

in the Special Education Setting in Barbados



CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
BACKGROUND	5
LITERATURE ON RELEVANT PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES	12
GOALS OF THE STUDY	20
METHODOLOGY	21
Quantitative Approaches	21
Qualitative Approaches	23
Data Analysis	26
Ethical Issues in the Study	27
Limitations	27
RESEARCH QUESTIONS	28
Policy and Quality Assurance	28
Teaching and Learning	29
The Setting/School Environment	29
FINDINGS FROM QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH	30
DEMOGRAPHIC DATA	31
TEACHER EFFICACY	34
TRANSITION AND PLANNING	36
The Irving Wilson School	36
The Ann Hill School	38
FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	48
POLICY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE	49
TRANSITION AND PLANNING	
PROGRAMME AND CURRICULUM	64
Irving Wilson School – Administrators Interview	65
Ann Hill School – Administrator Interview	69
Teacher Focus Groups – Ann Hill School	72

CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONS	78
IRVING WILSON SCHOOL	79
PEDAGOGY	79
THE SETTING/ SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	90
ANN HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL	101
FUNDING	101
HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES	101
PEDAGOGY	102
THE SETTING/ SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT	107
ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL SPECIAL UNIT	117
HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES	117
PEDAGOGY	118
THE SETTING/ENVIRONMENT	122
ST. STEPHENS PRIMARY INCLUSIVE UNIT	133
HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES	133
PEDAGOGY	134
THE SETTING/ ENVIRONMENT	140
MAKING SENSE OF THE DATA	144
A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY	145
RECOMMENDATIONS	149
REFERENCES	153
APPENDICES	159

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The study presented here was commissioned by UNICEF and the Ministry of Education. It is a multiple case study of four special education settings in Barbados that caters to children with a range of disabilities. These include: learning disabilities, sensory impairments, communication disorders, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and other developmental disabilities. The purpose of the evaluation was to explore teaching and learning environments across schools providing special education and to understand how education policy, quality assurance measures, curriculum, psychological and environmental factors influenced what occurred in the four case sites. It was undertaken to address concerns expressed by the Ministry of Education, parents and UNICEF about the state of teaching and learning in special education settings in Barbados. The results of this research will be used to improve the quality of teaching and learning at the schools under review and provide policy makers with evidence based information to guide the development of policy in special education.

This research was conducted over the period of one year from September 2010 to July 2011 by a team which was contracted by UWI Consulting that comprised of short term consultants from the School of Education, The University of the West Indies. The consultants were: Dr. Stacey Blackman (Lead Consultant), Professor Arthur G. Richardson, Dr. Claudette Fong-Kong Mungal, Mr. Gerald Rose, Miss Erin Mahon, Miss Allyson Pennegan and

two graduate students (Mr. Jason Marshall and Mr. Martin Hall).

Goals

The goals of this research were: to document quality education for children with special education needs, to inform the provision of a seamless programme of special education services, transition and education options for children with special education needs. Another goal is to inform the creation of socially just, equitable education policies that foster the inclusion of children with special education needs through optimizing their educational and career experiences.

Objectives

A number of objectives have been specified to assist in realising the goals noted above, these include: to conduct quality assurance exercises to evaluate policies, settings, and services for children with special needs, to examine programmes and interventions that guide the development, education and transition options for students with special needs, to investigate curriculum options, assessment practices and pedagogical practices of settings that cater to students with special education needs, to investigate the learning styles and strategies of students with special education needs, to investigate stakeholder perspectives about the education of children with special needs and to create a holistic and indigenous framework to guide policy and programme development.

Methodology

Quantitative and qualitative methodologies were employed to guide the investigation and a case study strategy adopted to examine the learning environment and teaching methodologies at the Irving Wilson Primary School, The Ann Hill Primary School, All Saints Special Unit and the St. Stephens Primary School Inclusive Unit. Approaches to data collection included interviews (face to face and in-depth), inventories, surveys, open-ended questionnaires, and observations, documents collected from the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and the four case sites.

Key Results

Findings of the study are presented for both the quantitative and qualitative components of the study. Results from this section of the study documents teachers' level of certification and it can be noted that most teachers are not trained in special education. Of note is the fact that only one of the four schools actually report using Individualized Education Plans to guide students' programme of education. This is a cause for concern as all instruction, assessment and monitoring of a child's programme of education in special education should proceed from this document. Teachers across the school however do note that they have access to various computer and assistive technologies. Observations and interviews at Irving Wilson however revealed that a number of their assistive technologies especially for students who are blind and visually impaired were either obsolete or not working.

