow in Kagen and Lamb (eds.), 1987

[11] based upon the "Strange Test" examining infants' responses to separation from the mother

derived aspect of the parent-child relationship (the mother's response to the infant's distress) in which the child *develops a model of the other person's desires and intentions,* allowing for a collaboration between parents and child in achieving mutual goals (Oatley and Jenkins, 1996, p177) and enabling the child to form trusting relationships (Ibid., p194).

Dunn (1987a) draws upon a study by Zahn-Waxler and Yarrow (1981) in which it was found that, in families in which the mother draws the attention of the children *closely and insistently* to the distress of others, the children at a later point demonstrate more altruistic and caring behaviour towards others than in families in which this is not the case (Dunn, 1987a, p36), thus laying the foundations for empathy.

What is evident from Dunn *et al.*'s studies is that when children are observed in familiar surroundings interacting with their parents and siblings they begin to form a *ToM* at a much earlier stage (perhaps even as early as fourteen months) than the early studies of Piaget (1926, 1928, 1929) (Donaldson, 1987, p31) and later studies conducted in laboratory settings might otherwise indicate.

Astington and Baird (2004) note the important function of language in the development of a *ToM* but they also observe that it is a reciprocal relationship - *ToM* facilitates language development (Ibid., p7). Through conversation, children develop an awareness of different perspectives; through gaining familiarity with concepts such as *think, know, want* (Ibid., p8), they come to be able to attribute mental states to themselves and others. Thus, both language development and social interaction contribute to the development of a *ToM.*

Whilst some researchers stress the role of 'nature' in the development of a *ToM* (for example, the perspective that impaired *ToM* function in autistic children arises from neurobiological defects), the perspectives forwarded by Dunn and Astington and Baird stress the role of 'nurture' - the development of a *ToM* arising from *the child's participation in social and conversational interaction* (Peterson, 2004).

3.1.2.1: Intrapersonal Intelligence

Gardner (1993a) describes *intrapersonal intelligence* as *access to one's own feeling life* - to be able to discriminate amongst one's feeling states and to *draw upon them as a means of understanding and guiding one's behavior.* He describes it, at its most complex level, as being the capacity to *detect and symbolise complex and highly differentiated sets of feelings.* (Ibid., p240)

In a later text, he describes the intelligence as being:- ... *the capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself - including one's own desires, fears, and capacities - and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life* (Gardner, 1999, p43) and, in a more recent text (2006), he describes it as *knowledge of the internal aspects of a person* (Gardner, 2006, p18). He observes that this form of intelligence, because of its private

nature, is manifested in forms such as musical expression - it is an intelligence which *allows one to understand and work with oneself* (Ibid., p20).

In the intervening period between first propounding *MI theory* and this subsequent text, Gardner had considerably revised his conception of this specific intelligence. Whilst still acknowledging the provenance of the intelligence in relation to the emotions, he puts greater stress upon *intrapersonal* intelligence in acting not only as a guide to life decisions but also having a self-regulatory function and acknowledges the role that emotions play in other intelligences.

In comparing these two definitions, important differences emerge, not just in relation to relative emphasis but also in relation to other key factors. The former definition accentuates the capacity of the individual for self-awareness, for reflection and for discrimination, not only in terms of distinguishing between different emotional states, but also being able to draw upon them to promote self-understanding and effective decision making. The latter definition, in its use of the term 'working model' suggests a 'meta' function - a mental *representation* or *schema* which guides and regulates one's actions, a *theory of mind.* It also extends beyond understanding of emotions to embrace the concept of efficacy (in its use of the word, 'capacities'). In other words, it is not sufficient to be able to discriminate amongst and between emotional states - it is necessary to be able to draw upon one's self-knowledge in guiding decision making, which may affect capacities such as resilience in the face of adversity.

3.1.2.2: Interpersonal Intelligence

Gardner (1993a) describes *interpersonal intelligence* as being:- *the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals and, in particular, among their moods, temperaments, motivations, and intentions.* (Gardner, 1993a (2nd ed.), p240) In a quote from a further text he describes it in terms of .. *capacities to discern and respond appropriately to the moods, temperaments, motivations, and desires of other people.* (Gardner and Hatch, 1989, p8)

At a skilled level, an individual exhibiting this intelligence would be able not only to discriminate amongst the *emotional states* of others but to potentially act upon the information to achieve a desired outcome, the latter of which is stressed more within the second quotation. This, however, raises the issue of moral intent. Gardner recognises that an intelligence is amoral - it can be used for good or bad purposes. As such, his advocation that there is an imperative to bring together intelligence and moral purpose such that it serves the need to build a better world is key. Yet, he cautions that to conflate the two concepts is not helpful (he points to the lack of correlation between people's performance on tests of moral reasoning and their capacity to act morally in real life situations).

> *The concept of "intelligence" should not be expanded to include personality, motivation, will, attention, character, creativity and other valued human capacities.*

(Gardner, 1999, p204)

and, further:

> *.. we should realise that when we attempt to aggregate the virtues, through phrases like "emotional intelligence", "creative intelligence" or "moral intelligence", we should realize that we are expressing a wish rather describing a probable reality.*
>
> (Gardner, 1999, p111)

Moral purpose needs to be conceived as distinct from the concept of intelligence.

A Synthesis

It is evident that there are strong parallels between the development of a ToM in children and the development of the *personal intelligences* and it could be argued that they mutually modify each other.

Gardner conceptualises *intrapersonal intelligence* as a self-regulatory function which guides and regulates one's actions and it therefore would play an important role if *Sg* pupils are to develop the self-control to be able to put into practice what they have learned within the *Sgi* (RQ2.1). Likewise, *interpersonal intelligence* requires of the individual not only *the ability to notice and make distinctions among other individuals* (RQ1.2), developing insight into interpersonal relationships (RQ1.3), but also the capacity to take appropriate action in responding to them (Gardner and Hatch, 1989, p8) (RQ2.1-2) which is also highly dependent upon the development of empathy (RQ2.2), all of which are key aspects of the *Sgi*, reflected in the research aims and questions.

3.2 *The Concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) and its relationship to MI Theory*

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to explore the concept of *EI* in any depth but it should be noted that there are parallels between Gardner's *personal intelligences*, the core capacity of which is *access to one's own feeling life* (Gardner, 1983, p239)[12] , and Salovey and Mayer's (1990) concept of *emotional intelligence* which is described as a form of *social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions* (Mayer and Salovey, 1993, p433). Mayer and Salovey defend their concept of *emotional intelligence* as being an 'intelligence' on the grounds that the capacity to discern the feelings of others is a mental construct (pp. 434-5); it may have greater discriminant validity (in relation to *g*) than earlier (somewhat discredited (Scarr (1989))[13] conceptions of 'social intelligence' (pp. 435-6); the mechanisms

[12] cited in Mayer and Salovey, 1993, p433.
[13] cited in Mayer and Salovey, 1993

through which people regulate their emotions (either by restricting ("don't think about it")[14] or being open to emotions) influences information channels (pp. 437-8); and there may be neurological bases for emotional intelligence (pp. 438-9).

Cobb and Mayer (2000) identify two models through which *EI* is conceived: an *ability* model which defines *EI* in relation to a set of abilities or emotion-processing skills and a *mixed* model in which it is conceived much more broadly to include social competencies, traits and behaviours. (Cobb and Mayer, 2000) The *ability* model (Salovey and Mayer, 1990) identifies four areas of *EI* - perception, facilitation of thought, understanding and management - which are measured by means of the *Mayer-Salovey-Carusso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT)* and the *Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS)*. The claims made for this model of *EI* are modest and do not extend into predictions about success in life. (Cobb and Mayer, 2000) The *mixed* model has been popularised through the work of Goleman. Goleman's concept of *EI* has been described variously as:

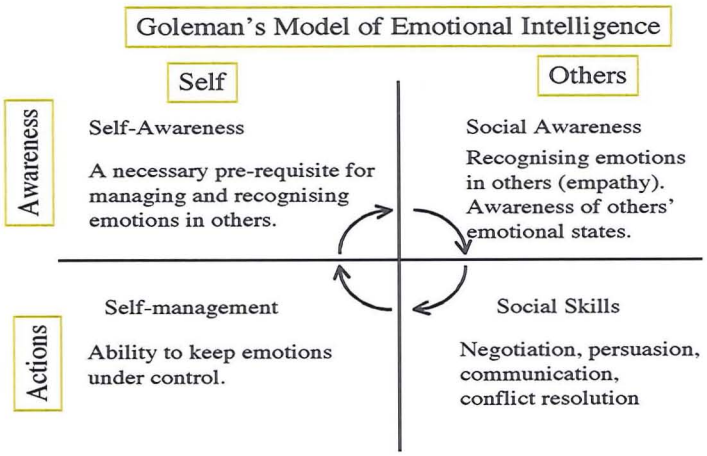
> *.. abilities such as being able to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations; to control impulse and to delay gratification; to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think; to empathise and to hope.*
>
> (Goleman, 1996, p34)

> *.. a potential for learning the practical skills that are based on its five elements: self-awareness; motivation; self-regulation; empathy and adeptness in relationships.*
>
> (Goleman, 1998, p24)

> *.. the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.*
>
> (Goleman, 1998, p317).

However, he also puts forward a further model based upon four *domains of ability* (c.c. Fig. 3.1).

Fig. 3.1: Adaptation of chart from "Emotional Intelligence Conference Report", 2003, SHPSC and SNAP



[14] exemplification from Mayer and Salovey, pp. 437-438

Mathews *et al.* (2002) note that such a general conception of *EI* renders it of little value as a means of redressing emotional disorders, such interventions requiring *fine-grained understanding of the individual* (Mathews *et al.*, 2002, p540). This is an important point to note in respect of the *Sgi.*

There is much criticism of Goleman's conceptualisation of EI in academic circles and, in particular, the claims made for it relating to later success in life. Mathews *et al.* (2002) state:- *There is no evidence in peer-reviewed journals to support this claim.* (Ibid., p546), a perspective supported by Cobb and Mayer - *psychologists view the populist claims about predicting success as ill-defined, unsupported, and implausible* (Cobb and Mayer, 2000, p2[15]). Mathews *et al.* (2002), amongst other criticisms, also raise concerns about the claim that the multifarious 'capacities/abilities' can be conceptualised as a form of all-embracing intelligence of an equivalent nature to *g* (indeed, they argue that individuals may have multiple social intelligences which come into play within different contexts).

Gardner does not reject the essence of Goleman's message but he raises similar concerns:- *We cannot hijack the word 'intelligence' so that it becomes all things to all people - the psychometric equivalent of the Holy Grail* (Gardner, 1999, p110). He questions the assumption that having an awareness of one's emotions and those of others will automatically lead to the outcomes described by Goleman. He puts forward the alternative concept of *emotional sensitivity* as being a more appropriate way to conceive of this intelligence and more in keeping with his own conceptualisations of the *personal intelligences* (Gardner, 1999, p206).

Goleman (1996), in turn, whilst also recognising the value and worth in Gardner's work, criticises what, in his view, is a narrow conception of intelligence held by cognitive scientists. He considers that Gardner has failed to appreciate the role which emotions play in the two *personal intelligences - rationality is guided by - and can be swamped by - feeling* (Ibid., p41), drawing upon biological explanations of intelligence, as forwarded by Bechera *et al.* (2000).

Gardner (1999) acknowledges that, within his conceptualisations of the *personal intelligences,* a greater emphasis has been placed upon the metacognitive aspects of the intelligences rather than upon the emotional abilities themselves. However, Mathews *et al.* (2002) call into question Goleman's narrow conception of what constitutes cognition as being concerned only with conscious, rational processes. They critique the assumptions inherent within theories of *EI* that certain traits are desirable in a generalised sense (without taking account of context) and that some traits are considered to be more or less adaptive than others - *Indeed, traits appear to specialize individuals for thriving in certain environments, at the expense of others.* (Mathews *et al.*, 2002, p537) Drawing from Zeidner and Saflofske (1996), they also note that specific coping strategies are only weakly related to coping outcomes (which might indicate that solution-focussed approaches (such as anger-management) may be less efficacious than might otherwise be envisaged).

[15] citing Davies, Stankov, and Roberts, 1998; Epstein, 1998

Mathews *et al.* (2002) claim that what is required is a much more rigorous conception of what it means to be emotionally intelligent, discriminating *conceptually distinct domains and develop(ing) coherent measures within each domain.* (Mathews *et al.*, 2002, p531). They surmise that *EI* may be a construct which measures the degree to which the individual's competence and skills are matched to the adaptive demands of the environment to which he is exposed.

A Synthesis

EI, as forwarded by Goleman, whilst gaining popular acceptance, has drawn criticism because of its over-inflated and largely unsubstantiated claims (Cobb and Mayer, 2000; Mathews *et al.*, 2002). Mayer and Salovey's (1993) more modest conceptualisation which is more in keeping with Gardner's *personal intelligences*, from the perspective of this author, offers a more valuable way forward as do the insights of Mathews *et al.*, 2002, who recognise that there is no one set of desired attributes/competencies which will suffice in each and every situation for each individual.

3.3 *A focus upon values and the development of moral understanding*

3.3.1 *Defining the nature of values and moral understanding*

> *Knowledge informs us, ideas liberate us, but values civilise us.*
> (McGettrick, 1995, p8)

RQ1 focusses upon the extent to which *Sgi* pupils develop further the personal intelligences, a component of which is to gain insight into their value and belief systems (RQ1.1) and those of others (RQ1.2), helping them to foster good interpersonal relationships (RQ1.3). This discussion focusses specifically upon the concept of values, exploring some of the tensions they pose for schools, before discussing the implications for the *Sgi.*

The importance of values has been highlighted within Scottish education in policy initiatives such as the National Priorities (SEED, 2000a), 'A Curriculum for Excellence' (SEED, 2004a) and in a series of curricular papers produced by LTS and its former body, SCCC, on this theme including *Education for Citizenship in Scotland* (LTS, 2000).

The centrality of moral and ethical values in human life is stressed in this quote from 'The Heart of the Matter':

> *The imperative is to provide young people with a sound foundation on which to base moral and ethical decisions and behaviour which respect the dignity of themselves and others and the nature of the inter-dependent world in which we live.*

(SCCC, 1995, p1)

Powney and Schlapp (1996) describe values as being:-.. *the framework for our lives. The ways we think, feel and behave depend upon the values we hold, our religious and moral beliefs.* (Powney and Schlapp, 1996, p1)

McGettrick (1995) defines values as:

> *A set of principles which are consistent and inform and direct our thoughts, actions and activities. That is to say, a value has essentially an intellectual base, but that this base informs and has its expression in action and in life.*
>
> (McGettrick, 1995, p2)

Halstead and Taylor (2000) define values as being:-

> *Principles and fundamental convictions which act as general guides to behaviour, enduring beliefs about what is worthwhile, ideals for which one strives, standards by which particular beliefs and actions are judged to be good or desirable.*

and moral development as being concerned with:

> *Acquiring a set of beliefs and values relating to what is right and wrong which guides intentions, attitudes and behaviour towards oneself, other people, one's own society and others, and the environment; and developing the disposition to act in accordance with such beliefs and values.*
>
> (Halstead and Taylor, 2000, p3)

Thus, values are described as being *the framework for our lives* (Powney and Schlapp, 1996); *a set of principles* (McGettrick, 1995); *principles and fundamental convictions, enduring beliefs, ideals* and *standards* (Halstead and Taylor, 2000) and moral development as being concerned with *acquiring a set of beliefs and values* and *developing the disposition to act in accordance with such beliefs and values* (Halstead and Taylor, 2000). These conceptualisations may have different emphases but what they all have in common is the understanding that values underpin motivation and behaviour.

3.3.2 Relativism v Absolutism and Consensus v Pluralism

There are those who maintain that there is no one universal morality that can be applied across all societies as a guide to conduct (the *pluralist* position (SCAA, 1996)[16]) and some, within that tradition, would maintain that there is no one set of values which can be regarded as being superior to any other - values are a matter of personal choice (the *relativist* position (SCAA, 1995 & 1996; Watson, 1997)). In contrast, it could be claimed that values are absolute and not open to question (*absolutism*) and/or that a single set of

[16] School Curriculum and Assessment Authority (England)

values should be arrived at via. discussion and *consensus*. (Halstead and Taylor, 2000, pp. 15-16)

Whilst this author accepts that the values which are held by an individual are unique to that individual, recognising that values are formed through people's interactions with the world which are, of necessity, unique, it is also true to say that for civilisation to be able to operate at any level there has to be a set of core values which determine standards of acceptable or unacceptable behaviour and which are not open to question. Thus, this position tries to reconcile the concept of values as lying within the individual with the concept of community.

This author would put forward a definition of values as being a set of principles which have a spiritual dimension, which guide and influence actions and which are influenced, in turn, by the beliefs held by the individual of the nature of the world and of his conceptualisation of his relationship to that world which are formed, in part, through social interactions, influenced by culture.

There are inherent tensions in relation to this field which may lie at the heart of some of the difficulties which schools face in fostering and developing values. If one accepts that there should be a set of core values, how should they be determined? by whom and on what basis? How, and to what extent, should schools take account of cultural aspects in determining values? What is the dividing line between fostering values and indoctrination? How do schools deal with tensions between the value system of the school and that of the home? ("Stand up for yourself, son.") Eaude (2004) observes that the *extent (to which) it is permissible to instil specific values and what such values should be has been a matter of fierce debate.* (Eaude, 2004, p5) These issues lie at the heart of the dilemma faced by educators which is summed up in the quote below:

> *Teachers and schools are at the forefront of a pluralist society's expectations for the moral education of the young. They have to try to reconcile and be publicly accountable for controversial and contestable values issues in education and school life, treading a tightrope between the needs and interests of pupils, parents, communities and professional practice.*
>
> (Halstead and Taylor, 2000, p16)

3.3.3 The significance of these theories for the Sgi

Within the *Sgi*, these tensions are resolved by taking the view that the aim of the approach is not to inculcate values but to draw out the value and belief systems of the child, making them explicit, such that he, in collaboration with the *SgL* and other group members can begin to explore, examine and perhaps interrogate those values and beliefs. It is not a position of *moral relativism* ('everything goes') but one in which, through a process of Socratic questioning and helping the child to consider and understand the perspectives of others, the *SgL* guides and leads the discussion such that the child can

form his/her own opinions and, if necessary, re-evaluate his value system. At the initial meeting of the group, pupils agree upon a set of core values (such as respect for the opinion of others) which are then embedded into a group pledge and act as a future guide to conduct within the group. It is hoped by these means that the *Sgi* will be able to embrace the challenge, identified by Eaude (2004) as being to .. *help children adopt appropriate values, both implicitly and through explicit reflection on what such abstract ideas mean, so that they can understand and internalise them.* (Eaude, 2004, p2)

Tate (SCCC, 1997)believes that young people will be able to cope more effectively with the challenges which will meet them in the ever changing landscape which is modern society if they *come to a view about what they believe in and if they are used to thinking morally in the light of these beliefs, about the new situations which face them.* (SCCC, 1997, p12)

Values cannot be 'taught' in the sense of other subject-matter. They can only be nurtured and developed within a climate of mutual respect. Carr (SCCC, 1997)makes the point that the development of moral values is not contingent solely upon critical thinking (or, as he puts it, *mastery of a style of moral inference)* but is a process of *initiation into a web of beliefs, practices, values and virtues enshrining a complex system of evaluative priorities* (SCCC, 1997, p14). Thus, children, in making moral decisions may have to balance and evaluate contradictory priorities such as whether to remain loyal to a friend or to tell the truth about an incident. It is a highly complex area requiring great sensitivity. The *SgL* acts as a guide and mediator in this process.

3.4 *Motivational theory*

Just as the previous discussion focussed upon the aspect of RQ1 relating to values, this discussion focusses upon motivation and the related concepts of self-esteem (RQ2.3) and self-efficacy, the latter of which is related to learning dispositions and attitudes towards school (RQ2.4).

3.4.1 *The concepts of self-esteem, self-efficacy and motivation*

In accessing the literature relating to this field, it became evident that theories of motivation are inextricably bound with two related concepts - those of self-esteem and self-efficacy (*the extent to which individuals believe themselves able to to succeed* (McLean, 2003, p33)).

Lawrence (2002) describes self-esteem as being the discrepancy between one's *self-image - the individual's awareness of his mental and physical characteristics* (Lawrence in Pollard (ed.), 2002, p103) and *ideal self - the ideal characteristics* which one would desire to have; and the degree to which one cares about this discrepancy. The concept of *self-image* arises from the child's rationalisation and internalisation of the relationship between himself and his

environment. It is related to the value judgements which the child holds about himself.

> *We are beings who ask questions; we are beings who make value judgements, holding some things good and important, others bad or worthless; and we are beings who build models of the world. In the course of time, these models come to include some representation of ourselves as part of the world. It is thus inevitable that we should arrive at the question: of what value am I?*
>
> (Donaldson, 1987, p112)

The process through which the child develops his *self-image* is described by Cooley (1902)[17] as the 'looking glass theory of self' - the reflection back of other people's attitudes towards the child, requiring of the child interpretation of those reflections. As the child becomes more aware of the traits and capacities which are found to be desirable within his culture, so also does a sense of *ideal-self* develop.

Lawrence makes the crucially important point that it is not a child's failure in achieving goals which leads to a lack of self-esteem but the way in which significant people in the child's life react to that failure. As the child becomes more self-determinate and, according to Donaldson (1987), develops a more independent value system, these external influences become less potent but, for a child of school age, the feedback from family, peers and teachers is crucial. Brewer (2001) notes that, if the discrepancy between *self-image* and *ideal-self* is too wide it may serve as a disincentive to motivation and may dent self-esteem.

McLean (2003) describes self-esteem as being a measure of the extent to which people are comfortable with themselves but he qualifies this by stating:- *It is not just the sum of our judgements about the self; it shapes those judgements and affects the ways in which evidence about the self is interpreted.* (Ibid., p43) Thus, it is a self-perpetuating process in that negative self-esteem is likely to lead to negative attributions of outcomes and more pessimistic predictions of future outcomes and positive self-esteem, conversely. Whilst students with high esteem are concerned with self-enhancement, students with low esteem are concerned with self-protection. McLean suggests that it is helpful to think of self-esteem not in terms of polarities (high/low) but as being on a continuum from positive to negative.

A further dimension upon which it is of value to conceptualise self-esteem is that of its stability (Keegan *et al,* 1995)[18] , which is a measure of the degree to which a feeling of self-worth is internalised or dependent upon the esteem of others. This latter form of self-esteem MacLean categorises as *contingent* self-esteem. According to McLean, *contingent self-esteem* arises when worth is attributed as being inherent within the individual. For people who have *contingent self-esteem,* self-worth is therefore dependent upon winning the approval of others. *Conditional acceptance* ("You do ... and I'll ..."), even if well-intentioned, can therefore be perceived as a controlling mechanism (Khon, 2005). McLean

[17] cited in Lawrence (2002)

[18] cited in McLean (2003)

claims that it is those who have both negative and *contingent* self-esteem who are most vulnerable - they are *at the mercy of feedback* (McLean, 2003, p45).

Is the answer therefore to seek high esteem for all pupils? There is a veritable industry of consultants, 'positive thinking' approaches and classroom materials designed to meet this purpose but, is it always a good thing? Are there dangers inherent in such approaches? Seligman (1996) notes that the incidence of depression in America, from being an unusual condition in the 1960s has become *the common cold of mental illness* in the 1990s (Ibid., p37). He attribute some of the rise in depressive illnesses in young people in America to the 'self-esteem movement'. In an attempt to buttress children from low self-esteem, parents and teachers shield them from failure, from constructive criticism, making it more difficulty for them to achieve mastery in their learning - *by encouraging cheap success, it produced a generation of failures.* (Ibid., p45)

Seligman (1996) and McLean (2003) point to the lack of empirical evidence to support the supposition that there is a link between achievement and self-esteem. However, McLean notes that there is some evidence to indicate that pupils with high self-esteem may be complacent, may set themselves unrealistic goals (Baumeister, 1993)[19] , may be more inclined to indulge in 'high-risk' behaviour and, if combined with unstable *(contingent)* self-esteem, may exhibit aggressive (Kernis, Granneman and Barclay, 1989)[20] and/or bullying behaviour towards others (McLean, 2003), precisely some of the difficulties for which some pupils have been referred to the *Sgi.* According to McLean, high self-esteem is often *contingent* and therefore fragile. McLean advocates a state of *true self-esteem* which is a combination of positive, stable and autonomous *self-esteem.* Drawing upon Kernis (1995)[21] , he observes that simply focussing upon raising self-esteem may be counter-productive as self-worth is as much a product of actions as a catalyst for actions. This is the position adopted in respect of the *Sgi,* the hypothesis being that positive self-esteem will arise through children's growing capacities to regulate their behaviour, to develop further, empathy towards others and through the quality of their interpersonal relationships, arising, in turn, from the furtherance of the *personal intelligences* (reflected in the research aims and questions).

In making the link between self-esteem and motivation , McLean observes:

> *The interplay between esteem and motivation is like the relationship between wealth and happiness: not having wealth may make you unhappy, but having it does not guarantee happiness. Positive esteem does not guarantee high motivation, neither is it essential for self-motivation.*
>
> (McLean, 2003, p48)

The importance of motivation in learning has been highlighted by the recent consultation upon it within the Scottish Parliament. The 3rd Report on Pupil Motivation (Scottish

19 cited in McLean (2003)
20 cited in McLean (2003)
21 cited in McLean (2003)

Parliament Education Committee Report, 2006) identified that 27% of children in Scotland did not want to attend school and that the attainment of the bottom 20% (representing 12,000 'kids') had remained static.

Entwistle (1987) describes motivation as:- *The amount of drive shown, the investment of energy, which was directed towards some goal or towards the satisfaction of some need.* (Entwistle, 1987, p3). He describes much of the discussion as centering around two key areas:- motivation as *intrinsic* or *extrinsic;* and motivation as being led by a need for achievement or a fear of failure (or, according to Donaldson (1987), difficulty in reconciling incongruities in the learning situation leading to withdrawal from learning).

Entwistle maintains that, if we are seeking to explain variations in effort, the starting point is the *emotional responses to, and rationalisations of, the outcomes of learning* of the learner. (Entwistle, 1987, p6) Entwistle puts forward a conceptual model whereby children who are *intrinsically* motivated (and who have metacognitive awareness and parental support) will engage in a 'deep' approach to learning; whereas those who are *extrinsically* motivated will adopt a 'deep' approach if they are praised and encouraged by their teachers but will adopt a 'shallow' approach if they are criticised by their teachers and become over-anxious.

However, this may have led some teachers to believe that there is something inherently wrong in providing constructive criticism of pupils' work and in judging it to be not satisfactory, as highlighted by Seligman. It may also have encouraged some teachers towards the view that the means of raising self-esteem (and therefore motivation) is through the indiscriminate use of praise:- *What's the best way you can motivate students? Praise. The most effective? Praise. What positive recognition can you give to your students at any time? Under all circumstances? Praise.* (Canter and Canter, 1992, in Smith, 1998, p3) Smith (1998) draws on a range of evidence to suggest that praise, used indiscriminately, can disempower children and can be used as a means of controlling their behaviour.

Seligman's concept of *learned helplessness* - a sense of hopelessness (*Nothing I do matters* (Seligman, 1996, p3)), arising from a sense of a lack of control over circumstances (described by Seligman as *noncontingency* (Ibid., p279)) and related to the personality trait of *pessimism* (Ibid., p3) - is one of a range of theories forwarded to explain motivation[22] .

Dweck and Elliot (1983) describe motivation as referring to:

> *... the contemporaneous, dynamic psychological factors that influence such phenomena as the choice, initiation, direction, magnitude, persistence, resumption and quality of goal-directed (including cognitive) activity.*
>
> (Dweck and Elliot, 1983, p645).