Findings are also reported on a number of psychological variables i.e. teacher stress, teacher efficacy and older students' psychological preparedness for the world of work. The results on the teacher stress component indicate that teachers reported experiencing the

most stress in areas of Job Satisfaction, Role Ambiguity and Task/Environment and Role Stress. On the variable teacher efficacy results showed that at the Irving Wilson school teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teacher efficacy. At Ann Hill, teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching efficacy. Teachers from the All Saints Special Unit reported high level of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching Efficacy. At the St. Stephens Special Education Unit, teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching efficacy.

A small cohort of students was assessed for psychological readiness for the world of work. Students who were assessed on transition and planning variables for Irving Wilson School were found to be psychologically ready for the world of work while the one student who was assessed at Ann Hill was only found to be moderately ready for employment.

Qualitative Findings are reported for sections on policy and quality assurance, curriculum inclusive of transition and planning, teaching and learning and the school setting. When one examines the data from this current evaluation in a holistic manner based on surveys, interviews and observations with critical persons in the Ministry of Education, school administrators, teachers and parents it is evident that the ability of the education system (at the macro level) and at the school (at the micro level) to provide quality education to children with special needs is compromised on many levels. This finding is inextricably linked to the lack of a coherent special needs policy to guide the delivery of special education in Barbados.

The Ministry of Education's Eligibility Placement Committee which has primary responsibility for placement of students reported that there are a number of factors that influence

placement, these include: an insufficient number of trained personnel to assist student assessment, an insufficient number of spaces available in special education settings to support the current demand and parents' submission of incomplete medical assessment data. One effect that has been noted in the section on policy and quality assurance is that schools have had to use alternative approaches to evaluating students and commencing instruction.

Observations of teaching and learning settings which offer a basic academic curriculum in Language Arts and Mathematics supports the view that learning goals comprise mainly lower ordered objectives that are geared towards reproducing orientations to learning, rather than reasoning and application of information. There is a caveat however, it must be noted that the more skilled based learning objectives in the technical vocation subjects inclusive of agricultural science at institutions like Ann Hill supported a more tangible learning outcome through the creation of an end product i.e. a basket, belt, beads and so on.

Teacher pedagogy in particular teachers' methods and strategies were also observed in the study. Observations across institutions revealed that teachers were using a variety of strategies including: games, hand-outs, charts, and other visual aids to assist them with instruction. It is interesting to note however that strategies were not informed by student's learning styles. This area was particularly difficult to assess in the study and it was noted that teachers were unable to provide the kinds of information which would have allowed the researchers to report on that aspect of the study. Unfortunately it was also difficult to measure how much learning was actually taking place across students at each of the institutions since student achievement data was diffuse especially within schools with no means to quantify and measure this construct.

Recommendations

- A clearer articulation of a special education needs policy is critical to guide the implementation, delivery and quality of special education in Barbados.
- There is need for a national special education curriculum or at the least, MOE suggestions about how to modify/adapt/differentiate the national (mainstream) curriculum.
- Teacher Training is needed in the following areas: Managing the IEP process and writing measurable goals, objectives and benchmarks. Differentiating Instruction; Learning Styles; Curriculum Adaptation and Modification; Assessment practices; Co-Teaching in general education settings.
- Upgrading of the status of Ann Hill and Irving Wilson to "secondary school" status to ensure equity of opportunity to the students in these schools. Better utilization of the school plant of Irving Wilson is needed given the underutilized space and small class sizes at this school.
- There is a need for a cadre of professionals to be trained to deliver multi-factorial assessments to assist the student services section in the Ministry of Education and teachers at schools with identification and assessment of students' impairments.
- Development of an Individualized Education Programme and Individualized Transition Planning process and form. Parents, children and professionals conducting educational assessments ought to be a part of an IEP Team to facilitate this process and oversee the child's educational progress.
- There is a need for training of paraprofessionals to serve teachers in both inclusive and special education settings and for resources such as larger classrooms for students with special needs and greater security for schools such as The Irving Wilson School.
- Monitoring of instructional practices in special education schools by Special Education officers needs to be systematically planned and implemented, especially in those schools where there was a high level of teachers with little to no qualifications in special education.
- Common school-wide curriculum planning time is essential for the creation of a coherent curriculum. Common planning time amongst special education teachers helped to ensure horizontal and vertical articulation of content across the school's curriculum

Limitations of the Study

1. A case study strategy has been utilised so that findings are not generalisable to other settings outside of those used in this study.
2. Younger pupils' perspectives are not represented in this study and therefore the report relies heavily on what adults said about pupils. Another important factor which militated against the inclusion of pupil voice was the nature of their impairments and lack of parental consent.
3. Parental consent for students to participate in the study was not secured until the end of the data collection period in April 2011. Only one parent consent form had been returned to the team up until the middle of February from a pupil at the Irving Wilson School.
4. Observers sampled some classroom settings and therefore results reflect findings for those lessons observed and should be viewed as informative and for description only.
5. The study of transition and planning was limited to two Government owned schools providing educational services to children with special education needs. It cannot be assumed that the findings apply to privately owned secondary schools providing educational services to children with special education needs.
6. Seven (7) of the nine (9) Informal Transition Inventories left to be completed by staff the Ann Hill School were incomplete/unreturned. The small sample size (two students) does not allow a representative sample for all students enrolled at the Ann Hill School who were nearing their graduation from the institution.
7. Because of unavailability of school personnel, and conflicting schedules, only two (2) teachers (one from each institution) were assessed on their knowledge of key transition related processes. The small sample size (two teachers) does not allow a representative sample for all teachers at the Ann Hill School and Irving Wilson Schools.

BACKGROUND

Barbados has articulated a policy on special education which aims to equalize educational opportunities for persons with disabilities via a three tiered system of educational provision. These are through:

1. Segregated settings – where students attend classes all day every day, with other students with disabilities.
2. Special education units attached to general education schools – where students attend classes full time and whose interaction with peers occurs primarily at recess time.
3. Integrated settings- where special needs students are included and/or integrated into a general education classroom.

In a UNICEF (2000) report entitled “An Assessment of the Status of Children and Adolescents with Disabilities in the Caribbean”, it was estimated that there were 1,562 children under the age of 19 years old with disabilities in Barbados. Recent research which documents the incidence and classification of persons with disabilities is needed.

Special Education Provision

The report also outlines the number of educational options available to parents of children with special education needs which can support their training and educational development, and these align with the classifications noted above in (1),

(2) and (3). To illustrate segregated settings include: The Ann Hill School and the Irving Wilson School. Special education units include: The Charles F Broome Special Unit, Eagle Hall Primary Special Unit and Erdiston Special School. Integrated settings include St. Angela’s Primary School and the Ursuline Convent which are also regarded as private schools.

Inclusive Education can be regarded as a type of educational reform which seeks to address exclusionary practices within the education system. Within the Barbadian context, inclusion is being pursued in order to address any imbalance in education provision towards persons with disabilities. This is operationalised through pull out and full inclusion models which are present at some of the island’s primary schools. According to a 2007 report from the Caribbean Symposium in Inclusive Education:

Firstly, the Pull-out Programme was introduced in which students who have been identified as experiencing special educational needs spend part of their time in general education and part of their time in the resource centre where they engage in small group instruction focused on their particular needs. The Learning Support Coordinator may also go into their classes to work with individual or small groups. Secondly, there has been the introduction of the Full Inclusion Model where students with special needs remain in the mainstream classroom all of the time and participate either with adaptations or modifications to the curriculum (p. 37).

In addition to this, the report also suggest that individualized education plans (IEPs) and differentiated instruction are also to be provided to enhance students' academic performance in the regular education setting. It is noted that "more students are being provided with adaptive curriculum programmes indicated by their IEP in age appropriate mainstream classrooms" (p.37).

In the report from the Caribbean Symposium on Inclusive Education it is also noted that teacher training opportunities were made available in 2003 through collaboration with the Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax Canada, at a cost of 2 million Barbados dollars.

A total of 106 teachers were trained through this initiative. When disaggregated, it can be noted that, 83 teachers received Masters Degrees mainly in the area of Inclusionary Practices and Curriculum Development, 9 teachers received undergraduate degrees in special education, and 14 teachers gained Masters in Educational Psychology of the deaf, hard of hearing and blind or visually impaired education.