Put more simply, the authors state that motivational factors determine the extent to which

[22] Dweck and Elliot (1983) describe 'needs achievement theory', 'anxiety theory', 'social learning theory' and 'attribution and learned helplessness theory' (pp. 647- 652)

students *pursue and master skills that they are fully capable of mastering and that they themselves value* (Dweck and Elliot, 1983, p645), bringing together effort and determination, the attainability of the goal and the desirability of the goal for the person concerned. Donaldson (1987) identifies that the degree of autonomy exercised by the child in determining the goal as also being a significant factor - *we enjoy best and engage most readily in activities which we experience as freely chosen*[23] - thus stressing the importance of *intrinsic motivation.* (Donaldson, 1987, p118)

What might these *contemporaneous, dynamic psychological factors* be? Dweck and Elliot, drawing and building upon theories of motivation which have been highly influential in shaping thinking within the field[24], construct their own model of *Cognitive Sets and Achievement Goals Theory.*

This theory draws from an earlier study of Nicholls and Dweck - *Achievement Motivation Theory*[25] - which identifies three *achievement goals* which may lead to increased competence and judgements of competence (c.c. Fig. 3.2). Dweck and Elliot maintain that the different types of *achievement goals* lead children to behave in very different ways. The theory seeks to explain why some children might be orientated towards different types of *achievement goals.* One possible explanation is the *theory of intelligence* which the child holds - *entity* or *incremental*[26] *:*

Entity Theory

> *Involves the belief that intelligence is a rather stable, global trait that can be judged to be adequate or inadequate. That is, this trait or entity is displayed in one's performance, and the judgements of that performance can indicate whether or not one is intelligent.*

Incremental (or *Instrumental) Theory*

> *... involves the belief that intellectual competence consists of a repertoire of skills that can be endlessly expanded through one's efforts.*
>
> (Dweck and Elliot, 1983, p654)

Thus, in respect of the former, effort would be perceived as an indicator of low intelligence whereas in the latter it would be seen as the means of increasing intelligence.

---

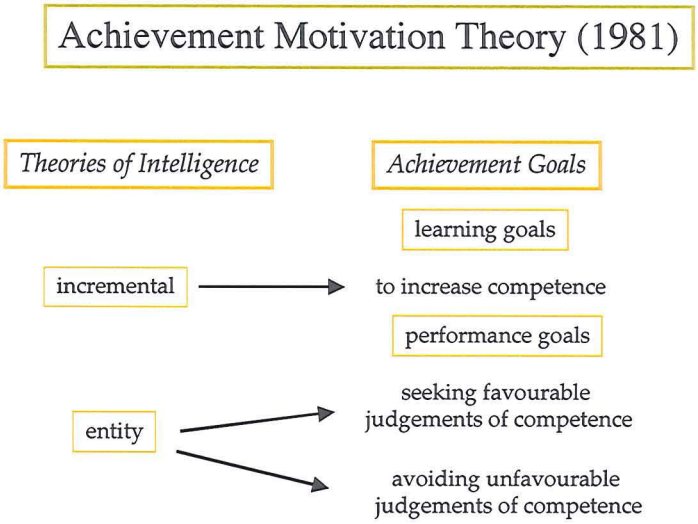
23 the author's emphasis

24 c.c. Dweck and Elliot (1983) p647 -652

25 1979 (unpublished manuscript)

26 in a later work, Dweck (2006) , Dweck describes 'entity' and 'incremental' learners in terms of mindsets - 'fixed' or 'growth' (respectively)

Fig. 3.2: Representation of Dweck and Elliot's (1981) 'Achievement Motivation Theory'

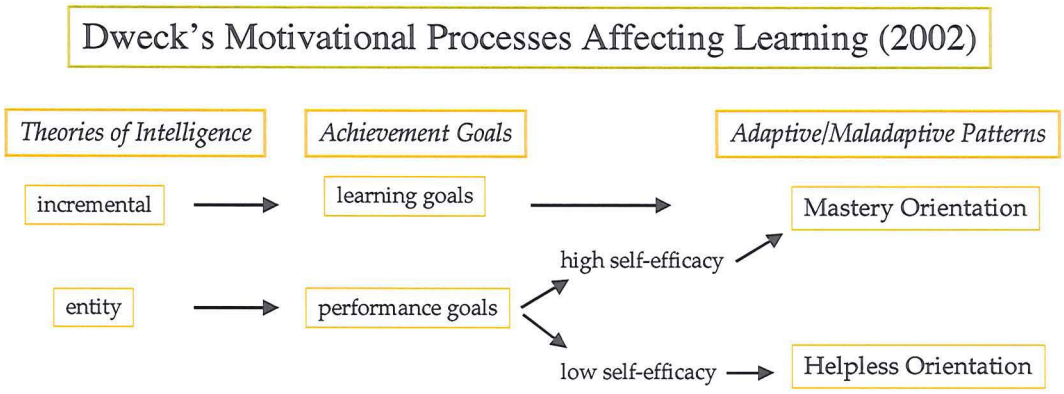


Dweck and Elliot maintain that, irrespective of ability, children will gravitate towards either *entity* or *incremental* theories of intelligence which, in turn, will lead them towards different *achievement goals* (Bandura and Dweck, 1981; Dweck and Elliot, 1981). In so doing, they will 'structure' the same situation very differently. However, the theory does not seek to explain why some children will gravitate towards *entity* or *incremental* theories of intelligence in the first instance.

In a more recent paper, Dweck (2002) identifies patterns of adaptive or maladaptive behaviour which, respectively, promote or hinder effective learning. These patterns resonate with the *learning dispositions* which the *Sgi* aims to promote - capacities to persevere when facing difficulties; to adopt effective learning strategies (such as seeking help and target-setting). Those who adopt adaptive patterns *(mastery orientated)* seek challenge and find ways of surmounting obstacles, whilst those with maladaptive patterns *(helpless)* seek tasks 'within their comfort zones', become anxious and fail to persevere when confronted with challenges, and rationalise failure to succeed as a lack of ability.

Dweck maintains that it is the *theory of intelligence (incremental/entity)* held by the child, leading to differing *achievement goals (learning/performance)*, influenced by the child's feelings of self-efficacy *(high/low)* which lead ultimately to whether the child adopts adaptive *(mastery orientated)* of maladaptive *(helpless)* patterns. The theory holds that, whilst a child holding an *entity theory of intelligence* will favour *performance goals*, if the child has high self-efficacy he/she will demonstrate a *mastery orientation* but it will be for different reasons (to achieve favourable judgements) than the *incremental learner* who will demonstrate a *mastery orientation* in pursuing learning related goals (c.c. Fig. 3.3).

Fig. 3.3: Adaptation of Fig. 7.6.1 (Dweck, 2002, p120)



This is a complex theory in which a range of variables play a significant role. If it is held to be true, it is clear that the children who are most at risk are those who hold *entity theories of intelligence* and who, in addition, have a low sense of *self-efficacy*. It follows that, if one were to successfully affect outcome for an individual child, there is a need to impact at the level of each of these variables. The theory also implies that there is no 'magic bullet' - no one way of motivating all children. The starting point is the individual child and understanding the belief systems of that child.

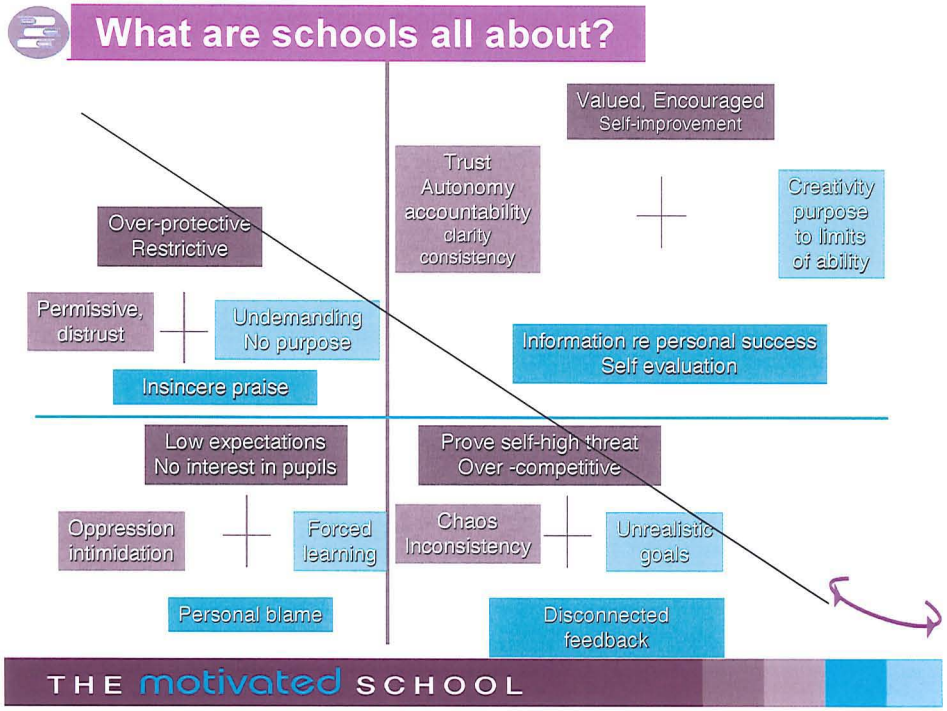
However, is it the case that children, in all learning situations, will adopt *mastery* or *helpless orientations* irrespective of context? Might it be dependent upon the nature of the learning situation? (a variable of which Dweck does not take account). Might it be the case that, in some situations, children may view effort or strategy as being important variables but in other circumstances (for example, their capacity to sing in tune) theories of ability may predominate? Entwistle (1987) draws upon both *external* (related to perceptions of the learning context) and *internal attributions* (ability, effort, strategy and metacognitive awareness) in the explanations forwarded to account for motivation in relation to school attainment (Ibid., p12) and McLean (2003) also synthesises theories relating to *internal attributions* with those relating to the classroom context.

In McLean's view, motivation is dependent upon the student valuing the desired goal or outcome in conjunction with having an expectation of success. In keeping with the conceptualisation of the *Sgi, students' beliefs, thoughts, feelings and values are seen as the main influences on behaviour*. (McLean, 2003, p8)

Sutherland, Smith and McLean (2004) offer a two-dimensional model of motivation - the first dimension relates to the degree to which the learner is able to exercise autonomy in learning - the *control/empowerment dimension*[27] - and the second relates to the quality of classroom relationships and of feedback in learning - the *affirmation/rejection dimension*[28] (McLean, 2003) (c.c. Fig. 3.4). The model is predicated upon the belief that *the source of motivation is internal to the self and will flourish when the classroom is sensitive to and can meet pupils' needs.* (Sutherland *et al.*, 2004, p84)

[27] the horizontal axis
[28] the vertical axis

Fig. 3.4: McLean, 2003, diagram 3.5 (reproduced from text)[29]



McLean (2003) identifies four *motivation mindsets* which underlie this model - *ideas about ability, interpretation of progress, attitudes to achievement mindsets* and *self-efficacy beliefs*. This leads in turn to the identification of four classroom types - the 'undemanding', 'motivating', 'destructive' and 'confusing/neglecting' classrooms[30] - as identified in Fig. 3.4, reproduced from the text. McLean claims that it is achieving a match between pupils' achievements and aspirations which is of the essence. This author maintains that this will only be the case if teachers and other significant adults convey high, yet attainable, expectations of performance.

These are very different conceptualisations from the earlier pre-occupations with the nature of external motivators such as rewards and sanctions. Their richness lies in the synthesis of factors inherent within the individual and within the environment and the inter-relationships between them. According to the various theories put forward, the concept of *self-efficacy* is crucial, underlying both self-esteem and motivation.

3.4.2 *The significance of motivational theory for the Sgi*

It is evident from the previous discourse that if pupils are to succeed in their endeavours within the *Sgi* they need to achieve that state of *true self-esteem* (RQ2.3) advocated by McLean - positive, stable and autonomous (ie. *non-contingent*) - and to achieve a state in

[29] with kind permission of Alan McLean
[30] from the upper left quadrant clockwise

which their motivation is internalised; in which they are able to set themselves challenging but attainable goals; in which they have come to an understanding of their own learning processes (Entwistle, 1987) and to understand that their beliefs about the nature of intelligence and the ways in which they rationalise and internalise the outcomes of their endeavours can have a lasting effect upon their future efforts. This is clearly related to metacognition as explored in Chapter 2 (c.c. 2.2.1) and to the development of learning dispositions (RQ2.4). In other words, the concepts which have been explored within this section of the chapter need to be shared with children and explained to them in such a way that they can be understood[31] . However, it is the process by which children can be brought to this point which raises the greatest challenge.

The nature of the activities and ethos of the Support Group are highly relevant factors in creating the *motivating classroom* to which McLean refers. Whilst group work has a different dynamic from a classroom situation, the characteristics of the *motivating classroom* identified by McLean (2003) (c.c. Fig. 3.4) are also apposite for the *Sgi. SgLs'* expectations should be conveyed clearly to pupils and high standards set and maintained. The Support Group pledge, as previously described, fulfils this function.

Group activities help children to understand the impediments to effective learning and to understand the set of circumstances which for them, personally, affect their capacity to learn and may act as triggers for poor behaviour (related to RQ2.4). Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon the degree of control which they can exert over the circumstances which prevail within the classroom and around the school. For example, how a failure to show respect can trigger an aggressive reaction from a teacher or peer.

This chapter initially makes reference to Bruner's question, "What is human about human beings?" The chapter has suggested that it is the values, beliefs, feelings and thoughts (which form attitudes) and motivations, which are universal traits, but which are unique to the individual which constitute what it is to be human and to have a sense of self as one relates to others and to the world in general. Perhaps the most important role which the *Sgi* plays is the opportunity which it provides for pupils to explore their attitudes, beliefs, values and motivations, as exemplified in Activity 3a (c.c. Fig. 3.5).

[31] Recent modifications to the materials (Mowat, 2007) draw explicitly from the work of Lawrence and Dweck, enabling pupils to engage with these concepts.

Fig. 3.5: Exemplification of Support Group Activity

Activity 3a

Motivation

- ❑ Choose a situation which has recently taken place in which you felt stressed - perhaps a situation in which there was an argument between yourself and another person.
- ❑ Go through the situation with your Support Group Leader and identify the things which you believe you gained from the situation and the things which you lost from it. Think about it not only from your own point of view but also the effects upon others.
- ❑ As you each discuss your own situations, other members of the group can contribute helpful comments and questions.
- ❑ When you have completed the exercise and your Support Group Leader has helped you each to complete the chart, answer the question at the bottom, with the help of the Support Group Leader and the other pupils in the group.

Gains

- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑

Losses

- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑
- ❑

What would you do differently if you were in the same situation again?

Teaching for Understanding within the Affective Field

Part 3

The Context of the Study

Chapter 4

The Wider Context of the Study: Social Inclusion

This chapter serves two purposes - it places the study within its wider context, but it also builds upon the discourse of chapter one, exploring the concept of social inclusion, as it pertains specifically to children perceived as having SEBD, and examining, more fully, the policy context. As such, it provides a lens and a means through which RQ3 (and, in particular, the variables which impact upon pupil outcomes) and RQ4 - the significance of the study for imperatives within Scottish Education and for knowledge transfer - can be contextualised and understood.

4.1 The Political Context: 'The Third Way'

'Education, education, education' - the mantra which heralded the era of New Labour and the modernising agenda of 'The Third Way' - a blurring of the boundaries between capitalism and socialism (Giddens, 1998, 2000). However, New Labour and 'The Third Way' can only be understood within the context of previous Government and, in particular, the Thatcher era and beyond (1979 to 1997). Cooper (2002)[1], within the context of education, identifies four key areas of reform associated with that period:- a reduced role for Local Authorities; an attack on the professionalism of teachers; the expansion of 'quasi-markets', and a culture of managerialism (drawing from the discourse and practice of the private sector) (Cooper, 2002, p12). Whilst it could be said that these reforms impacted to a much greater extent in England than in Scotland, many commentators would argue that the Scottish system has been affected by many of the same influences, if not to the same extent.

Why should it be the case that, to an extent, Scotland has been shielded from the effects of these reforms? Baron (2001) draws upon the 'Common Sense School' of the Scottish Enlightenment (of which education is a central component) to illuminate *the sense of a moral imperative to mutual obligations and to the cultures and networks which maintain them* (Baron, 2001, p89). According to Baron, the attachment of 'New' to Labour signified a modernising agenda in which Labour sought to seek the middle-ground, moving towards an ethical position in which *individuals owe a duty to one another and the broader society; and the collective power of all should be used for the individual good of each other* (Baron, 2001, p92 (quoting from Blair, 1994)). This manifests itself in a pragmatic 'what works' focus enabling Blair to build upon the 'quasi-market' of education established during the Thatcher era in which the needs of the economy, within the context of globalisation, are taken as a given, leaving the only question as to how to meet those needs (Baron, 2001). This 'quasi-market' philosophy, according to many commentators, underlies many of the tensions within the education system, contributing to the difficulties faced by local authorities and schools in developing and maintaining inclusive practice.

[1] Drawing from Burden *et al.*, 2000

Ainscow *et al.* (2006) identify a series of barriers to inclusion arising from national policy (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p32, box 2.2) amongst which are an over-reliance on narrow outcomes and targets, representing a 'technicist, instrumental view' of education, indicative of an excessive accountability culture; the promotion of competition between schools; and increasing selection within and between schools, leading to a *quasi-selective system in which the poorest children, by and large, attend the lowest-performing schools* (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p33). Further, they argue that the mixed messages about inclusion emanating from Government reports and the lack of a coherent approach towards its promotion, emerging through a series of individual (and sometimes contradictory) initiatives, creates an inherent instability in schools which militates against a sustainable approach to inclusion. (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p30 -36)

However, this author would suggest that the Scottish educational establishment has fought to maintain what is uniquely Scottish within the system (building upon the success of the Scottish Comprehensive system, as demonstrated by the increased staying-on rates of fifth and sixth year pupils (Paterson, 2003, in Bryce and Humes (eds.) (2nd ed.))). The Scottish Executive has maintained a more responsive and enlightened approach, as exemplified by the National Debate into the state of Scottish Education (2003) and subsequent developments, such as 'A Curriculum for Excellence' (SEED, 2004a). Whilst some might argue about the efficacy of public spending, it cannot be denied that the advent of New Labour has corresponded with substantial investment in education[2] and in an unprecedented range of initiatives to promote social inclusion.

4.2 *A Critique of policy and practice in relation to Social Inclusion*

> *There is no doubt that there has been progress, although this remains very patchy .. Progress is hampered by the widespread confusion that still exists about what 'inclusion' actually means.*
>
> (EENET, 2004, Newsletter 8, p1)

This statement, derived from the review of 'The Salamanca Statement - Ten Years On' forms the principal basis of the discussion to follow within this section of the chapter. This perspective is shared by Ainscow *et al.*, who identify the *multiple and conflicting perspectives on inclusion* (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p32) as one of the foremost barriers to inclusive practice. The chapter explores the possible reasons for the confusion surrounding inclusion and therefore some of the barriers to successful inclusion.

[2] in England, per pupil funding up 48%; 35,000 more teachers and 172,000 more teaching assistants; 1,106 new schools. Source: Coughlan, S. (2007) *Education, Education, Education,* http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/6564933 (last updated, 14.05.07)

4.2.1 Exploring the concept of Social Inclusion

4.2.1.1: The Slippery Concept of Inclusion

Within the literature, the terms 'inclusion' and 'social inclusion' are often used synonymously. Ainscow *et al.* (2006) note that the latter term, within the context of education, is often used in relation to vulnerable groups where access to schooling may be under threat - such as gypsy travellers - and, more specifically to pupils with SEBD who are at risk of exclusion from school. They question the addition of the word 'social' (as in 'social inclusion/exclusion') as it implies that there are other forms of inclusion/exclusion which are not socially based.

The concept of inclusion is elusive in the sense that it is difficult to pin down and define (Mackay and McLarty, 2003[3], Riddell, 2005/2006[4]; Warnock, 2005b; Lawson *et al.*, 2005). Riddell (2005/2006) maintains that the lack of clarity surrounding the concept has resulted in a 'patchwork' approach towards implementation. Rose (2003) draws upon Mittler (2000) who observes that the complexities surrounding the issue of inclusion have resulted in a lack of clear guidance to policy makers or to those invested in implementing it, leading to confusion and a lack of progress.

However, it can also be described as elusive in the sense that it is difficult to achieve. Hamill *et al.* (2002) note:

> *It is clear that inclusion is a multi-faceted complex concept which is not easily understood. It is open to fairly wide interpretation and it must be recognised that whereas we can establish a set of principles putting these into practice can be challenging. There is no single blueprint for inclusion which will automatically fit all schools.*
>
> (Ibid., p22)

In a previous study, Hamill and Boyd established that there was no shared understanding of the philosophy of inclusion amongst teachers or shared vision at local authority level. (Hamill and Boyd, 2000)

A focus upon Social Exclusion

In seeking to understand the concept of social inclusion, it is helpful initially to give consideration to its 'alter ego' - social exclusion. The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) defines social exclusion as:

> *A short-hand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems, such as unemployment, discrimination, poor skills,*

[3] cited in Pirrie *et al.*, 2006
[4] LTS website (not dated)

low incomes, poor housing, high crime and family breakdown.

(SEU, 2004, Summary)

Thus, by corollary, Social Inclusion would be concerned with seeking to find solutions to these problems, the Government advocating a 'joined-up', multi-agency approach (SEED, 2000d, 2001g, 2006b). 'Reaching Out: An Action Plan on Social Exclusion' (Crown Office, 2006) identifies five guiding principles for action:- better identification and earlier intervention; systematically identifying 'what works'; promoting multi-agency working; personalisation, rights and responsibilities; and supporting achievement and managing underperformance.

Munn and Lloyd (2005)[5] examine exclusion within the school context focussing upon three components:- *relativity, agency,* and *dynamics.*

Relativity rests on the concept that one can only be perceived to be excluded relative to the experiences of others. Thus, within a schooling context, some groups (for example, boys) are over-represented in statistics of school exclusions. It also raises questions as to the extent to which all members of a school community are equally valued.

Agency is concerned with establishing *who and what causes exclusion?* (Ibid., p213). Explanations within their study rest in psychological and emotional responses within the young person and the privatisation of individual problems; and in the ethos, policies and practices of schools. It can be argued that schools exercise agency in respect of the extent to which their policies, practice and ethos promote or hinder inclusion (such as exclusion procedures which are perceived by parents and pupils as being unjust and/or inconsistent discipline practices[6]). It can also be argued that pupils exercise agency in relationship to their behaviour (although there is a strong debate about the extent to which this can be held to be true in relation to pupils diagnosed with conditions such as ADHD (Lloyd, 2003; Lloyd *et al.*, 2006; Giddens, 2006)).

Dynamics of exclusion refers to the set of home and family circumstances which can impact negatively upon achievement and social mobility. Schools are seen as an important means of alleviating these difficulties through raising attainment and embracing social welfare goals.

However, Munn and Lloyd note:

... schools are on the horns of a dilemma. They are publicly accountable for one aspect of their work, pupil attainment, but are being encouraged to adopt practices to promote inclusion of pupils with behaviour problems that many see as jeopardising their ability to improve performance on the very important measure of attainment.

---

5 drawing from Micklewright, 2002, p7

6 Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000; Munn *et al.*, 1997, 2001, 2005; Hamill and Boyd, 2000, Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Cooper, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002; SEED, 2004e, 2004g; Wilkin *et al.*, 2005; McCluskey, 2005, 2006

(Munn and Lloyd, 2005, p209)

This 'dilemma' accords with the concerns expressed by Ainscow, Cooper and Baron about the contradictions between a system pursuing on one hand a standards based agenda (linked to a neo-liberal economic orthodoxy/'quasi' market) and, on the other, a concern for social justice. Munn and Lloyd conclude that the incentives for schools to engage in the high-maintenance work of supporting pupils were not clear and that, indeed, the disincentives were significant in respect of public accountability (Munn and Lloyd, 2005, p218). These concerns are shared by many commentators as highlighted by Riddell, 2005/2006; Head *et al.*, 2004; and Pirrie *et al.*, 2006.

Clarifying the Concept of Social Inclusion

A fundamental question posed by Bollard (1997)[7] asks what it is that society wants its children to be included in. Without being specific about the nature of the experience in which society wishes children to be included, it is almost impossible to promote or critique inclusion in any meaningful way. Herein, lies the difficulty.

How is inclusion portrayed and understood within the literature? Within the official documentation of the Scottish Executive, HMIE, LTS (and their predecessors) inclusion embraces a range of meanings. Some of these meanings are expressed in relation to the desired outcomes for young people; others in relation to the rights of the child, reflected in policy and practice; and others still in relation to the characteristics of an inclusive school.

The Social Inclusion Division of the Scottish Executive describes Social Inclusion as being concerned with:

> *.. reducing inequalities between the least advantaged groups and communities and the the rest of society by closing the opportunity gap and ensuring that support reaches those who need it most.*
>
> (Social Inclusion Division, cited in Pirrie *et al.*, 2006: 2.3)

A SOED (1994) document describes the overall aim of inclusive education as being to enable children and young people to become *fully participating members of their communities* (Pirrie *et al.*, 2006, 2.3). 'Social Inclusion: Opening the Door to a Better Scotland', SOEID (1998a: 6.1) adopts a broad view of all young people developing life skills and having the opportunity to participate in lifelong learning; being confident and healthy; valuing themselves and others whilst seeing themselves as active participants in society. The 'Beattie Report' (SEED, 1999a, p7) describes their *vision of inclusiveness* as being concerned with the need for *young people to be able to have their needs, abilities and aspirations recognised, understood and met within a supportive environment.*

[7] cited in Allan and Brown, 2001, p206

These aspirations are reflected in the National Priority (SEED, 2000a) *Inclusion and Equality* which seeks to *promote equality and help every pupil benefit from education ..* (National Priority 3), whilst the 'Standard in Scotland's Schools Etc. Act 2000', SEED, 2000b: Section 6 establishes a presumption of mainstreaming and aims to remove structural and attitudinal barriers to children's participation in mainstream schools.

'Count us in - Achieving Inclusion in Scottish Schools' HMIE (2002a) defines inclusion in terms of the characteristics of effective schools which value each child as an individual and seek to realise ambition and develop talent to the full. Circular 8/03, providing guidance to schools on exclusion (SEED, 2003a), defines an inclusive approach as characterised by *meeting the needs of all pupils who are part of their school community,* irrespective of pupil characteristics or circumstance. (Annex A)

A symposium paper, LTS (2005), describes an inclusive organisation as placing the child at the centre. This holistic emphasis is stressed within 'Ambitious Excellent Schools' (SEED, 2004b: p16) with its concerns for the well-being of children - *we want them to have the self-esteem to be confident, happy and ambitious.* LTS (2006), a paper for personal reflection, draws from Stainback and Stainback to describe in detail what this holistic approach might mean in practice and to state that *school is a place for everyone - not just the best-behaved, or the members of 'acceptable' groups.* (LTS, 2006, 'Thinking about key ideas - 3')

Whilst all of these aspirations may differ in emphasis and in the ways in which they are expressed, there are strong commonalities relating to the need to focus holistically upon the needs, potential, abilities and talents of each young person; the ability of young people to take their place in society as effective citizens and to feel included and valued within that society; and to remove barriers to learning. Thus, as indicated earlier, inclusion is closely allied to the realisation of all of the National Priorities as described in HMIE, 2004a.

Within the wider literature, conceptions of inclusion are more wide ranging and reflect different ideologies.

The Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education (CSIE) (2006)[8], a charitable body, equates inclusion with the need to remove barriers to learning and participation for all students within the setting of a mainstream school - *inclusion is for all* and is a *human rights issue.*

Warnock (2005a and 2005b), on the other hand, conceptualises inclusion entirely differently focussing upon the need for the child to feel a sense of belonging to whichever community of which he/she is a part and upon the *common enterprise of learning.* (Warnock, 2005b, p39). This author (Mowat, 2007) describes inclusion as being *a sense of being included, of feeling valued and, most of all, being able to learn in an environment which is best suited to the needs of the child,* thus sharing Warnock's emphasis upon facilitating learning. (Mowat, 2007, p48).

[8] derived from website

Allan (2004) relates inclusion to participation - *about a sense, in our hearts perhaps, of being part of something such as an ideal; a belief system; humanity; the wider life world.* (Ibid., p14) She describes inclusion as a struggle - *doing inclusion means working together - **struggling** - together, with children and young people, and trying to work out what inclusion means to them.* (Ibid., p19) Thus, she conceptualises it as a partnership, not something to be done 'to' young people but to be done 'with' them.