It is reported that the Mount St. Vincent programme assisted teachers

with developing learner centred strategies and practices, developing alternative modes of instruction to meet the needs of exceptional learners and in utilizing assessment strategies that enabled teachers to plan appropriate instruction for students in inclusive settings.

Special Education Policy

Barbados does not currently have a clearly articulated policy to guide the development and implementation of special education.

The Curriculum

Special Needs Education Policy documents that were examined are shown in Table 1. All documents were obtained from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development except the White Paper on Persons with Disabilities (undated) which was obtained from the National Disabilities Unit.

Table 1: Policy Documents Examined

White Paper on Education Reform in Barbados (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 1995)
Curriculum 2000 Barbados Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000)
An Assessment of the Status of Children and Adolescents with Disabilities in the Caribbean (O'Toole, 2000)
Children with Special Needs Parents' Handbook (Hornby, 2001)
Draft policy on Special Education (Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, 2008)
White Paper on Persons with Disabilities (Ministry of Social Transformation, undated)
Teacher's Manual for developing Individual Education Plans (Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, 2009)

The Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000) reiterated the Ministry's goals for special needs education outlined in their White Paper on Education Reform (1995). In line with the curriculum reform motto "Each One Matters", a major goal was that students with special needs would be mainstreamed into regular education, at least at the primary level, to the extent possible. This mainstreaming would

require that the national curriculum be adapted or modified. The White Paper stated that the Ministry would "review and amend the schools' curriculum particularly with respect to the Special Education programme" (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000, p.54). In the Rationale and Guidelines document of the White Paper it is noted that, the Ministry would develop a "new curriculum guide specifically designed for persons working with severely challenged children and young adults." (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000, p.19). It was further, proposed that Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) should be developed for all special needs students. This was revisited in Hornby's (2001) Parents' Handbook that encouraged parents to participate in the development of their child's IEP.

To date, 11 years later, there is limited mainstreaming of special needs students and no evidence of a modified or new curriculum for students with special needs. However, a manual for the development of IEPs has been produced (Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, 2009) and training in the development of IEPs has been provided for some teachers. Three of the 4 special needs schools participating in this study have implemented IEPs for their students although there was some variability of interpretation.

For analysis purposes, curriculum documents were classified as national curriculum documents, school-based

curriculum documents and resource materials used to support curriculum implementation (see Table 2) National curriculum documents were obtained from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development.

School-based curriculum documents were obtained from the 4 participating schools which were asked to submit their curricula for the academic year 2010- 2011. Resource materials were examined at the participating schools.

The national curriculum - Curriculum 2000 Barbados, was used as the backdrop against which to analyse the schools' curriculum documents.

The national curriculum is an outcomes-based one with a subject-centred design. National curriculum documents obtained from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development were of 2 types: the rationale for and general description of the national curriculum; and the attainment targets or learning outcomes for each year level and subject area of the curriculum. Attainment targets were described from early childhood through primary to Level IV (about Form 3) of secondary school.

Table 2: Curriculum Documents Examined

Curriculum 2000 Barbados Rationale and Guidelines for Curriculum Reform in Barbados (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000)
Curriculum 2000 Barbados Attainment Targets (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000)
Curriculum Web for Irving Wilson School (2010-2011)
Curriculum Web and Thematic Webs for All Saints Primary Special Unit (2010-2011)
Curriculum Web 2010-11 for St. Stephen's Primary Special Unit (2010-2011)
Curriculum Document for Ann Hill School (2008)
Curriculum resource documents available in school (Irving Wilson and Ann Hill)

Analysis of the school-based curriculum documents submitted presented some challenges.

A major challenge was the various levels of specificity and completeness of the documents. Ann Hill submitted a 90-page school-wide curriculum document designed in-house during the academic year 2007-2008. The 3 other schools (Irving Wilson, St. Stephens and All Saints) submitted curriculum webs specific to the 2010-2011 school year. However, while Irving Wilson submitted a single curriculum web for the school and St. Stephens submitted a single document for all the classes who utilised the Special Needs Unit, All Saints submitted curriculum webs for each class/group in the Unit.

An additional challenge was that of comparing the learning outcomes of the school-based curricula to the attainment targets of the national curriculum. Class groupings in

special education do not follow the age-specific chronological ordering of mainstream schooling.

Special education teachers must therefore pull from attainment targets they deem appropriate for each student, regardless of the age - level specified in the national curriculum in order to craft a curriculum suitable for their students.

Given the challenges identified, 2 levels of criteria were identified for document review. A general- level criterion aligned with the learning areas of the national curriculum and with those learning areas suggested by Hornby (2001), i.e. Life Skills and Social Skills. Another general-level criterion was the design of the curriculum, in particular the vertical and horizontal articulation of content. However, this criterion could only be applied to the school-wide

Table 3: Breadth of content coverage of the Special Education curricula (primary) compared to the learning areas specified by the national curriculum

Learning area/Subject identified by the national curriculum	Learning area/Subject identified by St. Stephen's (Inclusive Unit)	Learning area/Subject identified by All Saints (Attached Unit)
Language Arts	Yes	Yes
Mathematics	Yes	Yes
Science	No	Yes
Social Studies	No	Yes
Visual Arts	No	Yes
Music	Yes	No
Physical Education	No	Yes
Health and Family Life Education	No	Yes
Religious and Moral Education	No	Yes
Conversational Spanish	No	No
Life Skills	No	No
Social Skills	No	Yes

curriculum document submitted by one school. A more specific criterion, alignment of school-based curricula with the learning outcomes (attainment targets) of the national curriculum will be discussed in the latter part of this document.

All school-based curriculum documents were examined using the general criterion of alignment with the learning areas of the national curriculum with Hornby's (2001) addition that special needs curricula should also include the teaching of "the life and social skills necessary for survival in society..." (p. 22). In addition, Hornby stated that the secondary school curriculum should emphasise vocational skills.

The learning areas of the national curriculum are specified in the Rationale and Guidelines (Ministry of Education, Youth Affairs and Culture, 2000). The subject areas identified at the primary level are:

Language Arts; Mathematics; Science; Social Studies; Visual Arts; Music; Physical Education, Health and Family Life Education; Religious and Moral Education; and Conversational Spanish. With the addition of life skills and social skills, these learning areas were used to operationally define the breadth of scope of the primary curriculum. To what extent do the curricula submitted by the 2 primary-level schools cover these learning areas (at least nominally)? Table 3 shows the learning areas given in the school-based curricula submitted by the 2 primary schools.

As expected, the curriculum of the inclusive unit emphasised support in numeracy and literacy since the students who visit the inclusive unit were in the regular, mainstream school and would therefore experience the school-wide curriculum at their year level. On the other hand, the attached unit must

provide coverage of all learning areas for its students. The curriculum documents submitted indicated that all learning areas except conversational Spanish and Music are addressed to some degree in the inclusive unit's curriculum. However, depth of coverage was difficult to assess and would be better done at the level of the instructional or lesson plans used in the Units.

Although the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development currently classifies all special needs schools in Barbados as primary level schools, in fact 2 of the schools under study accommodate students of secondary age. The Ann Hill School is a secondary level institution. Its student intake is usually from the special needs units of the primary schools, primarily those students who are deferred and do not write the Barbados Secondary Entrance Examinations. The Irving Wilson School, designated as a school for the deaf/hearing impaired and blind/visually impaired, has a student intake that covers both primary and secondary-aged students. As such then, both these institutions enrol secondary-aged students. The subject areas identified in the national curriculum at the secondary level are shown in Table 4. The compulsory core subjects are Language, Literatures in English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Conversational Spanish or Conversational French, Physical Education, and Religious and Moral Education. The Visual Arts, the Performing Arts, Information and Communications Technology, Design Technology, Woodwork, Metal Work, Technical Drawing and Home Economics are identified as Foundation courses from which students choose at least one. With the addition of life skills, social skills and vocational education (Hornby, 2001), these learning areas were used to operationally define the breadth of scope of the secondary curriculum.

“As noted, the core learning areas identified for secondary education were offered by the school as well as a variety of “non-traditional” vocational subjects”

Table 4 shows that the special schools offer the core learning areas for secondary education and some of the Foundation courses identified in the national curriculum.

However, they do not offer a Modern Language; neither do they offer courses in the Performing Arts. There also appears to be a paucity of vocational courses shown in the Irving Wilson curriculum web that was submitted, although Hornby (2001) recommended that these areas be targeted by special needs schools with secondary age students. A caveat however, is that some vocational areas may not have been represented in the school's curriculum document but in fact are offered in the school (e.g. Woodwork).