Head (2005), within the context of SEBD, describes an approach which recognises the role which all participants play, advocating that *each feels valued and that they all belong* (Ibid., p97) as being important in effecting improvement in young people, bringing together aspects of the philosophies of Warnock, Allan and Mowat.

Ainscow *et al.* (2006) provide a helpful typology of inclusion which classifies it according to six conceptions:- inclusion as:

- Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- a response to disciplinary exclusion
- being concerned with vulnerable groups
- developing the school for all
- 'education for all'
- an ideological principle.

(Ibid., p15)

The authors argue that, in order to forward inclusion, it is important to articulate the values which underlie it, which they define as equity, participation, community, compassion, respect for diversity, sustainability and entitlement. (Ibid., p23) They define inclusion broadly as referring to all children and describe inclusion as an ongoing process rather than an end-state which is concerned with *presence, participation and achievement.* (Ibid., p25) It is therefore concerned with the removal of barriers to participation and with a continuous process of school improvement. It is a process of *putting values into action.* (Ibid., p27)). The authors are committed to the concept of the 'school for all' (and thus a policy of mainstreaming) and 'education for all', addressing inequalities and discrimination.

Just as within the official documentation emanating from national bodies, many studies seek to identify the 'ingredients' of an effective ethos which promotes inclusion[9]. Whilst socio-economic factors are the predominant determinant in relation to school exclusions, schools serving similar catchment areas can have entirely different patterns of exclusion (Munn *et al.*, 2000), a phenomenon which is explained by Munn *et al.* as pertaining to school ethos, therefore vesting the solution in an examination of the values and beliefs which underpin policies and practice. (Munn *et al.*, 2000, p50)

[9] Munn *et al.*, 2000; Hamill and Boyd, 2000; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Kendall *et al.*, 2001; Ainscow *et al.*, 2006

Teachers, however, generally adopt a much narrower perception of inclusion, equating it with the policy of the presumption of mainstreaming (Munn *et al.*, 2004; Adams, 2005), as expressed in this quote:

> *Teachers mainly perceive the policy as being mainly about including every child in the mainstream school, irrespective of behaviour and irrespective of their effect on other pupils.*
>
> (Adams, 2005, p48).

A synthesis

The concepts of inclusion and social inclusion are elusive not only in terms of their definition but also their realisation. Munn and Lloyd (2005) examine social exclusion in relation to the concepts of *relativity, agency* and *dynamics.* Related to the concept of *relativity* is Bollard's question as to the nature of the endeavour in which young pupil should engage. Without having clarity in this respect, this author would maintain that it is not possible to critique inclusion. A range of conceptualisations of inclusion abound both within official documentation and the wider literature. Whilst common themes emerge, wide philosophical differences are evident. Ainscow *et al.* (2006) create a typology of inclusion which takes account of these varied perspectives.

Inclusion, however, can only be fully understood when placed within the historical framework of developments, the most prominent of which relate to the field of SEN / ASL.

4.2.1.2: The Evolving Concept of Inclusion

This section traces the developments leading from the Warnock Report (DES, 1978), exploring the tensions between the concepts of integration and inclusion and between the medical and social models of disability.

The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) was tasked with *widen(ing) the scope of 'special education' .. and to get people to recognize that children with special needs were not a race apart, but familiar members of the ordinary classroom.* (Warnock, 2005a, p2). Warnock's vision was one of education becoming *an integrated unified enterprise, its content and accessibility more important than the location where it was to be provided* (Ibid., p2), with mainstream and special schools co-existing to deliver the goals of independence, understanding and enjoyment.

Even at this early stage, however, the view was expressed that Special schools were contrary to the spirit of inclusion leading to a conception of them as being a 'necessary evil' to serve only the most severely handicapped. (Ibid., p3) Warnock asserts that the perception of special schools as being a 'necessary evil' was predicated on the assumption that the mainstream school *could be so adapted and changed that their (the children's)*

disabilities would virtually disappear (Warnock, 2005a, p3). This conception of Special Schools is articulated very clearly by Dessent (1987)[10] :

> *Special schools do not have a right to exist. They exist because of the limitations of ordinary schools in providing for the full range of abilities and disabilities amongst children.*
>
> (Allan and Brown, 2001, p97)

The focus upon the needs of the child rather than the disabilities of the child (the medical model) led to an approach which focussed upon the support which the child would require in order to be successful in his/her learning thus leading to a neutral tone in discussing his/her deficiencies (Warnock, 2005b, p21). However, in Warnock's view, it also led to the former categorisations being replaced by the single categorisation of SEN, thus implying a homogeneity amongst the group which was misleading. She claims that the initial act failed to take account of gradation of needs and the wide range of needs to be met, *leading to a tendency to overlook the differences not only between the educationally 'needy' and others, but also between various kinds of educational need.* (Ibid., p13) She goes on to state:

> *If children's needs are to be met it is absolutely necessary to have ways of identifying not only what is needed but also why (by virtue of what condition or disability) it is needed.*
>
> (Ibid., p21).

Prior to discussing further Warnock's critique of current practice, it is of value to explore some of the drivers of change which have led from the Warnock report and its Scottish equivalent (SED, 1978) to the ASL Act (SEED, 2004d). These can be categorised as either ideologically/ethically driven or arising from pragmatic concerns. However, it is neither practical nor feasible to separate out these two categories as they often prove to be inter-dependent.

The Role of discourse and the concepts of 'Special Needs' and 'Additional Support Needs'

The desire to create a new discourse around the area of SEN could be regarded as a continuation of the process begun by the Warnock committee. This stems from the theory that the nature of the discourse shapes the way in which people conceptualise ideas (Nuthall, 2002; Giddens, 2006). Whereas Warnock (DES, 1987) replaced categories such as 'handicapped' and 'normal'; the ASL Act seeks to move away from a conceptualisation of children as having 'needs' (a 'deficit' model in which the needs are conceptualised as residing within the child) to one focussing upon 'learning needs' - the additional support children require in order to learn and socialise effectively (a 'social' model) (LTS, 2005). LTS (2005), however, indicates that this is a subtle distinction which may not be understood by those already familiar with the concept of 'needs'.

[10] cited in Allan and Brown, 2001

The social model of disability makes a distinction between 'impairment' and 'disability', the latter of which is defined by the Union of Physically Impaired against Segregation (UPIAS) as:

> *The disadvantage or restriction of activity caused by a contemporary social organization which takes no or little account of people who have physical impairments and thus excludes them from participation in the mainstream of social activities.*
> (UPIAS, 1976, cited in Giddens, 2006, p281)

This definition has subsequently been expanded to incorporate non physical, sensory and intellectual forms of impairment. Thus, disability is conceived as discriminatory practices within the social environment which prevent people with impairments from participating fully in society rather than as residing within the individual. One of the principal arguments which is forwarded by the medical profession to counter the social concept of disability is that both 'impairment' and 'disability' are social constructs and that it is not always possible to delineate them, thus arguing that a full understanding of disability rests on incorporating both explanations. (Giddens, 2006)

Ainscow *et al.* (2006) make a strong case for the 'social' model of disability as it pertains to education. They argue that to focus upon the 'special needs' inherent within the child is to ignore the wider aspects of the child and the ways in which such children can be discriminated against or included. Thus they focus upon 'barriers to learning and participation ' and 'resources to support learning and participation'. On the basis of a human rights perspective, they argue against the segregation of children in special schools which legitimises, for them, the concept of a continuum of needs leading ultimately to provision in Special schools, and the categorisation arising from which (and the practices and language associated with which) acts as a barrier to inclusion. They consider that the focus upon 'special needs' detracts attention away from a deeper understanding of the societal factors which may contribute towards oppression (and which may be reflected within the over-representation of specific groups (such as the preponderance of African-Caribbean boys with SEBD)). It fosters a narrow perception of inclusion as being concerned only with specific groups of pupils, for whom special provision is made, rather than being concerned with the full participation of all children in their education (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p15-18).

Likewise, Thomas and Loxley (2001)[11] attest that much of the legislation of the past twenty years, founded upon thinking based upon 'deficit' models', leading to an undue emphasis upon individual learning difficulties rather than a broader focus upon 'education for all', has created barriers to progress.

It is evident that these concerns are reflected in the ASL Act with its focus upon the removal of barriers to learning and the identification of 'additional support needs', and

[11] cited in Rose, 2003 in Tilstone and Rose (eds.), p11

the broadening of the concept of 'additional support needs' to encompass temporary as well as permanent 'needs' as they could pertain potentially to all children.

This author, whilst being sympathetic to many of the arguments forwarded by Ainscow *et al.* and welcoming the change in emphasis within the ASL Act, concurs with the case forwarded by the medical profession, particularly in respect of children perceived as having SEBD. Whilst it can be argued that many of the difficulties experienced by children with SEBD may initially have arisen from environmental and social factors and that contextual factors (including those within the learning environment) may exacerbate these difficulties, it cannot be argued that these are the sole factors. The heated debate surrounding ADHD is testimony to the contentious nature of this issue (Lloyd, 2003; Lloyd *et al.*, 2006; Giddens, 2006).

It is difficult to conceive how the additional learning needs of the child can be identified without focussing initially upon the individual circumstances which pertain to the child, including the nature of the impairment. As Warnock quite correctly indicates, intervention which is not sharply focussed upon the nature of the potential and actual difficulties of the child is unlikely to be successful. Likewise, the focus within the ASL Act upon removing barriers to learning can only be accomplished through an understanding of the barriers which the child is likely to encounter, stemming in turn from an understanding of the educational needs of the child which derives from an understanding of the individual circumstances pertaining to the child (as argued above).

Might it not be the case that we are in danger of replacing a deficit model of the child with a deficit model of systems and practice which may be in no-one's best interests, de-values the expertise and commitment of those working within the field (Rose, 2003), and risks demoralising both those who lead developments and class teachers? Surely, the best provision arises from an understanding of both systemic factors and of the circumstances pertaining to the individual child as previously argued? Need it be one or other?

Might it not also potentially be the case that the more sophisticated the arguments and discourse within the academic community, the more it becomes divorced from the the teacher within the classroom, parents and pupils, contributing to the confusion around the concept of inclusion and therefore acting as a barrier to successful inclusion? Rose (2003) comments upon the entrenched positions adopted by some commentators adopting a human rights stance who fail to engage in a dialogue with teachers or to engage with teachers' concerns about their capacity to cope with a wide range of diversity within their classes. Similarly, teachers may also adopt an insular perspective which stands in the way of progress. (Rose, 2003, in Tilstone and Rose (eds.)), p9)

Winzer (2005), drawing from international comparisons of approaches to inclusion for children with EBD, observes:

> *.. liberal thinking has more influence on policy thinking than policy implementation,*

and educational reform initiatives may be only tacit. Indeed, the gap between rhetoric and reality is often enormous.

(Winzer, 2005 in Clough *et al.* (eds.), p26)

Lawson *et al.* (2005), drawing upon the perceptions of teachers and classroom assistants (in England) towards inclusion, describe the various accounts as *ambitious, visionary and somewhat vague.* (Ibid., p1) They note that whilst the various accounts given accorded with some aspects of Government rhetoric, *rhetoric and 'reality' were tenuously linked* (Ibid., p3) and observe that:

Whilst policy, structure and culture might shape the broader social context in which teachers and teaching assistants operate, it is their personal interpretations and understandings, their day-to-day enactments, their ***agency*** *which determines how the policy is formulated and re-formulated in practice, what it looks like on the ground.*

(Ibid., p12)[12]

Whilst this may appear to be an obvious point which does not need stating, it should not be overlooked. Leadership which fails to recognise the agency of teachers in interpreting and re-formulating policy according to their own understandings and individual circumstances is leadership which fails in its central purpose.

Discourse in itself can be an agent of exclusion creating a class of those 'in the know' and those on the outskirts. It can curtail full and frank discussion of issues through fear of infringement of 'political correctness', resulting in people 'walking on eggshells' and struggling to find 'politically correct' vocabulary through which they can express their views. This can only inhibit rather than forward the cause of inclusion. It can become a self-perpetuating process - how long will it be before the concept of 'additional support needs' itself is replaced? Whilst acknowledging that a great deal has been accomplished (who would wish a return to the days of the classifications of 'disabled' and 'normal' which resulted in some children being classified as 'ineducable'? (Warnock, 2005b, Editorial)), a note of caution is required.

The relationship between the concepts of integration and inclusion and their relationship with human rights

Pirrie *et al.*, (2006) draw from the literature to compile a typology of segregation, integration and inclusion (Ibid., Fig. 2.4) in relation to a range of factors such as the underlying philosophy (*'categorising difference'/'managing difference'/'celebrating diversity'*). The authors note that whilst integration is construed as a *pragmatic, politically-neutral form of service delivery,* inclusion is construed ideologically with a focus upon the whole school community, and upon a rights agenda, rather than upon the needs of a specific group or individual. As the authors testify, the typology represents *a mine-field of competing priorities and juxtaposed values that are not mutually exclusive* (Ibid., 2.3).

[12] the authors' emphasis

Whilst the focus of integration could be perceived as resting upon the need for the individual to adapt (certainly with appropriate support) to the environment, the focus upon inclusion is for the environment to adapt to the individual by removing barriers to participation and the provision of appropriate additional support. However, this author would maintain that a focus upon inclusion rather than upon integration (or vice-versa) creates a false dichotomy. Whilst it is helpful to try to separate out the philosophy and practice underlying the concepts of integration and inclusion as a means of helping to understand them and their provenance, the danger is that they are then perceived as opposites of each other. Surely, whether in the context of learning or of immigration or asylum seekers, to be successful requires both the individual to wish to adapt and have the capacity to adapt to the new surroundings as much as it requires of the environment to adapt to the needs of the individual, to be welcoming in approach and to provide the additional support needed? This raises the following questions:

- to what extent is the child (and his/her parents) willing and able to adapt to the environment of the school?
- to what extent is the school willing and able to embrace the child?

Without addressing both of these questions (whether in the context of a child with hearing impairment or a disaffected fifteen year old; and within the context of a mainstream or special school) this author would suggest that a successful outcome is unlikely to be achieved. Feuerstein argues that there are three pre-requisites for successful inclusion:- *the preparation of the child; the preparation of the receiving school;* and *the preparation of the parents* (Boyd, 1996, p2-3). These are encompassed in the questions raised above. Boyd suggests that the opposition to inclusion by some teachers and parents may rest in the failure to address at least one of these imperatives.

The focus upon inclusion in opposition to integration has enabled some who participate in the discourse not to address the issue of the capacity of the child to be able to adapt to the environment in which he/she is placed, even with appropriate support, and to equate inclusion with mainstream schools. This is particularly the case when a human rights stance is adopted.

Ainscow *et al.* (2006) argue for:

> *... the removal of structural barriers between different groups of students and staff; the dismantling of separate programmes, services and specialisms*[13]*, and the development of pedagogical approaches (such as constructivist approaches) which enable students to learn together rather than separately.*
>
> (Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, p40)

which is radical and uncompromising.

[13] This author's emphasis

Given the strong advocacy of 'a school for all' and of the dismantling of current services to support children with ASN, attention needs to be paid to the findings of Wolfson *et al.* (2007) that special school teachers viewed children, who had been identified as having ASN or being of low ability, as being more amenable to change than did teachers within mainstream settings (including learning support teachers) (Ibid., p305) particularly within the context of HMIE's frequent exhortations about the importance of teacher expectations in realising pupils' potential, expressed in a range of 'Standards and Quality' reports.

A synthesis

This section has explored the tensions between the medical and social models of disability and those between mainstream and special provision, exploring the role of discourse, noting the tenuous link between policy and practice. The advocacy of the abolition of specialist provision for pupils with ASN, as advocated by Ainscow *et al.*, 2006, should be treated with extreme caution.

4.2.2 *Inclusion as Exclusion*

This section explores the many ways in which children can be 'included' yet 'excluded'.

The difficulty with a concept such as inclusion is that it has an aura - a 'feel good' factor - with which it is hard to disagree - rather like 'America and apple pie'. Warnock (2005b) observes that, because inclusion stems from a vision of *'one society'* and a commitment to social justice and human rights (Ibid., p39), there is a failure to examine it critically.

> *That it seems not always to work, or often to produce results that are harmful is irrelevant. If something is self-evidently good, there is no point in seeking empirical evidence of its value.*
>
> (Ibid. 2005b, p21)

However, if one adopts the perspective that inclusion is fundamentally concerned with a sense of belonging (Warnock, 2005a & b; Mowat, 2007), how can it be legislated for? Warnock states:- *For inclusion, if it means anything, must mean feeling that you are where you are at home. Only this sense of belonging makes it possible for a child to learn and enjoy.* (Warnock 2005a, p9)

Boyd (1996) is not a lone voice when he states:

> *.. young people can be in a mainstream school but not necessarily be included. It may be, also, that the corollary is true, and that some young people need more specialist accommodation and care than a mainstream school can provide.*
>
> (Ibid., p2)

This perception of 'not being included' is voiced also by Warnock who describes the reality of many children's experience in mainstream schools as a *painful kind of exclusion* (Warnock, 2005b). Indeed, Winzer (2005) cautions for the need for schools within Western cultures to be:-

> *sensitive to fundamental realities of the prevailing culture and the capacity of the school systems to change and restructure to accommodate all students with special needs, including those who may be characterized as emotionally and behaviourally disordered.*
>
> (Winzer, 2005 in Clough *et al.* (eds.), p28)

Likewise, Kinder *et al.* (2000) question the capacity of mainstream schools to counter the influence of peer relations in pupil disaffection.

Lawson *et al.* (2005), in their case studies of perceptions of teachers and teaching assistants, provide a very poignant account of exclusion within inclusion:- *And you know it's pathetic, his little eyes looking in, it's almost like the whole of his life he's got this glass screen and he's looking in through the screen* .. (Ibid., p10) and Cooper (2002) draws upon the experience a child incarcerated within an isolation room:

> *Isolation is where you're in a room on your own. And you get set work from all the teachers and you're not allowed to look out and you're not allowed out. There's a toilet in the room, and they bring dinner to me.*
>
> (Cooper, 2002, p22)

This child could be describing the experience of prison. Whilst this may be an extreme example, it is by no means certain that it is an isolated example. Is this really what was envisaged under the mantra of inclusion? It is easy to blame schools and teachers for such a scenario but it is indicative of the pressures upon schools to deliver and yet be seen to be inclusive (simplistically equated with 'not excluding' as manifested within the target-setting agenda). It is hardly surprising that inclusion is such an emotive issue. Yet, once again an example of the tensions within the system described by Cooper and Baron and expressed by Lawson *et al.* (2005)[14] as *a tension between an educational ideal .. and the day-to-day living of inclusion.* (Lawson *et al.*, 2005, p13)

Allan and Brown (2001) describe a pupil *velcroed onto a special needs auxiliary* which is described by a Head Teacher of a Special School as *the sort of dependency that is extremely damaging and is yet unrecognised.* (Ibid., p203)

At which point was a conscious decision made that that one of the main supports for children should be an unqualified adult rather than the support which children, in the past, received from a fully qualified, Learning Support Teacher (albeit, perhaps extracted

[14] drawing from Broadfoot, 2002

from a class for support)? According to OFSTED (2006), support from teaching assistants *did not ensure good quality intervention or adequate progress by pupils* whereas the involvement of a specialist teacher did. (Ibid., p2) Of greater concern, in respect of this specific study, is that OFSTED also identified that pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD) were even more disadvantaged, being less likely to receive support in the first instance or to receive it too late. This latter finding is supported by a range of studies in Scotland (Kendal *et al.*, 2001; HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006). For example, pupils with SEBD were less likely to have a Record of Need than other pupils with SEN (HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003). Pirrie *et al.* (2006) observe the phenomenon of 'too little, 'too late':

> *The number of children traumatised by repeated failure in under-equipped mainstream settings is very high. Many would be able to integrate successfully if intervention was early and adequate.*
>
> (Ibid., 2.1.1)

Winzer (2005) draws from Eber *et al.* (1997) to note that students with EBD were the least likely to be given consideration when inclusive options are available.

It raises questions about the deployment of Learning Support staff (and the multi-agendas to which they operate); the training and ongoing professional support provided to Learning Assistants/Auxiliaries; the availability and quality of alternative provision and the quality of the mechanisms within Local Authorities to allocate support. To return to the initial question posed by Bollard, is this really what society wants for its children?

A range of studies identify concerns about the capacity of some pupils to cope within mainstream settings[15] . Increasingly, Boyd's finding that a policy of presumption in favour of mainstreaming may fail some pupils is being replicated in other studies (Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Warnock, 2005a & b; Wilkin *et al.*, 2005). The consensus view emerging from a range of studies is that teachers, in principle, support the concept of inclusion whilst expressing reservations about putting it into practice[16] . Thus is manifested in the , "Yes, but .." as described by Lawson *et al.* (2005) and expressed in this quote from a Primary teacher responsible for an autistic child:- *To me it is a very, very nice idea, inclusion but unfortunately teachers aren't given the training or backup or support to include children properly* .. (Ibid., p11-12).

Of concern are signs that attitudes towards inclusion are becoming more polarised, particularly within a context in which it is reported that half of Primary teachers and over a third of secondary teachers are unaware of "Better Behaviour - Better Learning" (SEED, 2004g); the GTC survey indicates that it has not impacted upon the classroom level (Adams, 2005); HMIE report that *issues relating to inclusion, behaviour and attainment remain*

[15] Kendal *et al.*, 2001; Cooper, 2002; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003; Lawson *et al.*, 2005; Warnock, 2005a & b; Wilkin *et al.*, 2005; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006

[16] Boyd, 1996; Hamill and Boyd, 2000; SEED, 2001a; Hamill et al., 2002; Lawson *et al.*, 2005; Riddell 2005/2006; Pirrie *et al.*, 2006

a real challenge for schools and education authorities .. (HMIE, 2005b, National Priority 2); and the finding of the GTC survey that:

> *Social inclusion, interpreted to mean integration of pupils with special needs, and children with behavioural difficulties, was overwhelmingly regarded as a negative factor in pupil behaviour and learning* ..
>
> (Adams, 2005, p44)

In particular, the greatest concerns revolve around pupils with SEBD (Riddell, 2005/2006) as had been anticipated in HMIE's/Audit Scotland's report to the Executive (HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003). Hamill *et al.* (2002) observe that the most consistent theme to emerge in staff views of inclusion is that *the needs of the minority and of the majority seem to many teachers to be irreconcilable.* (Ibid., p44) Farrell, 2001[17] attests that the placement of pupils exhibiting extremes of behaviour in mainstream schools is an infringement of the rights of other children to learn.

It brings to the fore the need for an open and frank debate as discourse which is not founded on 'shared understandings' (Hamill and Boyd, 2000) is of little value. Rose draws attention to the litany of *ill-conceived and poorly introduced procedures which have resulted from ideologically driven legislation.* (Rose, 2003, in Tilstone and Rose (eds.), p11) Researchers, policy makers and teachers need to work together to arrive at a shared vision. There is a need to give a higher priority to this issue and to ensure that the teacher voice is not only listened to but given credence. Rose (2003) states,

> *In order to move forward it is essential that policies are implemented which are founded upon a sound, shared philosophy and that this is supported by a pragmatic analysis of what works in an inclusive classroom.*
>
> (Ibid., p9)

Dyson (1997) claims that the quest for inclusion has resulted in special education reproducing itself in mainstream schools, *setting up colonies of young people within schools as opposed to transforming mainstream education.* (Ibid., p154)[18] Head (2005) attributes the replication of 'special' provision within mainstream schools to the propensity of schools to formulate their work with children with SEBD in terms of discipline rather than upon learning. He argues for 'Better Learning - Better Behaviour' rather than the converse on the basis that the first priority for children with SEBD should not be their behaviour but the identification of their learning needs, as would be the case for all other children in need of additional support. He argues that the prime function and *culture and context* of schools is teaching and learning and that the argument behind 'Better Behaviour - Better Learning' rests on a false premise - that better behaviour will automatically lead to better learning.

Kinder *et al.* (2000), in a study of disaffected teenagers, suggest that a common feature of

[17] cited in Rose, 2003 in Tilstone and Rose (eds.), p10

[18] in Hamill *et al.* (2002), p23

those young people who disengage from school is:- .. *their failure to acquire the self-esteem, interpersonal skills or self-control to automatically engage successfully with the demands of secondary school life.* (Ibid., p18) which the authors attribute, in part, to the inflexibility of school systems.

Allan and Brown (2001) raise the issue about the systemic change required within the system to promote inclusion:

> *Simplistic claims that mainstream placements will promote social inclusion for all pupils contained within official policy documents (DfEE, 1997) are irresponsible if they do not also specify the radical system changes that are necessary to make schools inclusive.*
>
> (Ibid., p206).

Rose (2003) argues that if inclusion (equated to mainstream provision) is to become a reality for children currently placed in Special schools, there is a need to embrace both the ideal and an examination of the conditions necessary to achieve the goal. He draws from Berlin (1996) to state that simply re-iterating the vision without putting in place the conditions necessary for it to succeed, will lead to frustration and rejection. (Rose, 2003, p13)

Whilst it may be the case that placement in mainstream schools may have served many pupils well, impacting in a positive way upon inclusive practice within the school, to the benefit of all pupils, these findings indicate that current approaches towards inclusion may be failing some of the most vulnerable pupils. They highlight the need for further study of the experience of pupils in need of additional support within mainstream schools and their parents, particularly for those pupils attending schools situated in areas of multiple deprivation where low attainment (and the range of factors which accompany it) is more likely to manifest itself (HMIE, 2006a; HMIE, 2006b, SEED 2006b) and a willingness to look afresh at policy and practice. Munn and Lloyd (2005) advocate that schools need to actively engage with the views of young people even when what they have to say is critical of school policy and practice. Allan and Brown (2001) advocate less of a focus upon location of provision and more upon finding ways of equipping young people as *responsible and independent learners* (Ibid., p206). OFSTED's findings would indicate that it is not so much a matter of where children with learning difficulties and disabilities (England)/additional support (Scotland) needs are educated but *the quality of the provision* which is of the essence. In particular, *high quality specialist teachers and a commitment by leaders to create opportunities to include all pupils were the key to success.* (OFSTED, 2006, p3)

4.2.3 *Exclusion as Inclusion*

Just as the previous discussion focussed upon how children can be 'included' yet 'excluded', this section examines how practices which may be described by some commentators as discriminatory and excluding may have the potential to foster inclusion.

Warnock's advocacy of a range of provision spanning both mainstream and special schools derives from a philosophy of inclusion which is concerned primarily with the learning needs of the child on the basis that *if all children are entitled by law to education, then they must also be entitled to an environment within which education is for them a genuine possibility.* (Warnock, 2005a, p9). Warnock makes a clear distinction between the rights and needs of adults and those of children. She argues that it is only through the provision of the right environment that some young people will be enabled to take their place in society. In her view, schools serve to prepare young people for their future lives and do not necessarily reflect society. (Warnock, 2005a, p8) As such, she states:

> *It is their (children's) right to learn that we must defend, not their right to learn in the same environment as everyone else.*
>
> (Warnock, 2005b, p44-45)

This perspective is shared by some teachers in Hamill *et al.*'s study (2002), exemplified in this quote:

> *Real inclusion means that within the system there is a place for everybody, but to insist that this place must be the same school, i.e. under the same roof is simplistic.*
>
> (Ibid., p46: a respondent)

and in the findings of the GTC survey (Adams, 2005) which argues for the rights of children to be educated in a positive learning environment, wherever that might be.

Whilst this author would concur with much of the analysis forwarded by Ainscow *et al.* (2006) in relation to the quest for inclusive practice, the solutions which they propose are more questionable. Whilst not disagreeing with the inclusive values (c.c. 4.2.1) for which they make a case, it is the insistence that these values can only be realised within the context of the 'local school' with which this author would take issue. As Baroness Warnock has argued, it is the entitlement to learn which is key - not the location at which it occurs. Can pupils of all kinds not learn respect for diversity in other settings rather than solely the local school? Is participation in worthwhile learning in contexts other than the local school not of value? This is a fundamental issue about the purpose(s) of education. If it is perceived primarily as an agent of social justice and human rights, then the position forwarded by Ainscow *et al.* could be justified. If, on the other hand, it is perceived primarily as being concerned with realising the learning potential of the child (accepting that the emotional and social needs of the child also require to be addressed)

then a more flexible and responsive approach can be adopted.