Given that Ann Hill submitted an entire curriculum document; this document was examined in terms of its design- specifically the scope and sequence of its content. The breadth of content covered was given in Table 4. As noted, the core learning areas identified for secondary education were offered by the school as well as a variety of “non-traditional” vocational subjects such as Leather

Craft, Fibre Craft and Ceramics. That is, the scope of the curriculum, in terms of its breadth of learning area coverage was quite wide.

In addition also specified in the curriculum document, were learning outcomes for each learning area; these outcomes were sequenced by ability level across the school-wide curriculum so that there was a developmental sequence of learning outcomes for each learning area, whether academic or vocational.

On the other hand, horizontal articulation among the learning areas at a particular ability level was not given, also missing from the school-wide curriculum were suggestions of the learning activities and assessments that could be used to achieve the identified learning outcomes and to assess progress towards them. In addition, a graphic representation of the scope and sequence of the curriculum was needed so that potential users of the curriculum could see the horizontal and vertical relationships implied in the curriculum.

Resource materials available to teachers for lesson planning (kept in the principal's office) were examined in the 2 secondary level schools: Irving Wilson and Ann Hill. Unfortunately, the material was haphazard as teachers had borrowed various documents or parts of documents. For example, no complete set of the National Attainment Targets was available and there were few syllabuses in the content areas although the school in fact had full sets. Of note though is that the materials, for the most part, were from other countries and quite out-of- date.

Table 4: Breadth of content coverage of the Special Education curricula (special schools) compared to the learning areas specified by the national curriculum

Learning area/Subject identified by the national curriculum	Learning area/Subject identified by Irving Wilson (Primary and Secondary age students)	Learning area/Subject identified by Ann Hill (Secondary age students)
Language Arts	Yes	Yes
Literatures in English	No	No
Mathematics	Yes	Yes
Integrated Science; Natural Sciences	Yes	Yes + Agricultural Science
Social Studies	Yes	Yes
Conversational Spanish or French	No	No
Physical Education	Yes	No
Religious and Moral Education	Yes	No
Visual Arts	Yes	Yes
Performing Arts (Music, dance, drama)	No	No
Information and Communications Technology	No	No, but Technology Education
Design	No	Yes, Design Awareness
Woodwork	No (not on web, but offered)	No (not on web, but offered)
Metalwork	No	No
Technical Drawing	No	No
Home Economics	No	Yes
Life Skills	Yes	Yes
Social Skills	Yes	Yes
Health Education		
Leather Craft, Ceramics, Fibre Arts		

LITERATURE ON RELEVANT PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES

Inquiry into the sources of stress in the teaching profession has engaged the attention of educational psychologists over the last three decades.

This interest has been propelled by the increasing realisation that stress among teachers often causes physical and psychological problems that inhibit them from performing their jobs at an optimum level (Richardson, 1997). Although most of this research on teacher stress has been conducted in mainstream education; other research studies have shown that special education teachers are subject to the same levels of stress or even more than mainstream education teachers.

“...it can be concluded that special needs teachers have important responsibilities that can be quite demanding when compared to mainstream education schools.”

Given the unique and dynamic requirements of special needs students the role of the teacher becomes even more important.

Teachers are the ones who have to interact with these students daily; ensure that they meet the requirements of the tasks given; ensure that students do not engage in disruptive behaviours. Additionally, they must ensure that they are there for these students both physically and emotionally, if they are to enhance the likelihood of student success. Furthermore,

teachers also have to play the role of caregiver (Reindal, 2010). Moreover, special education teachers also aid in the development of Individualised Education Programmes (IEP) for each student. Another major responsibility of special needs teachers is to equip students with the necessary skills that they would require to function efficiently and effectively in society after they have completed school.

Based on the above it can be concluded that special needs teachers have important responsibilities that can be quite demanding when compared to mainstream education schools. Thus, they are more likely to undergo stress given the intensity and commitment that their job requires. Special education teachers enjoy the challenge of working with students with disabilities and the opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with them. Although helping these students can be highly rewarding, the work can also be emotionally demanding and physically draining. Many special education teachers are under considerable stress due to heavy workloads and administrative tasks. They must produce a substantial amount of paperwork documenting each student's progress and work under the threat of litigation against the school or district by parents if correct procedures are not followed or if the parents feel that their child is not receiving an adequate education. Additionally, the physical and emotional demands of the job may cause some special education teachers to leave the occupation.