Cole (2005), within the context of a discussion of children with EBD, drawing from the literature, observes that in both the United Kingdom and the United States of America there was an:

> *over-arching concern for 'inclusion' and perhaps false assumptions that this was best pursued by maintaining a minority of students against their wishes and perhaps against their interests in unresponsive, sometimes rejecting, mainstream schools.*
> (Cole in Clough *et al.* (eds.), 2005, p40)

He concludes that in an 'imperfect world', *enforced and under-resourced 'mainstreaming' posing as 'inclusion' is less likely than responsive, well-run alternative provision to achieve meaningful social inclusion for them.* (Cole in Clough *et al.* (eds.), 2005, p43)[19] If this were held to be true, the proposal forwarded by Ainscow *et al.* (2006) to dismantle the current services for children with additional needs (c.c. 4.2.1) would be a disastrous proposition for many vulnerable children.

Warnock's advocation of a range of provision, however, is not in opposition to the Scottish Executive's policy on inclusion. HMIE (HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003) advocates provision for children with SEN on a spectrum from full time membership of mainstream classes (with an intensive level of support from specialist teachers and adaptations to the curriculum) to full time special schools (Ibid., 2.13: Exhibit 2) as do Munn *et al.* (1997) in their recommendations to Local Authorities. It was not predicted that the % of children attending special schools would change (taking account of the fact that pupils with SEBD were, at that time, under-represented) although it was expected that the nature of the population would change. (Ibid., 3.28: Exhibit 11) This has proved to be the case as established by Pirrie *et al.* (2006) who noted the much higher representation of children on the autistic spectrum in both Special and mainstream schools (which the authors believe may underlie the perceptions of mainstream staff of increasing numbers of pupils with SEBD).

It is interesting to note, however, that, at the time of the report, there was no correlation between the costs which councils spent on supporting inclusion and the level of deprivation, rural settlement pattern or the percentage of the population in special schools. (Ibid., 17) This may be indicative of a cost-driven rather than a needs-driven approach. It is also ominous that the addition of the provision of mainstreaming to the legislation (as an amendment) was not costed into the legislation (Ibid., 28) which makes effective planning and efficient, effective and economic provision difficult to achieve. The question as to how Local Authorities are to address the funding of mainstream provision whilst maintaining a range of alternative provision for pupils with SEN, particularly within the context of changing patterns of Local Government, is not adequately addressed within the report (Mowat, 2005). The 'Interim report on the implementation of

[19] the original author's emphasis

the Education (ASL) (Scotland) Act 2004' raises concerns about the availability of respite and mental health resources, speech and language therapy and the efficacy of inter-authority arrangements amongst others (HMIE, 2006e). These observations may explain, to an extent, the concerns of those who note a disparity between the rhetoric of inclusion and its manifestations in practice.

Munn *et al.*, (2004) note that the advocacy by teachers of smaller class sizes and greater provision of off-site units *raises questions about the ability of mainstream comprehensives as currently funded, organised and staffed to meet the needs of inclusion.* (Ibid., p67). In the views of a respondent, *The government has pushed this agenda without the resources at all levels to deliver it in a way that it is reasonable to expect.* (Pirrie *et al.*, 2006, 4.1.1)

Munn *et al.* (2000) draw from a range of evidence to cite criticisms of the restricted curriculum and quality of education on offer in specialist provision, the lack of clarity over aims and purposes and the lack of clear evaluative criteria for effectiveness. (Ibid., Ch 7, pp. 111 - 118) They observe that children attending such provision are already disadvantaged in a range of ways and that *providing such pupils with alternative schools is likely to ratchet up the spiral of disadvantage.* (Ibid., 2000, p151) However, these difficulties are not intractable and the starting point for any solution is to acknowledge problems and confront them. In the period since Munn *et al.*'s study, a range of initiatives from SEED and advice to schools has been directed towards addressing these problems (SEED, 2001h; SEED, 2004h; HMIE, 2007a), exemplified in the award of the 'European Foundation for Quality Management' to Kereslaw School in Renfrew (TESS, 25.05.07), the Head Teacher of which was commended for her vision and *passion for continuous improvement* and who described the most important underlying values of her school as joy and compassion.

Macleod (2006) notes the dilemma between the positive effects upon pupil self-esteem which alternative curricula can have upon young people countered against the more negative perceptions of self which may arise from the pupils perceiving themselves to being treated differently from others. She questions, is it only those perceived as disaffected who should be entitled to alternative curricula?, arguing that *the disaffected do not .. have a monopoly on socio-cultural diversity.* (Macleod, 2006, p2) Within her study, pupils attending Special schools appreciated the opportunity to engage in activities which were suitably challenging and structured and to follow a 'mainstream curriculum', seeing it as a passport to the future. She argues for a focus upon relationships to be regarded as at least as important as the curriculum.

Allan and Brown (2001) note that studies of special schools which portray them in a positive light tend to be ignored in the drive towards full inclusion. They draw upon Corbett (1997) who suggests that *inclusionism, at its extreme, has become a 'politically correct form of bullying'.* (Corbett, 1997, p57) They suggest that Special schools have made greater progress in developing inclusive approaches than mainstream schools. Might it be the case that this progress may stem from the ability of Special schools to respond more

flexibly to the demands of inclusion than mainstream schools, and the mechanisms which they already have in place for inter-agency working, in which they are more likely to have greater experience and expertise? Kinder *et al.* (2000) highlight the lack of flexibility of school systems to meet the needs of young people as much as the personal difficulties experienced by the young people themselves in contributing to the difficulties experienced by them in conforming to the norms of school life.

Pirrie *et al.* (2006), express concern that special schools or parental views can be perceived as barriers to inclusion or mainstreaming:- *There is a danger than inclusion becomes a new orthodoxy, and that authorities and schools engage in a relentless pursuit of an elusive gold standard,* which would ultimately militate against effective inclusion. (Ibid., 6.1)

Rose (2003) advises that the promotion of inclusive practice, in which all children are enabled to learn, is best achieved through:-

> *.. a continuum of provision which accepts that not all pupils learn in the same way and which, while celebrating diversity recognises those innovative practices that enable pupils to participate fully in a curriculum which addresses their needs.*
>
> (Rose, 2003 in Tilstone and Rose (eds.), p15)

a view with which this author fully concurs.

Alternatives to Exclusion

However, it would be wrong to curtail this discussion to the role of special and mainstream schools. Within a political climate in which diversity and innovation are being encouraged and alternatives to exclusion actively sought, the nature of schooling for all children (as envisaged in HMI, 2001; SEED 2004a, 2004b, 2006b) is likely to become more diverse.

The GTC survey (Adams, 2005) indicated that teachers wanted to see the wider application of alternatives to exclusion without it being perceived as being a rejection of the principles of social inclusion. Some of the most innovative work undertaken under the banner of 'alternatives to exclusion' and early intervention involves an element of removing children either partially or fully from the mainstream school or classroom. Many of these initiatives have been evaluated (or are in the process of being evaluated) by Local Authorities and SEED (drawing upon the academic community) and, whilst areas for development have been identified, many of the initiatives have been valued by young people and their families. (Renfrewshire Council, 2003; WDC, 2004; SEED, 2006c)

Some authorities, rather than focussing specifically upon a single initiative, have evaluated the quality of their provision for SEN/ASN (and, more specifically, for children with SEBD), focussing upon inter-agency working and encompassing an evaluation of on-site and off-site provision. (Hamill and Boyd, 2000; Lloyd *et al.*, 2001; Hamill *et al.*, 2002;

Head *et al.*, 2004)

Head *et al.* (2004) identify that a range of models for behaviour support existed in the schools within their study on a continuum from separate and distinct provision to a more holistic approach embracing learning, teaching, the curriculum and pastoral care. They identify the devolved responsibility to schools to decide upon the best means of utilising the resources provided to them as being key to their success in reducing exclusions. This accords with the findings of Hamill *et al.* (2002) who state, .. *the reality may be that the views of staff in schools are a product of the extent to which they feel included* .. (Ibid., p47) thus highlighting the need for effective management and leadership which takes account of the views of staff (as previously argued) and of the need to avoid top-down approaches which fail to engage staff. Indeed, one of the principal findings of the evaluation of the Learning Communities initiative in Glasgow and of the Integrated Community Schools (ICS) initiative is the sense of distance which the ordinary classroom teacher feels in relation to the initiatives - a lack of a sense of ownership. (Baron, 2001; Baron *et al.*, 2001; HMIE, 2004c; McCulloch *et al.*, 2004)

This phenomenon may be a reflection upon the day-to-day demands upon teachers and the multiple agendas to which they operate but it is also likely to be indicative of failures of communication and leadership. Baron (2001) is highly critical of the imposition of policy initiatives which (according to him) are based upon a poor evidence base.

Inclusion imposed? - a focus upon teacher attitudes and behaviours

This lack of ownership is perceived by teachers not only in relation to initiatives such as Integrated Community Schools but in relation to the concept of inclusion itself, many teachers feeling that it had been imposed from above (Pirrie *et al.*, 2006) with little prior consultation or debate, leading teachers to distance themselves from the needs of the children who were perceived to be the source of the problem - specifically those with SEBD. There was a failure to recognise (or perhaps reluctance to acknowledge) that pupils with SEBD were deserving of additional support, should be regarded as having special educational needs or have a right to have their opinions heard[20] .

Hamill *et al.* (2002) report that *Many staff believe that the right to be treated in a caring way is forfeited by some young people as a consequence of their behaviour,* and accordingly believe that these young people have also lost their right to be treated with respect. Further, *It is clear that many staff believe that some pupils should not be in mainstream schools, far less in mainstream classes.* (Ibid., p42) This perspective is also reported in Pirrie *et al.* (2006):- *One of the big problems in the mainstream classes .. is persuading the teachers that these children should be there.* (Ibid., 4.1.1: the views of a Headteacher) and is replicated in Munn *et al.* (1998) and the GTC survey (Adams, 2005).

[20] Hamill and Boyd, 2000; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Kendall *et al.*, 2001; Lloyd *et al.*, 2001; Munn *et al.*, 1998, 2000; Munn and Lloyd, 2005

These findings highlight, once again, the ever widening gap between the proponents of inclusion and those at the 'chalk face'. They also accord with the finding of Kinder *et al.*, 1996 that some teachers personify a range of attitudes which reflect a lack of equivalence between adult and child (failing to show respect to young people, being unfair, rude and victimising and humiliating individuals), reflected in the concerns of pupils and parents over the negative effects of labelling and being stigmatised because of the locale in which they live (Munn *et al.*, 1997). This leads to a sense of unjustness and unfairness[21] . Concerns about labelling and stigmatisation are identified in a wide range of studies[22] .

Thomas (2005) observes that whilst unacceptable behaviour poses difficulties for schools, it is not necessarily indicative of a clinical problem nor does it necessarily indicate some abnormality or deficit in the child. Explanations resting in a deficit model of the child have led to a movement away from simple explanations based upon morality (a sense of right and wrong) to an examination of the child - *the background, motivations and supposed trauma of the students rather than the simple humanity of the school's operation - its simple day-to-day processes and routines.* (Thomas, 2005, p65) The 'needs' of the school for *order, calm, routine and predictability* have, according to the author, been silently transmuted to the child's needs for *stability, nurture, security, one-to-one help or whatever,* thus we have moved away from an approach based upon *naughty-therefore-impose-sanctions* to one of *disturbed-therefore-meet-needs.* (Thomas, 2005, p64). Thomas describes this phenomenon as a 'fundamental attribution error' (Ibid., p 67).

> *Simple moral judgement is suspended. It is displaced by a morass of half-understood ideas about disturbance, a jumble of bits and pieces from psychoanalysis, psychology and psychiatry, a bricolage of penis envy and cognitive dissonance, of Freudian slip and standard deviation, of motivation ...*
>
> (Ibid., p 68)

His ultimate argument is that, in persisting in using labels such as 'EBD', the opportunity to address how schools can become more humane, congenial and inclusive places is lost.

Munn and Lloyd (2005) posit that negative labelling and stigmatisation of pupils may be part of a defence mechanism on the part of teachers to distance themselves from any responsibility for disruptive behaviour which might emanate from their practice and to protect their sense of self-esteem, perceiving disruptive behaviour as a public challenge to their authority. This can be become a self-perpetuating cycle - the more disruptive pupils become, the less sense of efficacy will the teacher have, resulting in an even greater propensity to label and stigmatise pupils, thus leading to further indiscipline. The real issue for schools is knowing how to break this cycle.

Kendall *et al.* (2001), drawing from a range of studies (Kinder *et al.*, 1995 - 1998),

[21] Kinder *et al.*, 1996; Munn *et al.*,1997 and 2004; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002; Davies, 2005; Munn and Lloyd, 2005

[22] Hamill *et al.*, 2002; Riley *et al.*, 2002; SEED, 2004e; Winzer, 2005, and Davies, 2005, in Clough *et al.* (eds.)

characterise these negative observations of teacher behaviour (and observations such as, "School's boring") by disaffected pupils as being part of a larger systemic breakdown between mainstream education and its pupils - a 'fight or flight' response by pupils to a discomfiting environment with which they cannot cope. These perceptions of some teachers by disaffected young people are replicated in many studies[23].

Hamill *et al.* (2002) observe that all children are not equally valued within school (an observation made by peers of pupils with SEBD). However, Hamill and Boyd (2000) are sympathetic to the difficult role which teachers play in continually trying to motivate pupils who demonstrate little interest or engagement in learning, a phenomenon with which many classroom teachers will be familiar.

> *It is all too easy in these circumstances for a vicious cycle to become established where teachers become reluctant to continually give of their best to young people who do not appear to respond.* (Ibid., p22 -23)

Munn *et al.*, (1998) explain this phenomenon not solely in terms of the frustration experienced by teachers but also in broader sociological terms within a context in which the service which schools provide has moved from a community to a market model in which the 'contract' between teacher and pupils can be withdrawn if it is deemed to be broken.

Whilst one might observe, "chicken or egg?" , the issue is that teachers are the professionals and should not personalise their relationships with young people in this manner, no matter the provocation. The GTC survey (Adams, 2005) highlights the importance of teachers as role models - *if teachers cannot show respect, even in the face of bad behaviour, they are not helping to improve the situation.* (Ibid., p49) However, it also raises issues about the quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) and the quality and availability of Continuous Professional Development (CPD); the quality of leadership and support for staff within the school and the local authority; and the nature of discipline policies in theory and in practice.

The importance of relationships

Within the school setting, the relationship between the young person and their teachers appeared to be of the essence[24]. SEED (2004e) identifies that the most important aspect of support for a young person as being the establishment of a trustful relationship with an *accessible, friendly and caring adult.* (Ibid., 8.6), a finding replicated in a wide range of studies [25]:

[23] Kinder *et al.*, 1996, 2000; Munn *et al.*, 1997; Cooper, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002; Hamill *et al.*, 2002; SEED, 2004e; Munn and Lloyd, 2005; McCluskey, 2005, 2006

[24] Munn *et al.*, 2000; Kendall *et al.*, 2001; Cooper, 2002; The Prince's Trust, 2002; SEED, 2004e; Munn and Lloyd, 2005; Adams, 2005; Macleod, 2006

[25] Kinder *et al.*,1995, 1996 & 1999; Kinder and Wilkin, 1998; Munn *et al.*, 2000; Kendall *et al.*, 2001; The Prince's Trust, 2002; Cooper, 2002; SEED, 2004e; Munn and Lloyd, 2005; Adams, 2005; Davies, 2005

Trust is the thread that ties these practices together. Through their actions teachers build or diminish the amount of trust in the world.

(SEED, 2004e, 8.3)

Lloyd *et al.* (2001) identify *sometimes it only took one person,* (Ibid., p59 - 61), an observation highlighted also within the SEED study (2004e):- *The most positive aspect of support in school is identified as being when an individual pupil has the one to one support of an accessible, friendly and caring adult.* (Ibid., pt. 8.1) and corroborated by McCluskey (2005).

Likewise, the establishment of relationships characterised by mutual respect are also highlighted in various studies as being an important factor in preventing disaffection and/or effecting improvement in young people (Kendall *et al.*, 2001; Cooper, 2002; Munn and Lloyd, 2005; Adams, 2005). Thus, there is a major job to be done in establishing a more positive and supportive ethos within mainstream schools if inclusion is to be ultimately successful.

A synthesis

This section has explored the nature of provision for pupils with SEBD and the impediments to inclusion, highlighting the need to foster mutually respectful relationships between teachers and pupils and the important role of an *accessible, friendly and caring adult* (SEED, 2004; Lloyd *et al.*, 2001).

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter has drawn from a wide range of official documentation and from the literature to illuminate some of the issues pertaining to inclusion and the debate surrounding school discipline and exclusion. It has raised questions and made tentative suggestions as to how some of the dilemmas identified in the various accounts might be addressed. In particular, it has highlighted issues relating to the need for 'shared understandings' and 'shared vision' (Hamill and Boyd, 2000) and therefore for more effective means of facilitating communication, helping to develop a sense of ownership amongst parties, and the 'joined-up' working and strategic thinking and systems required to support such practice. It has also highlighted the need for a learning focus and for the imperative to be the needs of the child to learn in an environment conducive to his or her needs for additional support rather than upon the relentless pursuit of a political ideology. Inclusion cannot be equated with locality of provision. The relationship between the concepts of exclusion and inclusion is much more complex and multi-faceted than often presented within the literature and media and is open to question.

It has been argued that it is not sufficient to tell teachers that they must be inclusive in

their practice - they need to believe it in their hearts and minds, and that sentiment should underlie any further policy development. A constructivist perspective rests on the concept that teachers must be able to develop their own understandings of inclusion in order to be able to internalise it and to know what it means to them. Teachers must therefore be involved within the debate placing a responsibility upon legislators and the academic community to engage with the profession.

There is a need to understand, to a much greater extent, the context within which inclusion is sought and the contextual factors which militate against or promote inclusive practice.

Finally, as indicated by Kinder *et al.* (2000, p18), *inclusion costs.* If not implemented effectively and resourced adequately (HMIE/Audit Scotland, 2003; Mowat, 2005), the 'costs' in terms of the potential in human life could be great, returning to Munn *et al.'s* (2000) advocacy of the need for a determined, and (this author would argue) listening, informed and enlightened Government.

Chapter 5
The study in context

This chapter sets the study within context in two respects:- in relation to the nature and development of the *Sgi*; and the characteristics of the populations from which the *Sgi* population derives. It also seeks to define the nature of the *Sgi* population, pre-intervention, establishing benchmarks against which pupil progress can be measured.

5.1 The Development of the Sgi

5.1.1 The Operation of the Sgi

Support Groups were first established in the school in session 1998-1999 at the instigation of the author in consultation with the Senior Management Team and Pastoral Care staff. The study focusses upon the first four cohorts of pupils - 14 girls and 55 boys - to participate within the initiative. The groups (constituting three to six pupils) met for one period per week (53 mins) for a proportion of the year - this varied from year to year depending upon staffing availability and other constraints (c.c. Table 5.1).

Fig. 5.1: Periods of Intervention for *Sgi* pupils (1998-2002)

Session	No. of pupils	Period of Intervention	No. of weeks
1998-1999	4	19.10.1.98 -7.05.99	28
	4	07.01.99 - 7.05.99	18
1999-2000	5	17.11.99 - 24.05.00	24
2000-2001	18	08.01.01 - 31.05.01	20
	4	23.04.01 - 31.05.01	6
2001-2002	11	10.12.02 - 29.04.02	17
	23	07.01.02 - 29.04.02	15

The intervention was offered to S2 pupils for two reasons:

- it was considered by senior management that S2 was the time when pupils were most likely to present initially with SEBD and therefore the best time to offer intervention before problems became intractable;
- S2 was the Year Group for whom the author had pastoral responsibility as Depute Head Teacher.

In sessions 2000-2002, a £6,000 grant awarded to the author from the Gordon Cook Foundation to 'Promote Positive Behaviour' was used to support the *Sgi*, principally to enhance the school's staffing, to enable Pastoral Care and behaviour support staff to lead groups.

Nomination to the *Sgi* by Pastoral Care staff was via a pro-forma using a Likert scale (based upon clinical definitions of oppositional defiance disorder and aspects of conduct disorder (c.c. App 1 & App 7.2.1)). Pastoral Care staff were asked to rate pupils against the criteria stated and to add further comments in support of the referral. Both pupils and parents were consulted about the child's participation within the *Sgi* and permission sought of the parents in respect of both the child's participation within the group and within the study (c.c. App 3).

The initial two groups were jointly staffed by the author and the Intermediate Treatment (IT) worker attached to the school. At the end of the first year, the IT worker forged links with the Depute Head for S3 to develop further group work and the author began to work principally, but not solely, with Pastoral Care and Behaviour Support staff. Over the period of intervention, a team of nine staff, all of whom were volunteers, has been involved in leading groups.

Staff involvement has broadened to encompass some register teachers assisting with monitoring of pupils within groups; some teachers providing additional one-one mentoring of pupils; and all teachers being involved in the completion of pupil target cards. In addition, some groups in session 2001-2002 were further supported by senior pupil mentors.

At the end of the period of intervention, all teaching staff who had taught pupils within the *Sgi* were asked to complete questionnaires focussing on the pupils' progress in relation to the aims of the approach.

A variety of approaches has been introduced to foster a partnership approach with parents incorporating the following:

- introductory meetings to outline the *Sgi*, to answer questions and allay anxieties;
- an opportunity for parents to attend a group session;
- participation of parents within the target-setting process;
- informal contact between *SgLs* and parents and vice-versa;
- an opportunity for parents to comment upon reports by *SgLs* relating to their children's progress within the *Sgi* and to complete an evaluation form (c.c. App 7.2.9).

5.1.2 The approaches adopted within the Sgi

The starting point was to identify the outcomes which it was hoped pupils would attain through participation within the *Sgi*[1] which are reflected in the aims of the *Sgi*. (c.c. 1.3.2) As previously described, the development of the *Sgi* was emergent in

[1] a process described by Wiggins and McTighe (2005) as 'backward design'

nature, influenced by a wide body of theories drawn from the cognitive and affective fields (c.c. Ch 2 & 3). The author, in consultation with *SgLs* designed, devised, piloted and refined the course. The materials took the form of collaborative activities which are designed to promote reflection and discussion, a pupil reflective diary, and individual, negotiated target-setting in which pupils take responsibility for setting their own targets. The materials were brought together in the form of a staff handbook which encompasses a course rationale, an introduction to the theories which underpin the approach; a set of teachers' guidelines for the delivery of the course; and pupil materials.

Subsequent to the study, the full set of materials and guidance to teachers wishing to adopt the approach have been revised and added to (in light of the findings of the study) and brought together for publication (Mowat, 2007).

5.1.3 Staff Development and the Embedding of the Approach

In developing an approach such as this, staff development is clearly crucial. Staff development concentrated upon two discrete aspects:- developing *Sgi* leaders' knowledge, understanding, expertise and confidence in the use of the approach itself and developing their understanding and expertise in research methodologies.

A range of approaches was adopted in achieving these ends:

- In-Service Training provided by the author and by Stuart Hall of SCRE;
- regular team meetings fulfilling a variety of purposes;
- the mentoring of staff new to the approach through team-teaching provided by the author;
- regular monitoring of the groups through brief 'pop-in' visits.

Over time, the *Sgi* has gradually embedded within the school as is evidenced by the expansion of group work (fulfilling a range of purposes) over the years, not only within 2nd year, but also into S1 and S3. This was a major aspect of the school's development plan for session 2001-2002 and the groups are now timetabled.

5.1.4 Other mechanisms within the school to support pupils with SEBD

The Joint Assessment Team (JAT) is a multi-disciplinary team which meets weekly or fortnightly and deals with a case load of two/three pupils in each session. The case load consists of first referrals and pupil reviews, the latter of which are set at regular intervals depending upon the needs of the child. Referral to JAT is normally at the instigation of the Pastoral Care teacher who will use his/her discretion as to when a referral is appropriate. Permission is sought from the parent(s)/guardian(s) and feedback is given to them after the meeting has taken place. A report, summarising

recommendations arising from the meeting, is circulated to all relevant personnel.

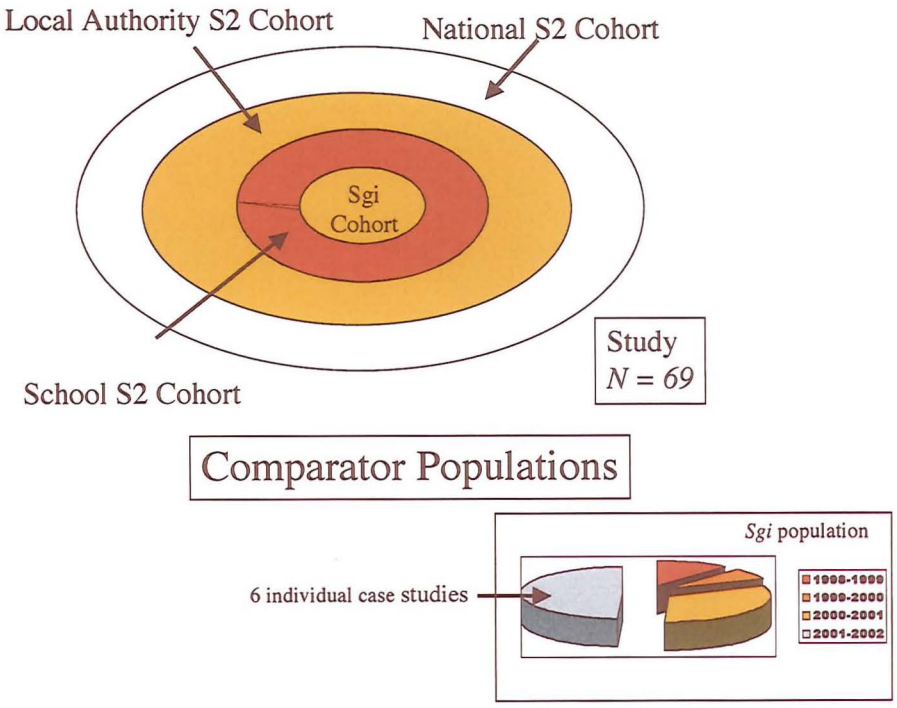
The Pupil Support Base is a unit, under the supervision of Behaviour Support staff, to which pupils (who have been recommended by JAT) can be referred by the Depute Head and class teachers if it is felt that the pupils would be more able to work effectively under close supervision and/or would be likely to disrupt classwork for other pupils. Pupils undertake work set by their class teachers whilst in the room. The room is also intended to provide support to school 'refusers' and other pupils considered to be in need of additional support.

Pupils may also benefit from participating within the range of activities offered by the X Trust, a charitable body within the local community, and in initiatives such as 'Toe-by-toe' - a paired-reading scheme which is offered to selected S1 & S2 pupils.

5.2 *Establishing the characteristics of the Sgi population*

This section of the chapter is concerned with establishing the characteristics of the *Sgi* population and the ways in which and extent to which it differs[2] from the immediate populations from which it derives (c.c. Fig. 5.1), as they progress from the end of Primary 7 to the end of S3.

Fig. 5.1: The relationship between the *Sgi* population and wider populations



It is also concerned with establishing benchmark measures, as a means of ascertaining the realisation of the RQs. The analysis examines the following:-

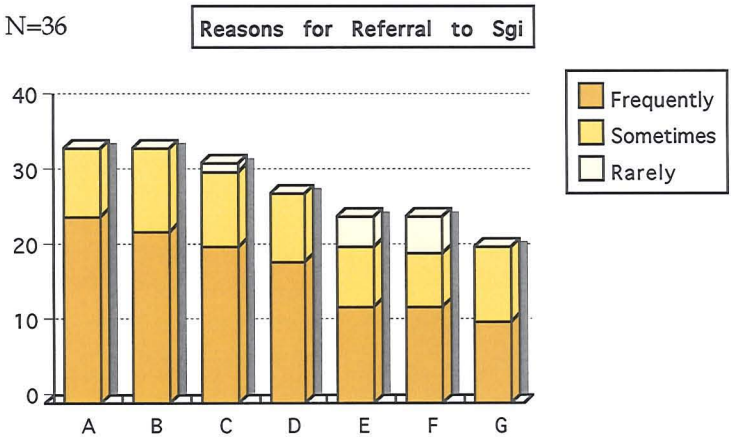
[2] In matters relating to the aims of this study.

- the reasons for nomination to the *Sgi* (5.2.1);
- the attendance and unauthorised absence record (pre-intervention) of *Sgi* pupils in comparison with wider populations (as defined above) (5.2.2);
- the discipline records of *Sgi* pupils (pre-intervention) in comparison with wider populations (as defined above) (5.2.3);
- the attainment of *Sgi* pupils (pre-intervention) as measured in National Tests in Reading and Writing in comparison with wider populations (as defined above) (5.2.4);
- the attitudes and perceptions of *Sgi* pupils (pre-intervention) in respect of a range of indicators relating to the pupils' inter-personal relationships; perceptions of themselves as learners; sense of self-esteem / self-worth; awareness of behavioural difficulties; and motivation to improve upon behaviour (5.2.5);
- other interventions in which *Sgi* pupils were involved (5.2.6).

5.2.1 The Reasons for Nomination by Pastoral Care staff

Fig. 5.2 summarises the most frequent responses given by Pastoral Care teachers to the pro-forma issued for nomination of pupils to the *Sgi* (c.c. 7.2.1).

Fig. 5.2: Most frequent reasons for referral to the *Sgi* in session 2001-2002



A defies teachers and / or refuses to obey rules
B argues with teachers
C deliberately does things to annoy other pupils
D blames others for his / her own mistakes
E loses temper
F is angry, resentful, spiteful or vindictive
G is touchy or easily annoyed by others

It would be fair to assume that these characteristics distinguish the *Sgi* population (by at least degree) from the S2 cohort as otherwise the *Sgi* population would not have been nominated for the intervention.

The comments in support of the referrals (c.c. App 6.1) could be classified as relating

to:-

- perceived benefits for the pupil (N = 11)

  ... is really losing it. He is bordering on serious trouble. I would hope that the Sg could help him harness his anger and aggression towards others.

- learning difficulties/work related (N = 5)

  ... produces very little work in class and pretends he can't do it. He will only work when a member of staff stands over him. This leads to conflict.

- lack of co-operation/unresponsiveness (N = 4)

  Always late and refuses to co-operate with the monitoring system. No improvement despite interview and assurances.

- family related (N = 4)

  Mother in hospital again (mental health problems) ... (pupil) is in ..... (Children's Home).

- inappropriate behaviour (N = 2)

  Different kettle of fish altogether - we somehow need to tackle his 'problem' and apparent inability to recognise appropriate sexual behaviour.

- concern about the child's ability to function within a group setting (N = 2)

  ... would disrupt any group she was in. We may want to think about a more one-to-one arrangement to bring about any change in patterns of behaviour.

- general concern for the welfare of the child (N = 1)

  ...'s behaviour and conduct within school and in the community are causing real concern.

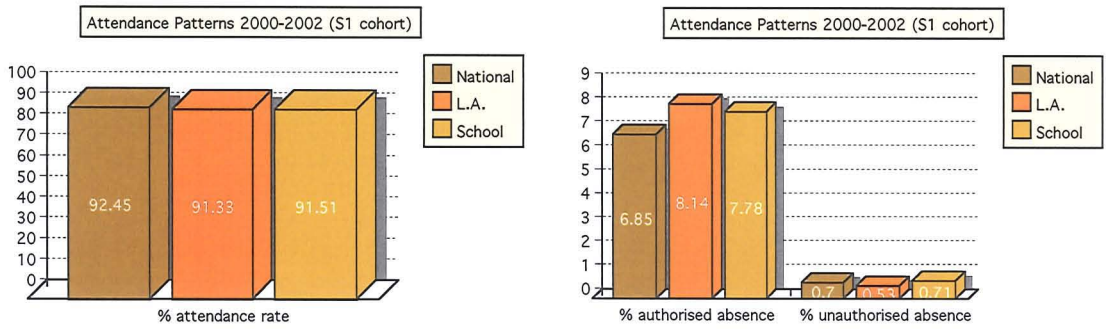
It is clear from the above that the reasons for which pupils were nominated varied considerably from case to case and also varied in the degree of concern expressed. It should be noted that places were offered for all pupils who were nominated, two of which were not taken up.

5.2.2 *Attendance related*

5.2.2.1: Comparison between Sgi population and wider populations

Figs. 5.3 and 5.4 illustrate the attendance patterns for the two year period 2000-2002 in respect of the National, Local Authority and School S1 cohorts.

Fig. 5.3 : Comparison between national, LA and school % attendance rates (2000-2002)
Fig. 5.4: Comparison between national, LA and school % authorised and unauthorised absence rates (2000 -2002) [3]



The percentage attendance rates for the three comparator groups were similar with both the Local Authority (LA) and school performing slightly below the national cohort. However, in terms of raw data, the differentials between the national cohort and the other two comparator groups were of statistical significance (LA/other LAs x^2=425, p <.001 (c.c. App 9.1.1 (table 1)); the school/other Scottish schools x^2=53, p <.001 (c.c. Ibid. (table 2))) but not in relation to the LA and school cohorts (Ibid. (table 3)).

Both the Local Authority and the school S1 cohort had a higher rate of Authorised Absence than the national cohort and the school cohort had the highest rate of unauthorised absence. Once again, in terms of raw data, the differentials between the national and LA (c.c. Ibid. (table 1)); and between the LA and school cohorts (c.c. Ibid. (table 3)) in respect of this latter measure were also of statistical significance (x^2=98, p <.001; x^2= 31, p <.001 respectively).

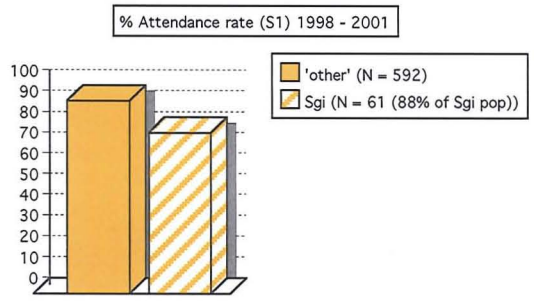
Caution needs to be exercised, however, in respect of the reliability of data relating to unauthorised absence as described in 6.3.3.2.

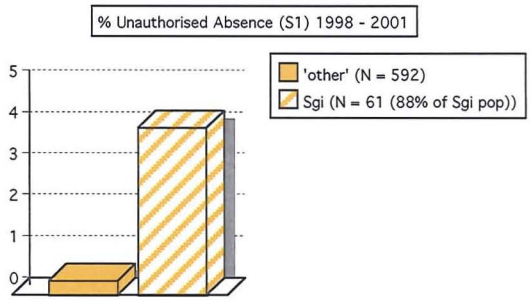
5.2.2.2: Comparison between Sgi population and 'other'

Figs. 5.5 and 5.6 illustrate the differences between the attendance patterns for the prospective *Sgi* population in S1 and those pupils within the year group who were subsequently not to become involved in the *Sgi* ('other'). Even at this early stage, highly significant statistical differences emerge between the *Sgi* population and 'other' in respect of both percentage rates for attendance and unauthorised absence (x^2=2828, p <.001; x^2=431, p <.001 respectively) (c.c. App 9.1.3 (tables 1 & 3)).

[3] School Handbooks 2001-2002 & 2002-2003

Figs. 5.5 - 5.6: Comparisons between % attendance rates and unauthorised absence rates of school (S1) cohort and prospective *Sgi* population (1998-2001) [4]





The *Sgi* population accounted for more than half of all unauthorised absences for the year group (c.c. Fig. 5.7), yet represent only 9% of the cohort (c.c. Fig. 5.8).

Fig. 5.7: proportion of unauthorised absence accounted for by *Sgi* population

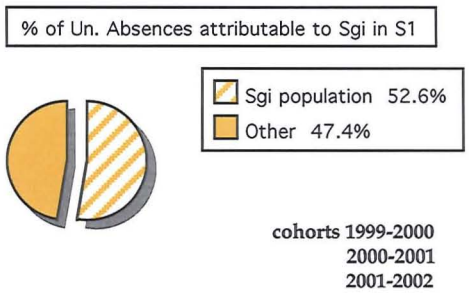
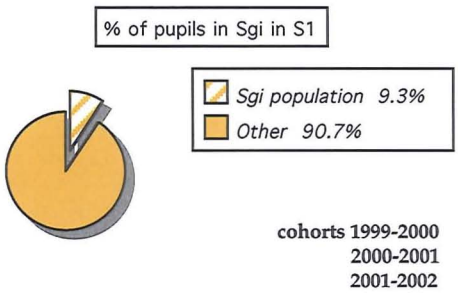


Fig. 5.8: proportion of cohort accounted for by *Sgi* population



5.2.3 Behaviour related

This section explores indiscipline as manifested in referrals for serious indiscipline (as judged by the classroom teacher) to Senior Management; the number of occasions on which pupils were suspended for indiscipline (frequency of suspensions) and the total number of days over a period of time for which they have been suspended (duration of suspensions). The raw data is controlled for pupil attendance and is presented as 'unit measures'. (c.c. Part 5: Table Int 1) For the purposes of this analysis, the *Sgi* cohort and 'other' will be regarded as two distinct populations.

Findings

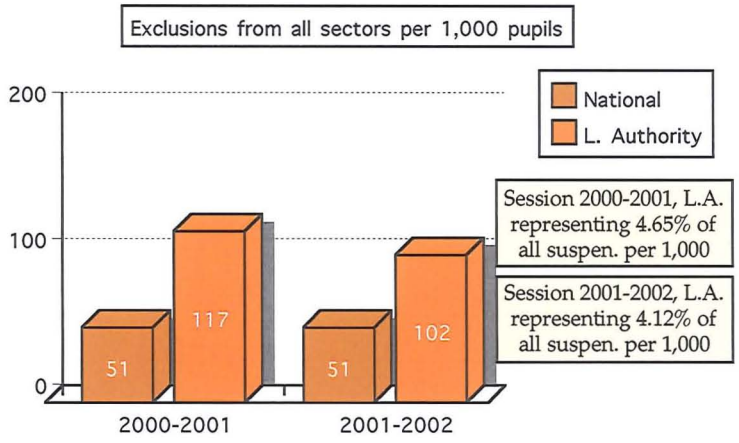
5.2.3.1: Comparison between Sgi population and wider populations

In comparing the number of exclusions per 1,000 pupils nationally with those of the local authority in respect of all sectors over the period 2000-2002 (c.c. Fig. 5.9), highly significant statistical differences emerge (SENSP, 2002; SENSP, 2003b) - the Local Authority (out of a total of 33 (2000-2001) / 32 (2001-2002)) rates as the highest

[4] SEEMIS

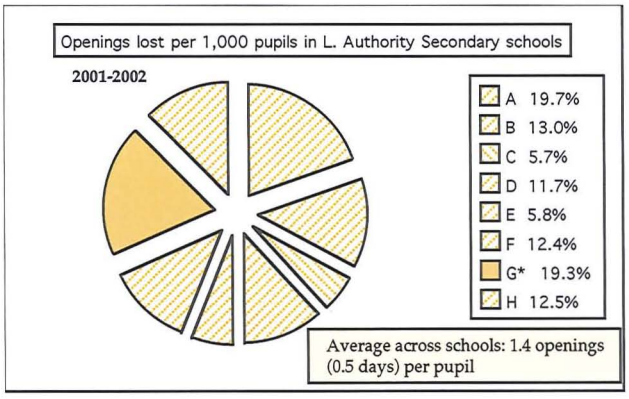
excluding authority in terms of both time periods. Whilst there is a decrease in suspensions in the latter period, when one compares the distributions relating to the performance of all authorities, the performance of the authority in 2001-2002 (along with two other authorities) was an 'outlier' which was not the case in 2000-2001.

Fig. 5.9: Comparison of exclusion openings between the Local Authority and Nationally for the period 2000-2002, per 1,000 pupils



How does the performance of the school compare to that of other schools within the Local Authority?

Fig. 5.10: Comparison between the performance of the school (G) against other Local Authority Secondary schools in respect of openings lost per 1,000 pupils[5]



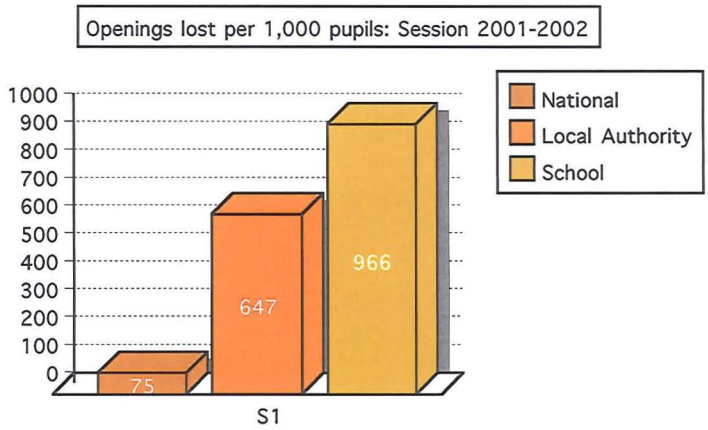
In session 2001-2002, the school ranked as second in terms of the number of exclusion openings per 1,000 (measured as 0.5 days) and accounted for 19% of the total for the Local Authority Secondary schools as a whole (c.c. Fig. 5.10). Thus, within a very low performing authority, the school was one of the most poorly performing schools in this respect.

In examining, more specifically, the performance of pupils at national and local authority level in session 2001-2002 in terms of stage (S1) (c.c. Fig. 5.11), it is evident that the school had a statistically significant higher number of exclusion openings per

[5] Local Authority chart of comparisons 2001-2002 and 2002-2003

1,000 pupils than either the Local Authority or nationally.

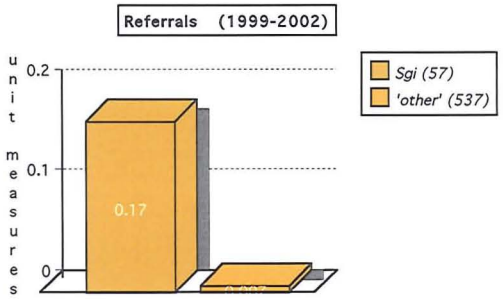
Fig. 5.11: Comparison between openings lost per 1,000 pupils for the school, Local Authority and nationally by stage (session 2001-2002)



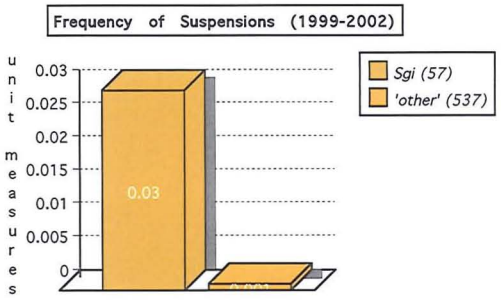
45% of all exclusions nationally for this period (and almost 50% in 1999-2000) (McGowan, 2001) were occasioned by pupils with an entitlement to free school meals who represented 19% of the national cohort. The proportion of pupils with a similar entitlement within the LA and school in 2003/2004 was 25%[6].

5.2.3.2: Comparison between Sgi population and 'other'

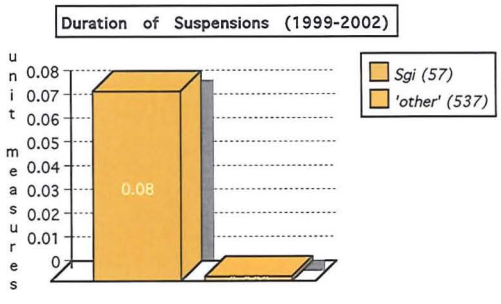
Figs. 5.12a - c: Comparison between indiscipline measures for *Sgi* cohorts 1999, 2000 & 2001 and 'other' (pre-intervention S2) expressed as unit measures[7].



unit measure of .20 = 1 referral per week (mean)



unit measure of .05 = 1 suspension (of indeterminate length) occasioned per 4 weeks (mean)



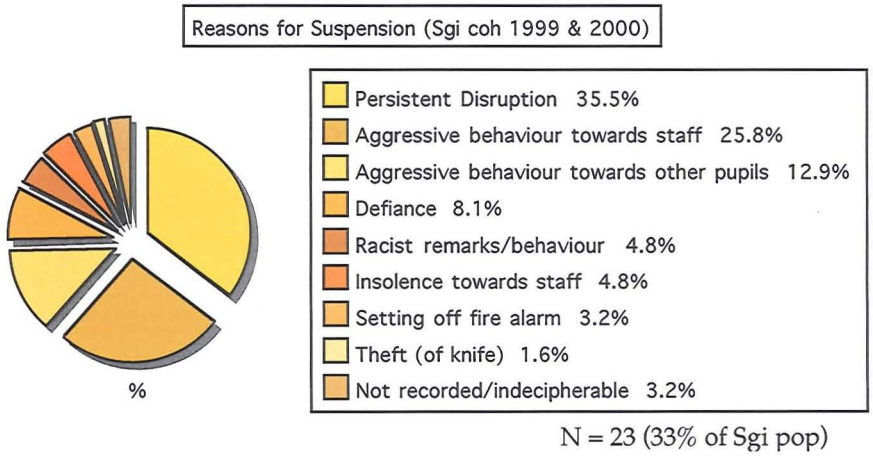
unit measure of .10 = 1 day of suspension per fortnight (mean)

[6] Local Authority Social and Economic Profile (2003/2004)
[7] Derived from individual pupil files & information from SEEMIS

The average performance of *Sgi* pupils was higher than that of 'other' on all measures of indiscipline (c.c. Figs. 5.12a-c). These differences are highly significant statistically in respect of each measure (referrals (cohorts 2000 & 2002): x^2=3543, p <.001; (cohort 2001): x^2= 1205, p <.001; frequency of suspensions (cohorts 2000-2002): x^2=1105, p <.001; and duration of suspensions (cohorts 2000-2002) x^2=2664, p <.001)[8] (c.c. App 9.2.1 (table 1)). Proportionally (in terms of raw data), *Sgi* pupils (cohorts 1999-2002) accounted for 46% of all referrals to Senior Management for indiscipline; 56% (44%)[9] occasions on which pupils were suspended; and 53% (47%) of all exclusion openings and yet represented only 9.5% of the cohort. If adjustments were to be made for absence (exclusive of suspensions), these proportions would have been even higher.

Fig. 5.13 summarises the reasons for suspension within the *Sgi* population, pre-intervention (S2), for cohorts 1999 & 2000. What characterises the *Sgi* population most is persistent disruptive and highly aggressive/abusive behaviour primarily directed towards teaching staff but also manifested in behaviour towards peers.

Fig. 5.13: Reasons for suspension (*Sgi* cohorts 1999 & 2000), pre-intervention (S2)



N = 23 (33% of Sgi pop)

Amongst 'other', the most frequent reasons for suspension were fighting (33%); aggressive/abusive behaviour towards staff (18.5%) and defiance (11%) , however, as only 27 suspensions were occasioned by this group, too much reliance cannot be placed on these percentages.

During the period of the study nationally, 24% of suspensions were occasioned by general or persistent disobedience; 16% (17%[10]) involved verbal abuse to members of staff and 13% involved physical abuse of peers[11] .

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8 Calculations are based upon the total no. of incidents for each measure set against the total number of potential incidents (controlling for attendance, as appropriate for each measure).

9 The figures in brackets illustrate the proportion whilst in S1

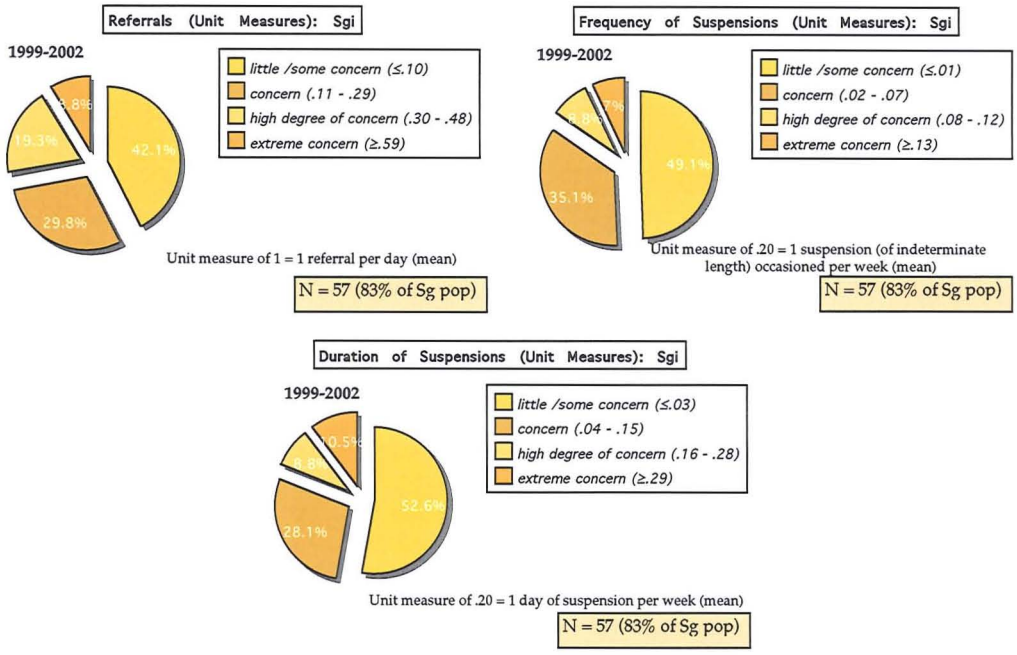
10 SENSP 2002, 2003b only

11 SENSP, 2001b, 2002 and 2003b (with the exceptions above)

5.2.3.3: Examining the individual performance of Sgi pupils

In examining the *Sgi* population on an individual basis, it is clear that there is a wide divergence in the performance of individual pupils in relation to indiscipline measures (expressed an unit measures). Figs. 5.14a-c categorise the *Sgi* population according to the degree to which their behaviour (pre-intervention) could be classified on a scale from *little/some concern* to *extreme concern*[12].

Figs. 5.14a - c: Categorisation of discipline measures for *Sgi* population (S2 pre-intervention) (1999-2002) according to degree of concern[13]



As might be expected, the pattern for each measure was not dissimilar. In respect of each measure, around half of *Sgi* pupils fell within the *little/some concern* category, indicating that they were likely to have been included in the initiative for preventative reasons. It is also clear, however, that some pupils were of great concern and the range between those at the lower spectrum and those at the upper spectrum was wide in respect of each measure. For example, a pupil with a unit measure in excess of .59 for referrals would have averaged more than one referral for serious indiscipline every second day and a pupil with a unit measure in excess of .29 for suspensions would have been suspended from school, on average, on more than one out of four potential days of schooling (excluding days of authorised absence). At the other end of the scale are pupils who occasioned few referrals (unit measure .02) and no suspensions.

Figs. 5.15a-c set out the parameters for each distribution.

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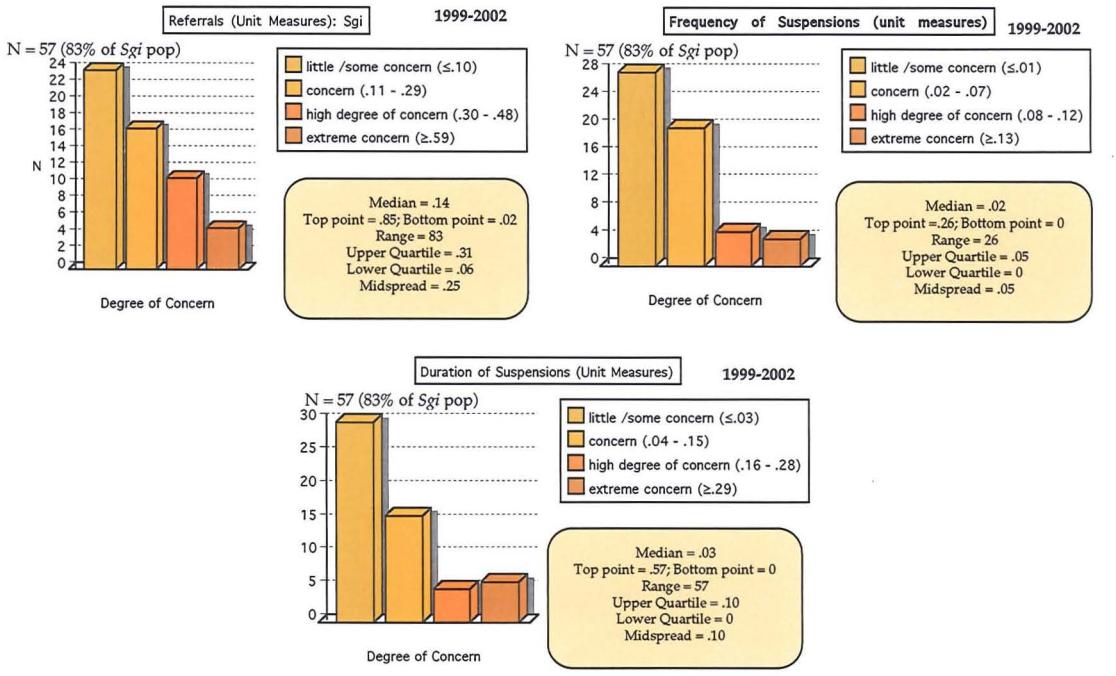
12 Each category represents a z-value of 1 in relation to the S2 (pre-intervention) distributions of values for each discipline measure with the exception of category *little/some concern* which is <1.

13 Derived from individual pupil records and SEEMIS.

Figs. 5.15a - c: Parameters of distributions for all discipline measures (unit measures) for *Sgi* (pre-int) (1999-2002)[14]



It is apparent that the performance of outliers had the effect of locating the mean away from the median and all three distributions are heavily positively skewed. However, the proportion of the *Sgi* population (pre-intervention) who had not been suspended (38.5%), or who had occasioned minimal suspensions, has the effect of locating the medians (and therefore the lower quartiles) for both frequency and duration of suspensions at a low level. It is clear that the indiscipline records of a minority of pupils (even within the *Sgi)* had a significant effect upon the parameters for the population as a whole which, in turn, impacted upon those for the wider populations. Addressing the difficulties of these pupils in particular is therefore a major priority.

The ratio of boys to girls within the *Sgi* is almost 4:1 which mirrors the national statistics for period 1999-2002 for suspensions from school within the Secondary sector in which 79% of suspension openings are accounted for by boys (SENSP 2001; SENSP, 2002; SENSP, 2003b).

These statistics would indicate the need for caution in discussing the *Sgi* population as a whole as clearly, whilst there are highly significant differences on all discipline measures between the population and 'other', it is diverse.

5.2.4: Attainment related

This section examines the attainment of *Sgi* pupils (cohorts 2000-2001 and 2001-2002) in National Tests in reading and writing in comparison to wider populations (as

[14] categories correspond to z-values

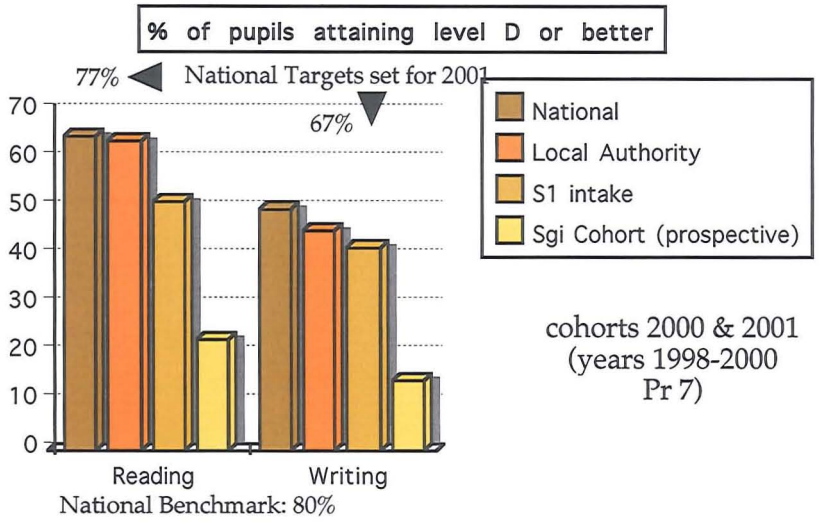
previously identified), retrospectively, at the end of Primary 7.

Findings

5.2.4.1: Comparison between Sgi population and wider populations

Fig. 5.16 compares the national performance in National Tests in English with those of the LA, school (S1 intake) and prospective *Sgi* cohort for the period 1998-2000 (corresponding to the *Sgi* cohorts 2000 & 2001) in respect of the % of pupils within each cohort attaining at ≥ level D in Primary 7.

Fig. 5.16: % of Pr 7 pupils attaining at ≥ level D in National Tests in English for each comparator group (*Sgi* cohorts 2000 & 2001) (SENSP, 2001)



There are significant (in most cases, highly significant) statistical differences between the attainment levels at ≥ level D of the four comparator groups, particularly in relation to the performance of the prospective *Sgi* cohort. The only comparisons which are not of statistical significance are those between the LA and all other LAs in reading and between the LA and school in writing, but all others ranged from values of $x^2 = 20 - 43$, $p < .001$ for reading and $x^2 = 13 - 29$, $p < .001$ for writing (c.c. App 9.3.1.1 (tables 1 - 6)).

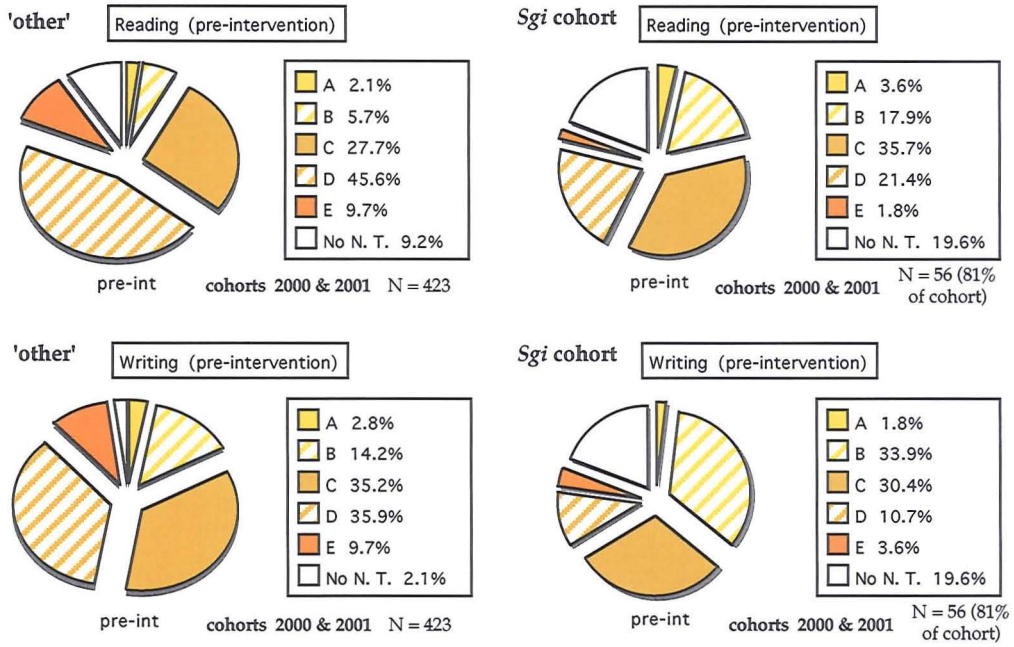
In comparison to the National targets set for Primary schools for 2001 (SEED, 1999c), it can be seen that, whilst all comparator groups fall short of these targets, the differentials in respect of the performance of the prospective *Sgi* cohort is so wide as to be highly significant statistically and this applies even more to the national benchmark figure of 80% of all Primary pupils achieving stage-related appropriate targets (in this case ≥ level D).

5.2.4.2: Comparison between Sgi population and 'other'

In comparing the breakdown of performance at each level for the *Sgi* population

(2000-2002) with the performance of 'other' (at the Pr 7 stage[15]), it becomes evident that the differentials between the two comparator groups are greater at some levels than others, particularly at levels B and D (c.c. Figs. 5.17a-d).

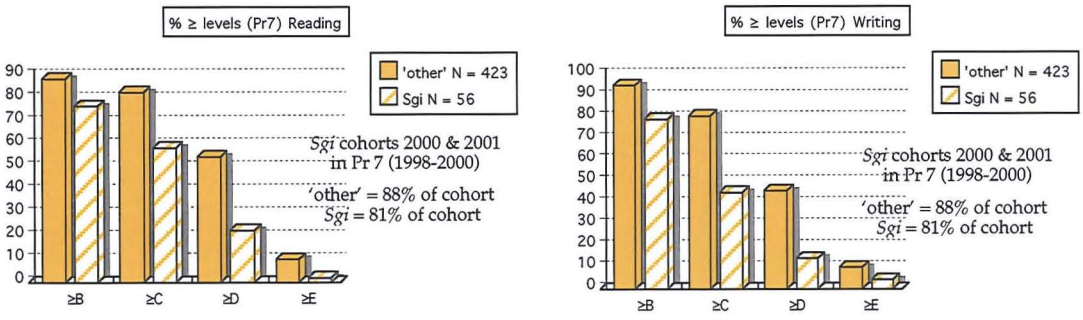
Figs. 5.17a - d: Comparison between the attainment levels of the prospective *Sgi* population & 'other' (2000 - 2002) in National Tests in English in Pr 7 (1998-2000)



Of particular concern, is the high proportion of pupils within the *Sgi* who are performing well below expected performance in Pr 7 (20% having only attained ≤ level B in reading and 36% in writing) which is indicative of prospective difficulties in accessing the Secondary curriculum. For these pupils, the priority is learning support.

Figs. 5.18a & b illustrate the % of pupils within the prospective *Sgi* cohorts (2000 & 2001) and 'other' attaining at each ≥ level in reading and writing[16] .

Figs. 5.18a & b: Comparison between the % of pupils within the prospective *Sgi* cohorts (2000 & 2001) & 'other' attaining at ≥ levels in National Tests in English in Pr7 (1998-2000)



15 As they performed in National Tests in 1998-2000 (Pr 7)

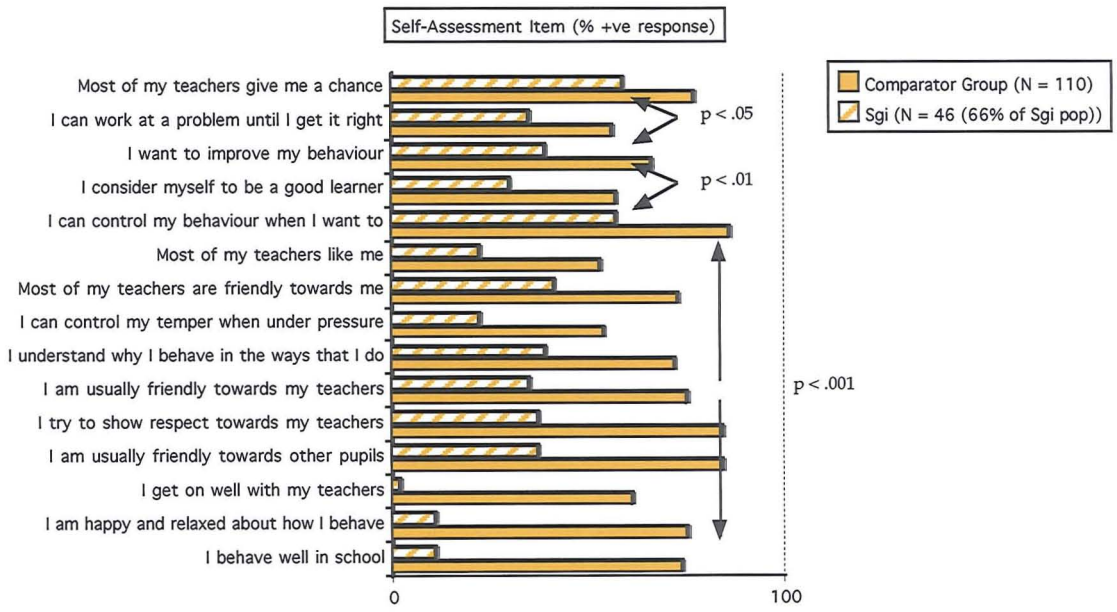
16 Where National Test results were available (c.c. boxed inserts on charts.)

The differentials between the two groups are statistically significant at all ≥ levels (with the exception of ≥ level E in writing) and highly significant in respect of ≥ levels C & D in reading ($x^2 = 18$, $p < .001$; $x^2 = 21$, $p < .001$ respectively) and ≥ levels B, C & D in writing ($x^2 = 21$, $p < .001$; $x^2 = 36$, $p < .001$; $x^2 = 20$, $p < .001$ respectively (c.c. App 9.3.2 (table 1) & 9.3.2 (table 3))). However, once again, caution needs to be exercised in discussing the *Sgi* population as a whole as, within a generally low attaining group, there was a spread of attainment with a few pupils performing at the expected level or above.

5.2.5 *Pre-Intervention Self-Assessment Comparison*

This comparison (based upon a semantic-differential scale) is derived from the responses of *Sgi* pupils (prior to intervention (S2(1)))[17] as compared with a group of pupils within the same cohort (S2) who had not been referred to senior management for indiscipline[18] (c.c. 6.1.4.1). Whilst the differences in response to emerge between the two populations is explored fully in 7.3, those responses which distinguish the two populations most (and which are of statistical significance (c.c. App 4)) are illustrated in Fig. 5.19.

Fig. 5.19: Pre-Intervention Self-Assessment Comparison
(based upon a Semantic Differential Scale)



[17] *Sgi* cohorts 2001 and 2002
[18] cohort 2002

5.2.6 *Other interventions*

5.2.6.1: Referrals to JAT

Of the fourteen JAT referrals concerning pupils within the *Sgi,* eight of them were made in S1, indicating that problems were already evident at that stage. A wide range of reasons was put forward for the referrals, including family breakdown; persistent disobedience and lying; inappropriate (sexual) behaviour towards staff; truanting and referrals to the Children's Panel for bad behaviour in the community; family neglect; and learning difficulties.

The solutions sought were individual to each pupil and ranged from support within school to support (for the family and pupil) within the community:-

- *School Support*: Group work; use of Behaviour Support room; *SfL* (Support for Learning) involvement; toe-by-toe paired reading scheme; use of restricted timetable; monitoring by Pastoral Care staff;
- *Psychological Services:* assessment and/or counselling; referral to a psychiatric hospital-based unit;
- *Social Work Input:* involvement with family; IT groups[19] ;
- *Other:* community based health initiative and community education programme.

Table 5.2 summarises the interventions in which *Sgi* pupils were involved in the course of S1 and S2.

Table 5.2: Summary of interventions of prospective *Sgi* population (S1 & S2)

Learning Support	Toe-by-toe Paired Reading	JAT	Behaviour Support Room	Social Work/ IT	X Trust
11 (16%)	4 (6%)	35 (51%)	21 (30%)	16 (23%)	8 (12%)

5.2.6.2: Support for Learning (SfL) intervention

Reference has already been made to the low involvement of *Sgi* pupils in Support for Learning initiatives (despite their low attainment generally as a group in comparison to their own cohort within the school) such as support from Learning Support Auxiliaries, in-class support, extraction for support in the Learning Support base and involvement in toe-by-toe. This is clearly a matter for concern.

[19] one pupil at the commencement of intervention was in care. One further pupil was put into care towards the end of intervention.

5.2.7 *Brief Summary*

The most striking aspect of these findings is the degree to which the *Sgi* population is delineated from wider comparator populations on a range of measures relating to attendance, attainment, discipline and pupil attitudes (on a range of indicators). On many measures, these differentials are of high statistical significance. This is exemplified in the fact that over half of unauthorised absence in S1 (inclusive of exclusions) and around half of all discipline measures were accounted for by *Sgi* pupils yet they accounted for only 9% of the S1 cohort. Likewise, their attainment was to a statistically significant extent (c.c. 5.2.4.2.) below that of their peers within the year group ('other') and well below national expectations. Yet, it is also evident that the population is diverse, highlighting the dangers of conceptualising the *Sgi* population as a homogenous group to whom the same solutions can be applied.

Teaching for Understanding within the Affective Field

Part 4

Methodology

Chapter 6
Methodology

This chapter explores the design of the study (c.c. 6.1.1-6.1.2) and the conceptualisation of the focus of the study (6.1.3), prior to describing the means by which the study was operationalised, focussing upon the literature review (c.c. 6.2), the various stages of implementation (c.c. 6.3) and the conduct of the case studies (c.c. 6.4), concluding with a focus upon practitioner/action research and a discussion of some of the dilemmas of the action researcher (c.c. 6.5).

6.1 The Design of the Study

6.1.1 Defining the study and the case

This study has been described (c.c. 1.1) as an *evaluative, theory-seeking and theory-testing* (Bassey, 1999), *explanatory* (Yin, 2003 (3rd ed.)) case study. It is *evaluative* in that it sets out to determine the worth of the case - the *Sgi* (Bassey, 1999); *explanatory* in that it seeks to explore *what works here and why it works in this set of circumstances* (Brown, 2001, p12); *theory seeking* because it seeks to illuminate the issues for others and to add to the body of knowledge in the related fields; and *theory testing* in that the study is built upon *theoretical propositions* which reflect the underlying principles of the *Sgi* and guide the study design (c.c. 1.3.2), reflected in the research aims and questions (c.c. 1.3.3). (Yin, 2003 (3rd ed.))

The study draws from the methodologies of *case study, evaluative study* and *action research* which, according to Cohen *et al.* (2002), all have their own distinctive purposes, foci, features *(key terms)* and characteristics (Cohen *et al.*, 2002, box 3.1, p79). It is not necessarily the case that these are mutually exclusive. Findings from a case study or evaluation which seeks to illuminate issues for others can also become part of the reflective cycle of action which is associated with *practitioner/action research* (c.c. 6.5). Indeed, Bassey (1999) identifies *action research* and *evaluative research* as being two of three sub-sets of *education case study research* (the other category being *theoretical research).*

The study focusses principally upon the progress of four cohorts of *Sgi* pupils (1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002), establishing benchmarks against which their progress can be measured (c.c. Ch 5.2) and drawing upon both qualitative and quantitative data.

The *singularity* (or case) in this instance, is the particular set of circumstances which are relevant to the *Sgi* - the population of pupils who have constituted the *Sgi* over the period of study; all relevant stakeholders (c.c. Fig. 6.2); issues intrinsic to the *Sgi* approach and its implementation; factors relating to the school context (for example, the quality of relationships between staff and pupils); and factors external to the approach but which may have a bearing on pupil outcome such as the degree of involvement/support of family. The *boundaries* have been defined in relation to the period of time over which the

study took place (1998 - 2003) and in relation to the parameters which have been set for the study (c.c. 1.3.4).

As has been described in Ch 5, the population which is under scrutiny (*Sgi)* is placed within the context of the wider populations from which it derives (c.c. Fig. 5.1). However, the population can also be defined in relation to the wider populations of pupils within the Local Authority and nationally who have been identified as having *Additional Support Needs (ASN)* and, in particular, that sub-set of the population who have been identified as having SEBD.

6.1.2 Considerations in the design of the study

One of the foremost considerations in the design of an evaluative case study is to be clear about the purpose(s) of the study. Brown (2001) identifies the responsibility of researchers to reach out to a range of different audiences. These were important considerations in the design of this study, reflected in the research aims and questions. However, it was equally important to establish that the study *is not concerned with establishing or setting out to prove that the Sgi is effective.* To undertake the study from this stance would be to negate the principles of any form of rigorous research. Indeed, as a practitioner researcher, the onus is upon the individual to actively seek out alternative explanations and to bring to the fore any findings which might cast doubt upon the efficacy of the approach, as outlined in Popper's theory of *falsificationalism* (1959).[1] This is an issue of *internal validity* as described by Yin (2003) (3rd ed.) who provides a typology of 'rival theories' which may act as alternative explanations (Ibid., p113, Fig. 5.1). As Kemmis (1980)[2] identifies, the onus is upon the practitioner researcher to make the case that he/she can be an independent observer. This calls for great transparency in approach.

Watt (1988) raises other issues to which consideration needs to be given in considering the purposes of an evaluative study. These include the questions:

- *should the emphasis be on formative or summative evaluation?*
- *should the evaluation be descriptive or judgemental, holistic or analytic, internal or external?*

(Watt, 1988, p8)

In this particular study, the decision was made that the evaluation should serve both formative and summative purposes as the intention would be both to build upon and develop practice on an ongoing basis, drawing from the evidence base, and to be able to examine the initiative retrospectively after account had been taken of all of the data. The study is emergent in nature, adapting in the light of new and deeper knowledge and understanding which, in turn, helped to identify, illuminate and refine the research focus, aims and questions. This in turn, affected decision making relating to the operation of the

1 as described in Silverman, 2001, p224
2 in Simons (ed.)

study, leading to additions, adaptations and refinements to the research tools and their deployment over time.

It is also participatory in that staff involved in the delivery of the *Sgi (SgLs)* were involved in decision making relating to the operation of the *Sgi* and its evaluation; in the design and modification of research tools; in the administration of research tools; and in the gathering of the data. This has clear implications in relation to staff development and training and the procedures which are adopted to ensure reliability in the conduct of the study (c.c. 6.3.2 and 6.3.3).

The latter set of questions raises issues about the style to be adopted within the study - whether *qualitative* or *quantitative* (the former being associated more with *descriptive* and *holistic* approaches (*interpretivist* methodologies); and the latter with *judgemental* and *analytic* approaches (*positivist* methodologies)) - and issues relating to the degree of objectivity of the researcher.

Whilst one of the criticisms of case study is the lack of a definitive approach (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972)[3] , paradoxically, this is one of its greatest strengths. It enables the case study researcher to draw flexibly from a wide range of methodologies, the principal criteria being that the methodology chosen is 'fit for purpose'. Both Gillham (2000a) and Watt (1988) argue for the researcher[4] to draw from both qualitative and quantitative approaches according to the needs of the study as together they may illuminate the case to a much greater extent than one approach used in isolation:- *In the last analysis, the question is not which model, approach or style is 'best', but how appropriate were the model and style chosen, and how well was the study executed.* (Watt, 1988, p16)

Humes (2001) makes the case that the quest for purity in research methods is an illusion - the *boundaries between development, evaluation and research are not rigid* (Ibid., p25). Further,

> *General theories developed on the "high ground" and according to scientific "standards of rigour" are unlikely to survive intact when brought to be applied in "messy, indeterminate situations", characterised by "uncertainty, uniqueness and value conflict".*
>
> (Humes, 2001, p25)

- an apt description of the school setting.

The advocacy of the process of *triangulation* in case study research (Gillham, 2000a), both in relation to bringing a range of methodologies and multi-perspectives to bear on the case, yields data which, according to Adelman *et al.* (1980)[5] is 'strong in reality' and allows for the differing perspectives of the various stakeholders to cast light on the case, highlighting both the subtleties and complexities of the case. *Triangulation,* as described by Elliot (1991), is a process for bringing different types of evidence together such that they

[3] as cited in Watt, 1998

[4] the former in relation to case study and the latter in relation to evaluative study

[5] in Simons (ed.)

can be compared and contrasted, thus highlighting areas of commonality and difference.

Drawing from the advice given, the author took the view that an eclectic approach best suited the needs of the study in that it enables a more 'rounded' view of the case to emerge and the findings from both qualitative and quantitative approaches to be interrogated in a process of *triangulation*, contributing to the rigour of the study.

Kemmis (1980) claims that the case study methodology, by its very nature, is an interventionist process designed to bring about positive socio-political change. He argues for the need for the researcher engaged in case study[6] to recognise that his/her very involvement will have an effect on the case under study - *Research is not a process of thought going out to embrace its object as if its object lay there inert.* (Kemmis, 1980, in Simons (ed.), p119) The case study approach is very much a creative process, concerned with the 'imagination of the case' and the 'invention of the study' (Ibid.).

Gillham (2000a), likewise, draws attention to the potential effects of the investigation upon the context of the study:

> *A research investigation is not neutral; it has its own dynamic and there will be effects (on individuals, on institutions) precisely because there is someone there asking questions, clarifying procedures, collecting data. Recognizing this is part of doing good research. Ignoring it is bad 'science'.*
>
> (Ibid., p7)

Kemmis conceives the researcher as being 'assumption laden' rather than 'assumption free' - the assumptions which the researcher brings to the situation (including those inherent within the research approach itself - the conceptions of knowledge, of the individual, the social world, what counts as theory ..) will guide the decisions which affect the conduct of the study.

The practitioner engaged in action research is constrained by the close engagement with the case and may unconsciously adopt the cultural norms[7] of the organisation in which the study takes place. This author would argue that it is important to clarify one's values in relation to the case under study as failure to do so may lead the researcher to ignore or minimise discrepant data and to place an interpretation on events which 'fits' one's value system, a point made by Gillham (2000a) in relation to ideologically driven research. The challenge, particularly within the context of a study which is emergent in nature and in which theory and data mutually modify each other (as advocated by Gillham, 2000a), is therefore for the researcher to be aware of these difficulties and the dangers which they pose and to conceptualise and design the study such that they can be minimised, an issue of *internal validity*.

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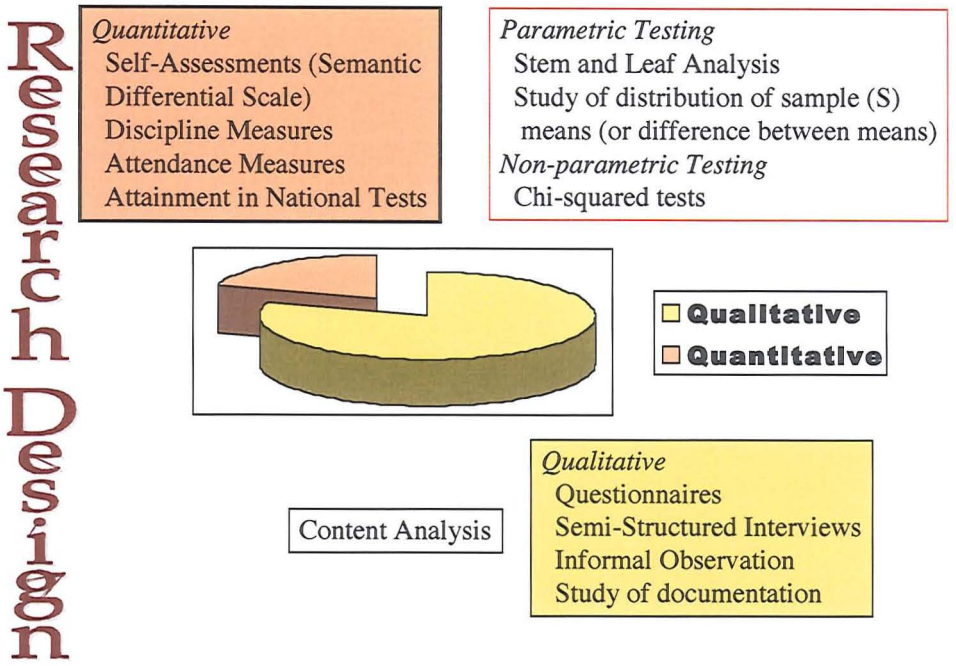
[6] from this point onwards, described as the case study researcher

[7] MacBeath and McGlynn (2002) describe the culture of the school as being concerned with *the values and beliefs, feelings and attitudes, relationships ... and taken-for-granted way in which all these parties go about their business.* (Ibid., p70)

Figure 6.1 is a visual representation of the research design.

Fig. 6.1: Illustration of Research Design



6.1.3 *The Conceptualisation of the Focus of the Study*

6.1.3.1: The Emergence of the Focus of the Study

The impetus for the study was a previous action-research study - *Promoting Positive Behaviour* (Mowat, 1997) - in which one of the (tentative) findings was that boys' understanding of concepts such as *consideration* was poorer than that of girls. The initial title proposed for this study was , "Promoting Positive Behaviour - Gender and Behaviour", and the previous study was expanded beyond its initial setting to a further Primary and Secondary school. However, whilst the study progressed satisfactorily, for practical reasons, it became no longer sustainable and engagement with the literature, and, in particular, the body of work deriving from *Project Zero* (Perkins *et al.*, 1998, in Wiske (ed.)) was beginning to move the focus away from this initial concept.

After a period of contemplation, and corresponding to the inception of the *Sgi* within the school, the study in its present form began to crystallise. The new title was, "Teaching for Understanding: to counter under-achievement". However, the author became aware that the title did not reflect as well as it might the nature of the study and took the view that the main focus of the study should not be predicated upon an outcome but should reflect the nature of the endeavour, which is to apply a body of knowledge deriving from the cognitive field - the *Teaching for Understanding (TfU)* framework - to the affective field - hence, the current title.

This does not imply that the study is not concerned with outcomes - these are expressed

within the two theoretical propositions outlined in Ch 1 (c.c. 1.3.2), which, in turn, reflect the aims of the *Sgi.* Likewise, whilst the principal focus no longer is identified as being under-achievement, it is still an important aspect of this study because of the relationship between behaviour and learning and the focus, as expressed in *RA4/RQ4* upon the significance of this study in relation to National imperatives such as the National Priorities.

1.3.3: The Conceptualisation of the Research Aims and Questions

Watt (1998) raises the question as to whether the evaluation of an initiative should be predicated or not upon the programme's initial objectives. This is an important issue as the research aims and questions which would be formulated would be likely to differ in respect of each circumstance. However, the stance of the external evaluator, looking in on the initiative under question, is not tenable for the practitioner researcher and the question therefore arises as to how best to ensure that the research aims and questions are a true reflection of the focus of the study.

With regard to this specific study, in formulating the research aims and questions, consideration needed to be given to the the validity of the findings and the needs of the varied audiences of the research.

In order to ensure that the evaluation reflected, as accurately as it could, the philosophy and approaches underlying *TfU* (Wiske (ed.), 1998) as they apply to the Affective Field (an issue of validity), the author considered it important to match the research aims and questions to the aims of the *Sgi*, as expressed within the two theoretical propositions (c.c. 1.3.2), and reflected within the first two research aims (RA) and questions (RQ). The wider perspective on the study is met through the realisation of RA3/RQ3 (the evaluation of the *Sgi* (identifying its strengths and weaknesses and the variables which impact upon pupil outcome)) and RA4/RQ 4 (addressing the implications of the research in relation to wider educational imperatives and knowledge transformation) (c.c. 1.3.4).

6.1.4 Ethical Considerations in the Conduct of the Study

The ethical guidelines for educational research, recently reviewed by SERA, identify a set of core principles to guide practice:

A commitment to an ethic of respect for:

- *The Person;*
- *Knowledge;*
- *Democratic Values;*
- *Justice and Equity;*
- *The Quality of Educational Research; and*
- *Academic Freedom.*

(SERA, 2005, p4)[8]

However, it should be noted that, in relation to *Practitioner Research,* the guidance given within the document (par 7 - 30) should not prohibit practitioner research as long as the following conditions are met:

- *the data are those that could be derived from normal/learning processes;*
- *confidentiality is maintained;*
- *the safety and welfare of participants are protected;*
- *informed consent is obtained where appropriate; and*
- *the use of the information obtained is primarily intended for the benefit of those receiving instruction in that setting.*

(Ibid., p13)

Subsequent to the publication of these guidelines, further guidance has been issued to practitioner researchers (SERA, 2007) on these matters. Within this section, the author will address these issues as they relate to this study. It should be noted, however, that the period during which the study was conducted preceeded both sets of guidelines.

6.1.4.1: A Commitment of an Ethic of Respect to the Person

As described in 5.1.1, after initial informal consultation with parents and pupils, the provision of an information leaflet and the opportunity to attend an information event, a letter of consent was sent to all parents of prospective *Sgi* pupils, seeking their permission for their child to participate within the *Sgi* and within the study (c.c. App 3). In addition, further letters of consent were issued to the parents of children participating within the six case studies (c.c. 6.4).

Permission of the pupils who constituted the *comparator group* (pupils within the year group who had not been referred to the author for indiscipline) and who participated in the self-evaluation survey was sought verbally by the author. Responses were anonymous.

One of the ethical dilemmas within this study was related to the author's role as a member of the Senior Management Team within the school. It was not always possible to draw a clear dividing line between requests for staff, parent and pupil participation which emanated from the role of the author within the school and those related directly to the study (for example, requests to class teachers for progress reports for pupils within the *Sgi* fulfilled both purposes). Whilst this dilemma is explored in greater depth in Ch 6.5, the author tried to overcome these difficulties by working with volunteers only as *SgLs,* by making it clear that requests relating specifically to the study were personal and not emanating from school management and by providing information which made clear the purposes of the information sought and the uses it would be put to, as in this exemplification:-

[8] derived from BERA, 2004, p4

The purpose of this questionnaire is to ascertain whether the Support Group has had any impact upon the pupils involved. Your responses will be of great value in helping us to judge this not only in relation to the progress of individual pupils but also in relation to the evaluation of the project itself. Whilst your comments may be used in the evaluation of the project, you will not be identified.

(Extract from Class Teachers' Questionnaire)

Whilst every care was taken to ensure that pupils and their parents were well informed about the *Sgi* and the study, the opportunity was provided for pupils to withdraw from the programme if it was considered not to be beneficial to the pupil concerned.

Whilst it might have been possible to have established a control group of pupils perceived as having SEBD but who would not have been included within the study (and therefore the *Sgi)* whose progress could be compared with those participating within the intervention, the author considers that this approach would have been unethical on the grounds that it would have denied these individual pupils the potential benefits[9] of the intervention. Given the author's role as Depute Head with responsibility for the welfare of *all* pupils within the year group, this approach would have contravened the professional duty of the author towards these pupils and their families (an issue of potential role conflict (c.c. 6.5)). It would also contravene (in this author's view) the principle enshrined within Article 3 of the 'UN Convention of the Rights of the Child' - *the best interests of the child must be the paramount concern in all decisions and actions affecting the child* (SERA, 2005, pt. 13).

The author was aware of the need to reduce the *bureaucratic burden* (SERA, 2005) on those who would contribute towards the generation of data for the study - in particular, upon *SgLs* and upon class teachers. One of the means of achieving this was to pose the question: - *Would this information have been sought if a study were not in operation?* (in other words, whose interests does this serve?) It should be noted, however, that this was one of the concerns raised by a few of the *SgLs* within the evaluation.

All participants were offered privacy, confidentiality and anonymity and, in cases where identity could be inferred (such as the Head Teacher) permission was specifically sought for his views to be represented and he approved the transcript of his interview. Measures were taken to try to ensure safe storage of data (for example, *SgLs* were issued with individual pupil files and a checklist of contents (c.c. App 7.1) and information relating to individual pupils was coded. Pseudonyms are used in respect of the names of all persons and organisations closely related to the case.

Feedback was provided to participants in a variety of ways, taking account of audience (c.c. 6.3.2.4).

[9] these cannot be assumed but the assumption underlying action/practitioner research is that it should be of benefit (and certainly not harmful (SERA, 2006)) to those participating within it (Somekh, 2006; Mills, 2007)

6.1.4.2: Responsibilities to the Sponsors of Research

A grant was received (as previously described) from the Gordon Cook Foundation to support a *Research and Development* project in the field of *Promoting Positive Behaviour* (the emphasis being principally upon *development*). The author has fulfilled her obligations to the Foundation by regularly updating them of progress and keeping detailed financial accounts which have been forwarded to the Foundation.

The research study was initially negotiated informally within the school. Retrospectively, the author wrote to the Director of Education informing him of the study and seeking permission to present the study at the SCRE Forum (2002) and to write an article for the SCRE Newsletter (Mowat, 2002). This permission was granted informally.

6.1.4.3: Responsibilities to the Field of Educational Research and to the Research Community

The principal responsibilities within this area relate to the integrity, authenticity and rigour of the study; to the extent to which the report is accessible to the varied audiences; and enables others to interrogate the data. Peer-review is a very important aspect of achieving these aims/outcomes as is a commitment towards these principles. The author disseminated this study through a range of mechanisms and sought the advice of 'critical friends'. Clearly, the supervision process itself in the conduct of a Ph D is a crucial element in achieving the rigour required for study at this level.

6.2 *Conduct of the Literature Review*

Taking account of the varied purposes of the literature review (Harlen and Schlapp, 1998; Hart, 2005) and drawing from the model of *best-evidence synthesis*[10] , the following criteria were determined in relation to the selection of the literature as it pertained to this study:

- the extent to which the text is concerned with the principal themes of the study
- the extent to which the text illuminates the issues for the author, facilitating new insights and/or fresh perspectives
- the authority of the source
- the extent to which the text is of relevance to current issues and developments in the field(s)
- the extent to which the text has a bearing on the local context - that pertaining to Scottish Education.

After some initial exploratory reading around the principal themes of the thesis, a concept (mind-) map, looking for relationships between and amongst theories was formed (a

[10] as advocated by Slavin (1986) and described in Harlen and Schlapp, 1998

strategy illustrated in Hart (2005), p157, Fig. 6.10) and this helped to define the shape, direction and boundaries of the literature review which, in turn, shaped the direction and boundaries of the study. Over time, the concept map underwent significant modification as the author's understanding of the key themes developed.

The principal means of accessing sources was not via. the use of search engines but by trying to identify, initially, a key source (such as a previous literature review within the field) and to then follow a trail from one source to another. It was by this means that key concepts (such as *theory of mind),* which had not initially been identified within the concept map, were identified and followed up.

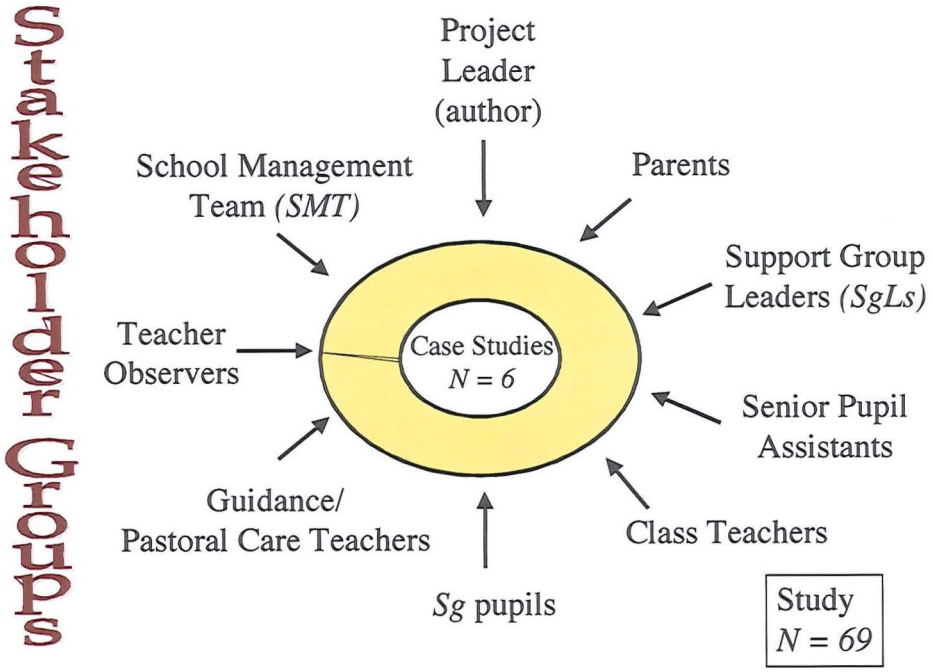
The literature review was not conceived or operationalised as an exercise to be undertaken solely at the commencement of the study but has been undertaken throughout the course of the study, those sources post-dating the execution of the study helping to illuminate the issues in greater depth and facilitating retrospective reflection.

6.3 *Implementing the Study*

6.3.1 *The Identification of the Evidence base*

There are two imperatives in relation to this endeavour. The first relates to the need to refer back to the research aims and questions in order to identify the nature of the evidence required and the sources from which it can be drawn, identifying the stakeholder groups (c.c. Fig. 6.2). The second is the identification of the means of realisation of the evidence base (methodology) (c.c. Table 6.1). Table 6.3 cross-references the research tools to the research questions.

Fig. 6.2: Key stakeholders of the study



The author decided not to draw upon the accounts of other pupils within the cohorts, other than in relation to the Self-Assessment questionnaire, as it was considered to be too sensitive and might have caused distress to Support Group pupils and their parents - an ethical issue.

Silverman (2001) identifies the principal methods associated with case study research as being:

- *observation*
- *analysing texts and documents*
- *interviews*
- *recording and transcribing*

(Ibid., p11)[11]

However, some of these approaches may present difficulties for the practitioner researcher. For example, the author devised and piloted an observation schedule seeking to observe the behaviour of pupils within the *Sgi* population within the classroom setting but this approach had to be abandoned because of the practical difficulties which ensued, arising from role-conflict. Bassey (1999) forwards an argument that the case study researcher should adopt methods which are *appropriate and practical* to reflect the eclectic nature of the endeavour. As such, the study relied upon tried and trusted approaches as outlined in Table 6.1 and as described in the *SCRE Guides*[12] and the *Real World Research Series* (edited by Gillham).

6.3.2 *The Design, Piloting, Conduct and Further Development of Research Tools*

Gillham (2000a) describes an *emergent style* of case study characterised initially by examination of the context of the study from which the research questions, methods and hypotheses emerge. Within this study, the long-term engagement with the case enabled the author to engage in a *formative* process (Watt, 1988) of *action research* (c.c. 6.1.2 and 6.5) in which feedback from the evaluation informs not only the development of the initiative itself but the conduct of the study. This provided the author with the opportunity to engage in a process of critical reflection, discussing the efficacy of the evaluation with stakeholders, responding to emerging needs and changing circumstances, learning experientially, modifying and adding to the research tools as required. However, in order that the data from one session to another could be collated, the questions posed in research tools over time remained essentially the same. The expansion of the groups and the concordant expansion of the team of *SgLs* in sessions 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 created a need for more robust and comprehensive systems of data collection. Table 6.3 illustrates the research tools as they applied to each specific cohort of *Sgi* pupils.

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[11] Theses are similar to Bassey's *asking questions, observing events* and *reading documents*

[12] The series edited by Harlen and Wake (1987 - 1995)

Table 6.1: Identification of the Evidence Base, cross-referenced to Methodology

Sources of Evidence	Methodology
Personal Accounts of Stakeholder Groups	**Research Tools**
Sgi pupils	Open-response Questionnaire /later modified to Semi-Structured Interview (*Sgi* cohort 2002) Retrospective Semi-Structured Interview Self-Assessment Questionnaires (Semantic Differential Scale) (*Sgi* cohorts 2001& 2002)
Comparator Group	Self-Assessment Questionnaire (Cohort 2002)
Parents/Guardians	Open-response Questionnaire (conducted as Telephone Interview if no initial response) Responses to Pupil Progress Reports
Support Group Leaders *(SgLs)*	Open-Response Questionnaire Interim Evaluation (Informal group discussion formulated around key questions) Group Semi-Structured Interview
Pastoral Care Teachers (if not *SgLs*)	Semi-Structured Interview (*Sgi* Cohort 2000)
Class Teachers	Open-response Questionnaire (*Sgi* Cohorts 1999-2001)/Open- and closed-response Questionnaire (*Sgi Cohort* 2002)
Teacher Observers/Senior Pupil Assistants	Open-response Questionnaire
Senior Management	Narrative accounts of pupil progress in relation to their behaviour post-intervention Semi-Structured Interview
Documented Evidence Relating to:	**Analysis of:**
Pastoral Care Teachers' Referrals to the *Sgi*	Referral Forms
SgLs' Reports of pupil progress to parents	Progress Reports
Group Activities	Support Group Diaries; Pupil Target Booklets (sample of)
Social Work/Pupil Welfare	Social Work/Children's Panel/Psychological Services Reports; Referrals to JAT and subsequent reviews
Learning Support	IEPs, RoNs, involvement in paired reading scheme
Wider Interventions	Participation in voluntary community activities
Quantitative Date Relating to:	**Parametric and Non-Parametric Tests** (c.c. Fig. 1.3.6)
Attendance/Attainment in National Tests/Discipline Measures	Analysis of data from SEEMIS, the Local Authority and from the National Statistics Unit

Table 6.2: Cross-referencing of research tools with research questions

Research Tools (N = 69) (Principal)	1.1	1.2	1.3	2.1	2.2	2.3.	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4
Pupils											
Open-response Questionnaire/Semi-Structured Interview	√	√	√	√	√	√		√	√		
Self-Assessment Questionnaires (Semantic Differential Scale)	√			√	√	√	√				
Retrospective Semi-Structured Interview	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√		√
Parents/Guardians											
Open-Response Questionnaire	√			√			√	√	√		
Support Group Leaders (SgLs)											
Open-Response Questionnaire	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√		
Report to Parents (may potentially address)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		√		
Interim Evaluation								√	√	√	
Group Semi-Structured Interview	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Class Teachers											
Open-Response Questionnaire				√	√		√		√		
Senior Management											
Narrative Accounts of Pupil Progress (S3)				√	√	√					√
Semi-Structured Interview	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Quantitative Data Relating to:											
Attainment									√		
Attendance									√		√
Discipline									√		√
Case Studies (N = 6)											
Semi-Structured Interview (pupils)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
Semi-Structured Interview (parents)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√		
Semi-Structured Interview (SgLs)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Semi-Structured Interview (Pastoral Care Teacher)				√	√	√	√		√		

Summary of Focus of Research Questions (in brief)	
1.1	Understanding of self (attitudes, beliefs, values and motivations)
1.2	Understanding of others (attitudes, beliefs, values and motivations)
1.3	Understanding of interpersonal relationships
2.1	The regulation of behaviour with good judgement in a range of contexts
2.2	The capacities for empathy and social-skills
2.3	Confidence and self-esteem
2.4	The development of more positive dispositions towards learning and school
3.1	A focus upon pedagogy (rationale and aims, quality of materials, methodology)
3.2	Evaluation of pupil progress focussing upon the variables which affect individual pupil progress
3.3	A focus upon management of the *Sgi* and staff development
3.4	Evaluating pupil progress retrospectively over time
4	Concerned with the significance of the *Sgi* - all other research questions are subsumed within this question.

Table 6.3: Application of Research Tools to the *Sgi* Population and % Response Rates[13]

Research Tools/Document Evidence (N = 69)	Coh 1999 a	Coh 1999 b	Coh 2000	Coh 2001	Coh 2002	N =	% Res Rate	% *Sgi Pop*
Pupils								
Open-response Questionnaire/Semi-Structured Interview	√		√	√	√	52	85	75
Self-Assessment Questionnaire (pre) (Semantic Differential Scale)				√	√	46	82	67
Self-Assessment Questionnaire (pre) (Comparator Group)					√	110	NA	NA
Self-Assessment Questionnaire (post) (Semantic Differential Scale)			√	√	√	43	83	62
Retrospective Semi-Structured Interview	√	√		√	√	22	S	32
Parents/Guardians								
Open-Response Questionnaire				√	√	23	44	33
Support Group Leaders (SgLs)			√					
Open-Response Questionnaire				√	√	53	100	77
Report to Parents	√			√	√	47	77	68
Interim Evaluation				√		5	NA	NA
Group Semi-Structured Interview					√	6	NA	NA
			√					
Class Teachers								
Questionnaire (in respect of 56 *Sgi* pupils)	√			√	√	488	62	81
Senior Management								
Narrative Accounts of Pupil Progress (S3) Semi-Structured Interview				√	√	55	100	80
Senior Pupil Assistants								
Open-Response Questionnaire					√	3	100	NA
Teacher Observers								
Open-Response Questionnaire					√	3	100	NA
			√					
Pastoral Care Teachers (if not SgL)								
Semi-Structured Interview						2	100	NA
Referrals to *Sgi* (Likert Scale Questionnaire)					√	36	100	100+
Quantitative Data Relating to:								
Attainment			√	√	√	62	100	90
Attendance			√	√	√	61	100	88
Discipline			√	√	√	61	100	88
Case Studies (N = 6) (25% of Coh 2002)								
Semi-Structured Interview (pupils)					√	6	S	9
Semi-Structured Interview (parents)					√	6	S	9
Semi-Structured Interview (SgLs)					√	6	S	9
Semi-Structured Interview (Pastoral Care Teacher)					√	2	S	9

[13] The % response rates exclude cohorts to whom the research tool was not administered or pupils to whom it could not be administered (for example, pupils leaving the school mid-intervention (N = 4) or who failed to commence the intervention (N = 2)).

A descriptor for each research tool, giving consideration to issues of *validity* and *reliability,* and outlining

- the aims of the research tool
- the target group to whom it was administered
- the research questions which it addressed
- the development of the research tool
- the administration of the research tool
- other issues of relevance

was created and an exemplification is provided in App 6.3.

6.3.2.1: Considerations in the Design of Research Tools

In designing research tools (and their means of operation), a pragmatic approach was adopted, taking account of the demands imposed by the study upon *SgLs* and upon the author[14] . The use of questionnaires was dictated by the scale of the endeavour and by the nature of the data - the use of a Semantic Differential Scale and Likert scale enabled data to be gathered and analysed economically and efficaciously. This was balanced with the more in-depth accounts afforded by the Case Studies.

As can be observed from Table 6.2, each research tool addresses a different set of research questions, taking account of audience and the point at which the tool was to be administered within the research study. With regard to the former consideration, whilst class teachers might feel able to comment upon observable behaviours in children, it is unlikely that they would be able to comment in any depth upon the extent to which *Sgi* pupils had developed *intrapersonal intelligence.* With regard to the latter, pupils may only be able to judge the long-term impact of the *Sgi* retrospectively, rather than on immediate completion of the intervention.

Account needed to be taken in the wording, design and administration of the research tool of the sophistication, skills and inclinations of the audience to whom the research tool is addressed. The principal question is, over the range of research tools and documented evidence, how well are the research aims and questions addressed (an issue of *validity*) and are they covered in sufficient depth such that accounts can be compared and contrasted through a process of *triangulation*? (an issue of *reliability*).

The ordering of questions was also an important issue in the design of research tools. Care had to be taken to ensure that the response to one question did not lead the responses to subsequent questions. In general, the ordering of questions reflected the ordering of the Research Aims and Questions. In order to avoid the difficulties which can arise when varied routes are given through the questionnaire or interview schedule (which may reflect assumptions made on the part of the researcher which may or may not be founded) and on the basis that the more complex the design of the research tool, the greater the

[14] Account was taken of the advice in the 'SCRE Guides' and the 'Real World Research Series'

propensity for error in responding to it, few of the research tools were designed in this manner.

One of the dilemmas of the action researcher in respect of a study which aims to enhance the lives of children (Somekh, 2006; Mills, 2007) is that it is very difficult to frame questions in such a way as to avoid bias. For example, in trying to ascertain whether pupils have developed *intra- and inter-personal intelligence*, it makes little sense to frame the question in terms of improvement or deterioration (how does one demonstrate deterioration in terms of understanding?). As argued by Somekh (2006), *No research is ever neutral but action research because it embodies an imperative for change is always explicitly value laden.* (Ibid., p24) The assumption held is that, whether or not the intervention leads to a positive outcome, the intention is that it should.

Many of the questions are framed in terms of, *To what extent ..?* or *To what extent, if any, ...?* followed by a simple statement of the issue which the research question addresses, enabling the respondent to reply that the *Sgi* has had little or no impact upon the issue in question. Some questions are framed in terms of polarities. For example, in ascertaining the effect of the *Sgi* upon self-esteem, the following question was posed within the interview schedule:

> *To what extent, if any, has the Support Group made any difference to how you feel about yourself?*

If, after, some initial encouragement, the pupil had failed to respond to this question, the following prompts were given and the instruction given to the interviewer that both choices should be offered to the pupil:

more confident?	*more anxious?*
more able to talk?	*less able to talk?*
happier?	*sadder?*
more motivation towards learning?	*less motivation towards learning?*
more sense of self-control?	*less sense of self-control?*

A further factor relates to the complexity of the issues which this study addresses which may require some of the questions posed in interview or oral questionnaire to be reframed or broken down. For example, in posing the question,

> *To what extent, if any, do you consider that the Support Group has helped you to understand yourself and your feelings better?*

(Reframed)	*Why you behave in the ways that you do.*
(Prompts)	*Do you understand why you get into trouble?*
	Do you know when you need to calm down ....? etc.

A request was made to *Sg* Leaders that any additional prompts or probes given should be

noted on the interview schedule, the advice being that any such means of eliciting responses should be framed in as neutral a manner as possible.

Munn and Drever (1996) identify one of the advantages of questionnaires as being the removal from the equation of the potential impact of the interviewer *interpreting/distorting meaning* (Ibid., p10). In respect of interviews, this has clear implications for the design of the interview schedule (particularly relating to the use of prompts and probes), for the conduct of the interview itself and the subsequent transcription, analysis and reporting of data, implying the need for negotiated and agreed procedures. Guidance (verbal and written) was given to *SgLs* relating to the administration of research tools (c.c. App 7.2.2-3 & App 7.2.5) and, as previously noted, individual pupil folios of evidence (with a checklist) were compiled for each pupil. Exemplification of the research tools can be found in App 7.

6.3.2.2: The Process of Piloting Research Tools

The piloting and/or trialling of research tools is regarded as one of the most important means of ensuring rigour within a research study and is of particular importance in respect of questionnaires over which, once in the field, the researcher has no control - there is no opportunity to re-frame questions, to probe more deeply or to direct the respondent along more productive routes.

Munn and Drever (1996) identify two means of piloting questionnaires: - *small-scale*, the purpose of which is to identify any difficulties in the structure of the questionnaire and/or in the wording of the questions/instructions to respondents; and *large-scale* which is a complete 'dry-run' which enables the researcher also to identify difficulties in respect of the representativeness of the sampling technique; difficulties related to the administration of the questionnaire and in the analysis of data.

With regard to interviewing, Drever (1995) identifies the two main purposes of piloting the research interview as being to trial the interview under the same conditions as are likely to pertain in the 'real' situation and to try to draw from the respondent his/her interpretations and reactions towards the questions asked, and the means by which they were asked. Drever identifies the need to refine, and if necessary, trial again, the revised schedule until the researcher feels confident that potential difficulties have been avoided.

Gillham (2000b), stresses the importance of the piloting/trialling stage as being concerned more with the skill of the interviewer than simply with refining questions or the structure of the interview schedule. He describes the skills of *active listening*, the non-verbal dimension of listening and the verbal dimension of listening, advocating that the interview process is not merely about *social skills* but about being genuinely interested in what the interviewee has to say and conveying this in a genuine manner. (Ibid., p28 - 36)

All of the above are important considerations - the imperative is to be critically reflective in one's practice and to learn experientially.

Most models of empirical research are predicated upon the assumption that the research tool is to be applied to a sample of the population and that the piloting/trialling of the research tool can therefore be applied to other members of the population not directly involved in the study. Within this specific study, all pupils involved within the intervention have been included within the study, even if the full range of research tools has not been applied to each cohort (arising from the *emergent* nature of the study). The *large-scale pilot* advocated by Munn and Drever was not a possibility. However, it was possible to carry out *small-scale* pilots for almost all of the research tools.

The author used her own groups to pilot the research tools as they were introduced and developed. If modifications were required to the research tools, the pupils within the groups were provided with the opportunity to undertake the questionnaires/interviews again, addressing only the modifications. As such, it was possible to include the data from these groups within the data for the study. Whilst this is an unorthodox approach, it enabled the author to have as full an account as was possible to inform the evaluation.

6.3.2.3: Sampling Procedures (Retrospective Interview)

In addition to the questionnaire (cohorts 1999-2001)/scheduled interview (cohort 2002) administered to all *Sgi* pupils at the end of intervention, a retrospective interview, carried out one-to-two years after intervention by the author, was administered to all *Sgi* pupils within cohorts 1999 and 2000 [15] and to a sample of *Sgi* pupils in cohorts 2001 and 2002. This sample comprised 13 pupils, representing 26% of the cohorts.

The principal of *random sampling* is based upon two fundamental conditions:

- *each member of the population must have an equal chance of being selected*
- *the chances of one being selected must be quite independent of any other.*

(Munn and Drever, 1996 (rev. ed.), p13)[16]

On the hypothesis that the experience of pupils within the *Sgi,* whilst individual to that pupil and the circumstances surrounding that pupil, would be likely to be influenced to an extent by the *group dynamic*[17] , the author used a *stratified random sample,* selecting one pupil from each group at random, drawing names from a hat.

6.3.2.4: The Conduct of Interviews

There are various means by which interviews can be recorded and advantages and disadvantages associated with each approach. Whilst the use of tape and video recording provides a full and authentic account of the interview (and in respect of the latter, enables the interviewer to make inferences from the body language of the interviewee), it may

[15] still present on the school role

[16] the underlined words are the original authors' emphases

[17] This hypothesis is explored within the Findings chapters.

constrain the participants within the interview and requires extensive time and effort in transcription. Likewise, whilst the process of note-taking may create difficulties in attending to the finer details of the interview, requires a carefully designed schedule to facilitate the process and will not provide such an authentic account, it may be perceived by participants as less formal, and therefore less constraining, and does not require such intensive work thereafter (Drever, 1995). In the experience of the author, it focusses the attention of the interviewer on the key issues to emerge from the discussion.

Taking account of the considerations above, the approach adopted was note-taking, seeking to verify the authenticity of the account by paraphrasing what had been said during the course of the interview. Transcripts of the interview were either read out to the interviewee or were returned to the interviewee for comment. There were no changes requested, with the exception of one minor adaptation.

Guidance (both in written and verbal form) was provided to Support Group Leaders on the conduct of interviews (c.c. App 7.2.5), supplemented by training on interview methods by Stuart Hall (SCRE). However, it became evident that the degree to which Support Group Leaders recorded in detail the responses of pupils varied, with some Support Group Leaders providing more detailed transcripts than others - an issue of *reliability*.

6.3.2.5: The Process by which Research Tools were further developed

To select an example, the design of the scheduled interview (c.c. App 7.2.5), which replaced the initial pupil questionnaire, was a collaborative venture involving all *SgLs* following the training, provided by Stuart Hall (SCRE), on interview techniques. One of the difficulties in designing an interview schedule is the need to avoid bias not only in the means of framing questions (as previously described) but also in the selection of suggested prompts and probes. How might an objective rather than a subjective approach be adopted?

The author collated and analysed the responses to the initial questionnaire over its period of administration, undertaking a content analysis. Themes to emerge from this content analysis were then shared with the *SgLs* who then divided into groups to develop the prompts and probes for sub-sets of questions, using the themes as a guide. The author then collated the responses from each group and produced a draft interview schedule which was approved by the team and piloted with the author's Support Group. There were no subsequent changes to the interview schedule arising from the pilot as the pupils were comfortable with the process, were happy with the transcript of the interview which was read back to them and the *SgLs* considered that the responses were satisfactory and, as far as they were able to judge, authentic.

6.3.3 *Analysis and reporting of data*

The analysis and reporting of data is discussed under two headings: - qualitative data and quantitative data.

6.3.3.1: Qualitative data

Silverman (2001) identifies four principal means of textual analysis - *content analysis* (drawing from quantitative methods), *analysis of narrative structures* (text creating its own *reality*), *ethnography* (the use of text to exemplify features of natural settings) and *ethnomethodology* (understanding the means by which people make sense of their world) - each of which draws upon its own paradigm.

Silverman is scathing in his critique of *content analysis* within qualitative studies - *the theoretical basis of content analysis is unclear and its conclusions can often be trite* (Ibid., p123) - but the description which he provides is very narrow and he conceives of only one means of carrying it out - by prior identification of categories against which the data is classified. He perceives the problem as lying not only in terms of the danger of overlooked categories but of the analyst drawing upon his/her tacit understandings in drawing up the categories which then act to limit understanding:- *they furnish a 'powerful conceptual grid' from which it is difficult to escape.* (Silverman, 2001 (2nd ed.), p123[18]). It can be acknowledged that, in the case of the Practitioner Researcher, it is difficult to separate tacit understanding/knowledge derived from membership of a group from that drawn from empirical study. If this, indeed, were the only means by which *content analysis* could be operationalised, this author would agree with his conclusions.

However, this author would point to the potential dangers of the fine-scale analysis of narrative in that it might rely, to a great extent, upon data which is not representative of the population as a whole; it might place too much emphasis upon aspects of the data to the detriment of other aspects; it might rely too heavily upon the interpretation of the analyst (reading more into the data than was the intention of the respondent); and, it cannot provide a sense of wholeness - 'gestalt' - of looking at the study in the round.

No matter which approach is adopted, it has to be recognised that all accounts (no matter how obtained) portray reality as perceived through the 'eyes' of the respondent which may vary depending upon context and be influenced by the circumstances surrounding the study. Both Gillham (2000b) and Silverman (2001) observe that how people behave in real world situations may not equate with what they may say in an interview. Gillham surmises that it is people's lack of self-knowledge which may underlie this difficulty.

Baker (1982)[19] observes that both interviewees and interviewers construct meaning derived from the assumptions which are made about the person to whom he/she is speaking and the context of the question:- *When we talk with someone else about the world, we*

[18] drawing from Atkinson, 1992, p459

[19] cited in Silverman, 2001

take into account who the other is, what the other person could be presumed to know, 'where' that other is in relation to ourself in the world we talk about. (Silverman, 2001, p86)[20]

Silverman (2001), drawing from the evidence of Moerman's study of the 'Lue' (Ibid., p84 - 86), concludes that *attempts to see things as they are* ultimately fail because 'facts' are as they are perceived - *facts never speak for themselves.* (Ibid., p86)

Gillham (2000a) makes the case for case study research which is characterised by *inductive theorising ie. making sense of what you find after you've found it* (Ibid., p7) to establish *grounded theory: theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up.* (Ibid., p12) However, by whichever means the *content analysis* is conducted, *reliability - the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions* (Silverman, 2001, p33))[21] - is of the essence.

Within this study, the categories were arrived at by collating the responses onto a data-base, seeking common themes and classifying and sorting the responses until the author considered that the categorisation was robust[22] . This was a complex procedure which presented several difficulties amongst which were the difficulties inherent in arriving at categories which were discrete - a process of trial and error; of categorising individual responses which spanned more than one category[23] ; of categorising 'stand-alone' responses[24] ; of dealing with responses which related to research questions other than those under scrutiny [25]; and, in respect of some, but not all, research tools which had undergone modification, there were implications for the process of analysis.

For example, with respect to the latter, the inclusion of closed-response categories within the Class Teachers' Questionnaire (c.c. App 7.2.6) provided the opportunity to analyse the responses according to the classifications which had been selected by class teachers for the *Sgi* population as a whole (c.c. App 6.2.5) rather than collating and classifying the responses, in relation to each pupil, according to the author's judgement (App 6.2.4).

There are other considerations which arise in the analysis of data which relate not only to the trustworthiness of the study but also to its ethical dimensions. For example, how much weight should be attached to individual observations? Are all observations of equal value? (Does the perspective of the Head Teacher carry more weight than that of the pupil?) Does the majority view prevail (House, 1977)? How should one deal with deviant observations (Gillham, 2000b) - those which 'go against the flow'?

The most important consideration, from the perspective of the author, is the degree to which the response (no matter from which source) resonates with the issues under consideration and has something meaningful to contribute to the discourse.

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20 citing Baker, 1982, p109

21 citing Hammersley, 1992, p67

22 The author drew on the advice of Drever, 1995, pp. 66 - 69; Gillham, 2000a, pp. 71-75; and Gillham, 2000b, pp. 59 -7 in conducting the content analysis

23 in this case, the response was sub-divided into its constituent parts

24 these were classified and listed under 'other'

25 these responses were 'flagged' and were referred to in the correct context

Silverman (2001) highlights the dangers of *anecdotalism* in qualitative research which he describes as:- *the way in which research reports sometimes appeal to a few, telling 'examples' of some apparent phenomenon, without any attempt to analyse less clear (or even contradictory) data.* (Ibid., p31) - an issue of validity.

If a study is to be regarded as trustworthy (Bassey, 1999) and rigorous, it is important to seek out deviant cases through a process of *critical rationalism*[26] exemplified in Popper's theory of *falsification.* Popper states,

> *What characterises the empirical method is its manner of exposing to falsification, in every conceivable way, the system to be tested. Its aim is not to save the lives of untenable systems but, on the contrary, to select the one which is, by comparison the fittest, by exposing them all to the fiercest struggle for survival.*
>
> (Popper, 1959: 42)[27]

Whilst this theory can more readily be applied within *positivist* approaches, if account is taken of the truth status of the claims made, it can also be applied to *interpretivist* approaches. At a practical level, the onus is upon the researcher to actively seek the full range of evidence, whether positive or negative, and to apply an appropriate weighting to each both in terms of undertaking the analysis and the reporting of the findings.

In the reporting of qualitative data, it was considered important therefore to reflect the full range of data and the author achieved this through ensuring that the reporting of findings was proportionate to the evidence. Where findings are predominantly positive, the evidence to support the argument should represent this; if a more variable 'picture' emerges, this should be reflected both in the argument itself and in the evidence used to support it.

The use of language within the report of findings within a qualitative study has to be chosen with great care. What do *the majority, most, a few* actually mean? The author surmounted this difficulty through arriving at a code of practice before beginning to write up the findings (c.c. Part 5: Table Int 2). On some occasions, qualitative data is supported by the use of graphs, charts and tables illustrating the proportion of responses within each category. The exemplification of analysis of qualitative data can be found in App 6.

6.3.3.2: Quantitative Data

A range of methods can be brought to bear on quantitative data from the simplest analysis of distributions (such as *stem and leaf analysis*); through the study of *distributions of sample (S) means* (or *distributions of difference between means*) to establish statistical significance; multi-dimensional studies using non-parametric tests (such as *chi-squared*); to studies of *correlation* and *regression*[28] and the highly complex strategies of *meta-analysis* studying the

[26] also described as *deviant case analysis*
[27] In Silverman, 2001, p224
[28] similar to a measure of central tendency

relationships between variables. (Cohen *et al.*, 2002; Rowntree, 2000), some of which are more appropriate for large-scale surveys than for the case study approach.

This study drew upon three of these methodologies: - *stem and leaf analysis;* the calculation of the *standard error of the means* of two different samples; and *chi-squared testing* which was used in relation to comparisons between categories and between continuous variables when parametric testing was ruled out because of skewed distributions.

The analysis of statistics proved to be one of the most complex and difficult aspects of undertaking this study and presented a series of dilemmas which required critical reasoning and problem-solving approaches. These dilemmas and considerations in the analysis and interpretation of quantitative data are discussed below.

Collection of Data Related

In a study which relies upon the endeavours of a team of people with little or no research experience (*SgLs),* despite the initial provision of guidance (written and verbal) regarding the collection and safe storage of data, there were some initial difficulties. Further guidelines and procedures were put in place to alleviate these difficulties (for example, the checklist attached to the pupils' folios of evidence (c.c. App 7.1)). Unfortunately, a small amount of data was lost in the fire which swept the school in session 2001-2002.

For a variety of reasons, it was not possible to make a direct comparison between the *Sgi* population[29] (in relation to a range of measures such as exclusions) and wider stakeholder groups as the means by which data is collected and reported nationally and at local authority level did not meet the needs of the study which required comparisons to be made in relation to finer time periods and in relation to combinations of variables (such as year group and local authority statistics which were not correlated nationally). This difficulty was overcome by analysing at two levels:

- a broad overview to provide a context, comparing directly the national, local authority and school populations in relation to the calendar year
- a more specific analysis, relating to finer time periods, comparing the performance of the *Sgi* population to 'other' and the year group cohort as a whole drawing from school maintained records held electronically (SEEMIS) and on paper.

Issues relating to the Reliability of Data

The lack of specificity in the recording of data at national level relating to attendance and exclusions at the time relating to this study created difficulties in distinguishing between unauthorised absence sanctioned by the school (exclusions) and truancy. It was only through scrutiny of individual pupil records that this distinction was able to be made.

[29] c.c. Everitt 1977, Ch 1.2 for an explanation as to why the *Sgi* cohort can be described as a population in its own right rather than as a sample (if not random) from the wider populations from which it emanates.

Discrepancies arose between data recorded nationally, by the local authority and between school sources. The author resolved this difficulty by deriving the following criteria:

- identifying the most likely authentic and accurate source - drawing from all the available evidence
- going back to source whenever possible to verify data
- using whichever source was selected consistently thereafter.

There is a perception that 'hard data', represented in statistical form, is more reliable than data drawn from personal accounts or observation - 'soft data'. An example of the former is the evidence pertaining to indiscipline in which, at each and every stage, judgements have come into play. At which point does indiscipline reach the point at which it is considered necessary for the class teacher to make a discipline referral? Would this point be the same for all teachers under the same conditions? Would all senior managers react in a similar way to such a referral? At which point would it be considered sufficiently serious for a child to be suspended from school? These are only some of the variables which can affect the statistics relating to indiscipline which make clear the subjective nature of what might normally be regarded as 'hard data'.

The introduction of the National Priorities (SEED, 2000a) in tandem with the target-setting agenda (SOEID, 1998b)[30] resulted in the imposition of targets to reduce the number of exclusions[31] in Scottish schools. The interim report on progress in relation to the National Priorities (SEED, 2003f) states:

> *One of the Scottish Executive's current social justice milestones is to reduce by a third the days lost every year through exclusion and through truancy.*
> (Framework for Learning: National Priority 2)

In reporting and interpreting the findings of this study, the effects of this drive should be borne in mind.

At the time period relating to and prior to this study there had been industrial action in which national tests were boycotted by some schools and individual teachers. This resulted in some pupils not having national test results recorded. In these circumstances, it was not possible to distinguish between pupils who did not have levels recorded because they had not yet attained the next level and those pupils who had not had the opportunity to sit the tests. These difficulties manifested themselves within the school more in the test results of pupils within *Sgi* cohorts 1999 and 2000 (particularly in relation to Mathematics). Accordingly, whilst the National Test results of all pupils within the study are recorded (when available), only those for cohorts 2001 and 2002, in relation to reading and writing, are analysed within the study.

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30 It should be noted that subsequent to this study, the setting of targets to reduce exclusions was no longer advocated by the Scottish Executive.

31 the terms 'exclusion' and 'suspension' are use synonymously within this thesis

National tests were not designed to provide fine measurements of progress over relatively short time periods. A child who has not attained the next level has not necessarily failed to progress but has not made sufficient progress for it to be recorded. The reliability of national tests has come under national scrutiny to the extent that they have been replaced by the *Scottish Survey of Achievement* (SEED, 2004i).

A further consideration is the time-period over which comparisons are made on a range of measures. Clearly, if one wishes to measure the impact of the intervention over time, a reasonable time scale has to be selected to allow for change to occur and to measure whether it remains stable. However, the longer the time-scale, the greater the number of variables which can potentially come into play. Given the relatively short-time scale over which change is measured in relation to this specific study, it may be the case that other indicators, such as the extent to which pupils develop more positive learning dispositions, may be a greater predictor of future success than might be indicated by National Test results.

The response rate to the parents' questionnaire is relatively low at 44% (despite the measures taken to increase uptake, such as telephone interviews) and this has to be considered when examining the findings. Taking cognisance of the fact that, due to the *emergent* nature of the study, some research tools were applied only to specific cohorts rather than to the full population, both the % response rate and the % of the *Sgi* population to whom the research tool applied are provided.

In summary, taking account of all of these considerations, and in keeping with advice of Stake (1995), the imperative is to adopt a cautious approach in interpreting, reporting and making claims from the findings and to balance them with the findings arising from qualitative data.

Issues Relating to Methodology

In analysing the discipline records of both the *Sgi* population and 'other' a means needed to be found of controlling for the variables of attendance and unequal time-periods of measurement. The means by which this was achieved is described in the introduction to the Findings chapters (c.c. Part 5: Table Int 1).

If one were to place the *Sgi* population on a norm-distribution curve of values for the S2 cohort as a whole in respect of discipline measures (referrals, frequency and duration of suspensions), whilst a proportion would lie within one or two standard deviations of the mean, the majority would lie at the extreme end of the curve and a minority of these would be outliers. This is indicative of the criteria by which *Sgi* pupils were selected. The distribution is not normally distributed which means that parametric tests cannot be used to make inferences or predictions or to be able to state the significance of the findings.

Non-parametric tests (chi-squared) were used as a means of establishing the significance of the findings both in terms of comparing the *Sgi* population to 'other' and to wider

populations (c.c. App 9) although, in the latter case, account had to be taken of the fact that the populations were embedded within each other.

In order to understand the data as fully as possible, and allowing for the fact that inferences could not be drawn from parametric tests within these circumstances, the author carried out both parametric and non-parametric tests on aspects of the data. This enabled patterns of change to be studied over time. The *z-values* obtained from such analyses provided a useful, objective means of categorising pupils for example, as being of *low* or *high* levels of concern (in relation to discipline measures) pre-intervention, allowing for the benchmarking of pupil progress.

Reporting of Quantitative Data

Quantitative data is reported within the thesis in both textual and graphical forms, drawing from the advice of various texts: - Munn and Drever (1996); Rowntree (2000); and Dunleavy (2003). A range of representations of data is used within this thesis all of which are in standard use - histograms/bar-charts/grouped bar-charts, pie-charts, 'hi-lo' charts and tables.

6.4 *The Case Studies/Group Interview with SgLs/Senior Management Perspective*

All of these aspects of the study were conducted by an independent researcher[32] who was brought in by the author[33] to draw upon his professional expertise and on the basis that people would feel more comfortable with and would talk more freely to an individual perceived as being independent of the school. The design of this aspect of the study and of the research tools, and the analysis and reporting of data were undertaken by the author but the piloting of research tools and the conduct of the interviews were undertaken by the independent researcher.

The case studies draw upon the perspectives of six *Sgi* pupils (drawn from cohort 2002) and their related stakeholders - parents/guardians; *SgLs;* and Pastoral Care teachers (if not *SgL)* - and the full range of evidence as it pertains to each pupil (c.c. App 10.1). In order to obtain a more holistic perspective of the *Sgi* and to place it within the wider context of the school, a group interview was held with *SgLs* and the perspective of senior management was sought.

Permission was sought of the Head Teacher and Local Authority for this aspect of the study to be implemented. No objections were raised. The author approached all interviewees individually to seek their co-operation. Prior to letters of consent being sent out, parents/guardians were contacted by phone in order to set a context for the request for participation, to explain more fully what was involved and to answer any questions raised.

[32] Stuart Hall, SCRE

[33] using a grant provided by Glasgow University

6.4.1 *The Selection of the Sample*

Cohen *et al.* (2002) identify four considerations in the selection of a sample:

- *the sample size*
- *the representativeness and parameters of the sample*
- *access to the sample*
- *the sampling strategy to be used.*

(Ibid., p92)

The authors advocate that, in a qualitative case study, a sample of five or six would suffice if the researcher uses other means of validating the data.

Whilst a sample cannot be held to be representative in the fullest sense, the author considered it important that account should be taken of the initial degree of concern (as exemplified by the discipline records of pupils) and of the initial response of pupils to the intervention in the selection of the sample. At the point of selection, the intervention had been in place for a three month period and there was data available to indicate how pupils were progressing in relation to these indicators. An exemplification of the data from which the selection of the sample was drawn is illustrated in App 6.4.1.

On the basis of the unit measure (referrals) pre-intervention, pupils were classified as being of 'mild concern' (<0.076), 'concern' (0.076 - 0.304) or 'severe concern' (> 0.304)[34] . These classifications were not arrived at by statistical tests but by examining the 'lie' of the values and drawing upon the author's experience as Depute Head.

The degree of change was calculated by subtracting the unit measure[35] for referrals pertaining to the individual pupil mid-intervention, from that which pertained pre-intervention.

> degree of change = pre-intervention unit measure (referrals) - mid-intervention unit measure (referrals)

The values were classified into the categories of 'deterioration' (> -0.058)[36] , 'no significant change' (-0.058 - 0.058) and 'improvement' (< .058), once again, on the basis of the 'lie' of the values. These two sets of statistics were then cross-tabulated: (c.c. Table 6.4).

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[34] a unit measure of 0.3 is the equivalent of three referrals for indiscipline per fortnight

[35] c.c. Introduction to Findings Chapters

[36] a unit measure of 0.05 is the equivalent of one referral for indiscipline per four weeks

Table 6.4: Cross-tabulation of unit measures (referrals) pre-intervention with degree of change as measured mid-intervention

Selection of Sample	Initial Mild Concern	Initial Concern	Initial Severe Concern
Improvement	N/A	2 pupils	5 pupils
No Significant Change	8 pupils	3 pupils	2 pupils
Deterioration	5 pupils	5 pupils	2 pupils

This exercise was repeated in relation to the measure 'duration (total no.) of days of suspension' and pupils were then classified using the following criteria:

- a pupil demonstrating deterioration in relation to at least one measure was placed in the category 'deterioration'
- a pupil demonstrating improvement in relation to at least one measure was placed in the category 'improvement'
- a pupil demonstrating no significant change for both measures was placed in the category 'no significant change'[37] .

The resulting table (Table 6.5) was produced from which one pupil was to be selected from each category[38] (the pupils were listed individually (coded[39])). The other variable which is represented within the table is that of the Support group to which pupils belonged. The recommended group (which would restrict the selection further) was the mode within each category.

Fig. 1.5.: Table from which sample was selected

Mild Concern No significant change	Mild Concern Deterioration	Concern Deterioration	Concern Improvement	Concern No significant change	Serious Concern Deterioration	Serious Concern Improvement
7 pupils	6 pupils	4 pupils	2 pupils	4 pupils	4 pupils	5 pupils
Group G	Group D	Group H	Incorporate within next category	Group F	Group G or H	Group C

The process of selection can therefore be described as being by means of a *stratified sample,* however it also an example of *multi-phase sampling* in which the criteria upon which the selection is based changes at each stage (Cohen *et al.*, 2002).

- Stage 1: selection according to pre-intervention degree of concern (referrals) and degree of change as measured in relation to referrals and days of suspension

[37] it should be noted that no pupil demonstrated 'deterioration ' in one measure and 'improvement' in the other.

[38] there were no pupils in category 'Serious Concern/No significant Change'

[39] for example, 00 (session 1999-2000) 1 (1st pupil in the group (alphabetically, according to surname)) G (group G) b (boy)

- Stage 2: selection according to the Support group to which the pupil belongs
- Stage 3: selection according to gender to represent the proportion of boys/girls within the population from which the sample is selected
- Stage 4: selection according to wider criteria:

    - the pupil's involvement in the pupil support room, learning support and/or Joint Assessment Team (JAT)
    - the pupil's involvement in the X trust (charitable trust working within community)
    - the involvement of social work with the family
    - the parents' attendance at the *Sgi* briefing meeting (a measure of parental support)
    - any other relevant factors.

In order to assist the independent researcher in the selection of cases, brief, individual 'potted' histories of each pupil were provided (pupils were coded for this purpose) (c.c. App 6..4.1). One additional factor of which account was taken was entirely pragmatic - factors which might affect participation within the case studies. Thus, only when all of the above criteria had been satisfied would there be any element of random selection (perhaps in the selection between one or two pupils within a group).

It should be noted that, after selection had taken place, one pupil had to be substituted because of a sensitive child-protection issue but the same process of selection was adopted. An exemplification of the data upon which the selection of the case studies was drawn is provided in App 6.4.1.

6.4.2 The Development, Piloting and Implementation of Research Tools

Drawing from the research aims and questions, the author formulated a short paper - 'Interview Themes' under the following headings:

- Pre-Intervention;
- During Intervention;
- Outcomes;
- Looking at the Initiative as a Whole.

These headings were further divided (for example, under the heading , 'During Intervention', the following themes were explored:- feelings on being in the group; perceived reactions of others to pupil being in the group; perceived value/worth of the approaches adopted) and each of these themes was sub-divided into specific questions and prompts. The questions were then customised for each stakeholder group:

Pupil Interview
Why do you think you were asked to join one of the Support Groups?

Parent Interview
Why do you think ..... was asked to join one of the Support Groups?

SgL/Pastoral Care Teacher Interview
How did you perceive ..... 's difficulties prior to intervention?

A schedule was designed for each stakeholder group (including one for the group interview with *SgLs* and one for the management perspective), taking account of the advice given in Drever (1995) and Gillham (2000b), an exemplification of which is given in App 8.2. These schedules were then examined by both the independent researcher (who passed them round his colleagues at SCRE) and the author's supervisor and, with the exception of two changes (the addition of a question probing specifically learning related outcomes; and the addition of a prompt seeking exemplification of changes in behaviour), were agreed and piloted by the independent researcher (c.c. App 10.5 - an interview transcript).

The research tools were piloted under the same conditions as would pertain for the conduct of the interviews (to follow) involving one pupil (chosen at random) and his stakeholders, and an Assistant Head Teacher. It was not possible to pilot the group interview under the conditions in which it would operate but it was piloted with one *SgL* (who was unable to attend the group interview). There were no recommended changes to the schedules arising from the pilot although changes were made to the recommended times for the interviews[40] .

Given that most of the interviews were to be held with stakeholders who were already on the school premises, it was decided that the interviews would be held within the school in a small, informally set-out room near the reception area. Whilst it is often advocated that interviews with parents should be conducted within the home setting, this was rejected for two reasons:- economy of time and control of the environment (minimising interruptions). The locating of the interviews in school premises did not present any difficulties and enabled the author to ensure that the process ran smoothly.

As has previously been discussed, it was decided that, rather record the interviews, notes should be made on the schedule which would then form the basis of the analysis. The data was then validated by providing a brief oral synopsis to parents and pupils at the end of the interview. A written transcript was returned to the *SgLs* and Head Teacher for verification. The only difficulty which emerged was that the group interview (1hr 40 mins) was rather rushed towards the end which could not have been anticipated as it could not be piloted in this form.

6.4.3: The Analysis of Data and Reporting of Findings

A content analysis was undertaken by the author and the themes to emerge were collated onto a data-base such that the author could identify issues which prevailed across the case

[40] c.c. App 10.5 for an exemplification of the Interview Schedules

studies (c.c. App 6.4.2).

Given that there had been no significant changes to the interview schedules at the piloting stage, the author included the views of the Assistant Head Teacher (c.c. 8.1.3) and also the views of the *SgLs* who had piloted the schedule for individual *SgLs* and the group interview (c.c. 8.1.1.1 and 8.1.1.3) within the analysis, having sought their permission.

The reports of each case study and those arising from the interviews with *SgLs* and senior management were returned to the independent researcher, Head Teacher, Assistant Head Teacher and to the *SgLs* for comment. Feedback was very positive indeed and no changes of any significance were requested. In verbal feedback, the independent researcher stated that the case studies represented an authentic account of what had been said in the interviews (he had passed them round his colleagues at SCRE also for comment).

A descriptive account of each case study[41] is provided in chapter 10 but the discussion of findings pertaining to each study, arising from the analysis of themes, is incorporated within those pertaining to the wider study (c.c. Ch 11) as they mirror (and provide deeper insight into) the themes which emerge from the wider study.

6.5 Reflections upon the study: A focus upon Practitioner/Action[42] Research and the dilemmas it presents

Educational action research, according to Mills (2007), *is a systematic inquiry done by teachers (or other individuals in the learning/teaching environment) to gather information about - and subsequently improve - how their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn.* (Ibid., p20) The principal goal with which it is identified is the enhancement of both the lives of children and the professionalism of teachers (Ibid., p10).

Somekh (2006) identifies action research as being underpinned by complex theories of action in the service of a moral purpose, which has at its heart conceptualisations of:

- the nature of knowledge, truth and reality;
- the nature of the self (in the view of Somekh, *socially constructed and multiple rather than unitary* (Ibid., p15)), taking cognisance of the context in which social relationships occur; and
- the theory of power and the ways in which it is exercised consciously or unconsciously, focussing upon the role of micropolitics and of discourse in shaping social reality, drawing upon the theories of Foucault. (Ibid., p1 - 19)

Mills identifies from the literature a range of models of action research[43] , common features of which are:

41 for reasons of economy, case studies 5 & 6 are omitted

42 from this point onwards, described as *action research*

43 Lewin (1952), Kemmis (1988), Calhoun (1994), Wells (1994), Sagor (2000), Stringer (2004), Cresswell (2005) and Hendricks (2006) (Mills (2007) pp. 15-20)

- a sense of purpose derived from the identification of a 'problem' or 'area of focus';
- observation or monitoring of practice;
- synthesis (analysis and interpretation) of data;
- a means of acting upon the findings (developing an action plan), feeding back into the process.

These processes form the four steps of the *dialectic action research spiral* advocated by Mills.

It would be misleading to imply that, within this specific study, a specific model of action research was developed and operationalised. Perhaps the model which exemplifies the approach adopted best is that of Sagor (2007)[44] - a seven step model based upon *selecting a focus, clarifying theories, identifying research questions, collecting data, analyzing data, reporting results, and taking informed action.* (Mills, 2007, p16) - however, the cyclical model of Kemmis (1998)[45] is also apt.

Elliot (1991)[46] outlines a range of 'dilemmas and temptations' which beset the action researcher. Many of these accord with the experiences of the author, as described below.

Simons (1985)[47] describes one of the major dilemmas inherent within action research as being the conflict between the values associated with action research - *openness, shared critical responsibility and rational autonomy* - and those associated with the school setting - *privacy, territory and hierarchy.* Whilst it is the case that more collegiate ways of working are being promoted within schools and that, arising from the Teachers' Agreement, structures are flatter, many would argue that these 'traditional values' are difficult to shift.

This author has already cited examples of the clash between her role as action researcher and Depute Head in terms of the impact which this had on the research methods selected, upon the development of trust, and the sensitivities involved in carrying out an action research project when one is in a position of authority.

A further dilemma is that of information (which could be applicable to the study) coming to the attention of the author in her capacity as Depute. The author used the following criteria in deciding whether or not it would be appropriate to include such information within the study:

- was the information generally within the public domain?
- if not within the public domain, did the person who provided the information (or whom it was about) know that it could be disclosed and to whom?

There are two possible solutions to the above - either seeking permission of those to whom the information pertains or not disclosing the information.

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44 as described in Mills, 2007, p16

45 as illustrated in Mills, 2007, p16, fig. 1-1

46 Elliot, 1991, Ch 5, pp. 57 - 68

47 as described in Elliot, Ch 5, p58

One of the difficulties which may present to the action researcher is how to handle findings which may be sensitive. Within this study, many of the issues which emerged are issues which are common to most schools and not specific to the school, although there were instances where concerns about practice in relation to individuals, policy and/or the operation of policy have emerged. These are perhaps most evident within the case studies which enabled a more in-depth analysis.

The author has tried to cope with these scenarios through a variety of means:- principally by pledging anonymity; by trying to find alternative explanations which present the situation from more than one perspective; going back to source to check out the data and provide the opportunity for the person to give an alternative explanation or retract what had been said in the light of further evidence; and discussing with individuals any concerns they might have about how the data would be used (for example, the parents of the pupils within the case studies). These are all strategies forwarded by Elliot (1991).

The author has been pro-active in sharing the research findings as they have emerged with the senior management team, staff and parents in the form of presentations and pamphlets summarising the study and its findings (customised for different stakeholders). Findings, as they pertain to individual pupils, have also been shared with pupils and parents through the *SgL's* report to parents.

Somekh (2006) describes action research as a process through which the *unthinking routines of practice* transform into *finely tuned intuitive actions grounded in depth of understanding* (Ibid., p29)[48] and as a collaborative process through which participants *reconstruct and transform their practices* (Ibid., p27). Whilst the difficulties of conducting a collaborative study, leading a team of staff with no previous experience of research have to be acknowledged, it has been a most worthwhile venture which has contributed towards the creation of a reflective culture within the school - a true learning community.

[48] drawing from Somekh and Thaler, 1997, pp. 151-2