Given the above demands it is important to have an understanding and an insight into teachers stress

among Special Needs education teachers. Although teacher stress can sometimes produce positive results, stress that has adverse effects such as alienation from the work place, absenteeism and attrition is often unwanted. Nonetheless, research has shown that when special needs education teachers experience high levels of stress caused by the unmanageability of their workload, they are more likely to leave. Thus the ability to competently manage stress related to teaching is critical if special needs educators are to survive and thrive in the classroom environment (Vaughn, 1993). Nonetheless, if teachers perceive themselves to be highly efficacious and believe that they have a strong influence on student academic outcomes they are likely to reduce the amount of stress they experience within special needs education.

Like teachers stress, teacher efficacy is of equal importance among Special Needs education teachers. Teacher efficacy has been defined as “the extent to which the teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy, 1998). Understanding teacher efficacy within Special Needs education is extremely important, particularly given the fact that these students occupy a unique component of the educational system and as such, teachers are therefore confronted with more unique challenges than would be faced within mainstream education schools. Therefore it is extremely important for special needs educators to believe in themselves; their capabilities and their ability to influence student learning outcomes.

The development of the concept of teacher efficacy has been strongly influenced by the work of Bandura and has its theoretical underpinnings in the work of Rotter (1996). Teacher efficacy was first conceived by the RAND researchers as, the extent to which teachers believed that they could control the reinforcement of

their actions – that is, whether control of reinforcements was under their control or caused by factors within the environment. Student performance and motivation were assumed to be significant motivators for teachers. Thus teachers with high self-efficacy would believe that they have a powerful influence on student outcomes.

“one of the purposes of this study was to investigate the levels of teacher stress and teacher efficacy in a selected sample of special needs educators”

Bandura (1977) also added to this view of teacher efficacy. His premise was that teacher efficacy is a type of self-efficacy which influences how much effort the individual puts forth, how long they will persist in the face of obstacles, how resilient they are in dealing with failures and how much stress and depression they experience in the face of demanding situations (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk & Hoy, 1998).

The above discussion on teacher efficacy and teacher stress indicates their importance of investigating these variables within Special Needs education. Added to this, the discussion also highlights that teacher efficacy can also influence the amount of stress a teacher experiences. However, despite the continuous research that highlights the importance of teacher stress and teacher efficacy within the educational system, little research has been conducted in the Caribbean examining these variables in relation to Special Needs education. Therefore one of the purposes of this study was to investigate the levels of teacher stress and teacher efficacy in a selected sample of special needs educators in Barbados.

Teacher Stress

Worldwide research indicates that teachers stress is becoming endemic.

Further research, has shown that stress in teaching can have severe implications for both teachers and students. For example, Richardson (1997) notes that teacher stress can result in health and psychological problems which in turn can lead to poor teaching performance, poor job-satisfaction and bad judgement. These research findings suggest the importance of evaluating teacher stress not only within mainstream schools but in special education as well.

“...many special education teachers exhibited frequent and strong manifestations of job-related stress.”

Although special education teachers enjoy the challenge of working with students with special needs and the opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with them, the high demands of the job can also be emotionally demanding and physically draining.

In fact many special education teachers are under considerable stress due to heavy workloads and administrative tasks. Research has shown that there is a high attrition rate among teachers of learners with emotional and behavioural disorders caused by high stress levels and job dissatisfaction (Abelson, 1986). Moreover, some research findings suggest that many special needs education teachers are prone to job-related stress.

For example, research by Fimian (1983) and Fimian and Santoro (1983) conducted a study on 365 low, moderate and high stress of full time special education teachers from Connecticut. Results indicated that many special

education teachers exhibited frequent and strong manifestations of job-related stress. The study indicated that 87.1% reported their jobs as being moderately to very stressful with forty-six percent (45.6%) reporting high stress levels. Additional studies have found that much of teacher stress is due to workload Morvant et al (1995), for example found that only half of the special needs educators in their study consented that there workload was manageable, 68% of their participants reported that they had too little time to do their work and one-third reported that conflicting goals, expectations and directives were a frequent source of stress.

Further research has also indicated that special needs teachers experience more stress than teachers who teach in mainstream education.

For example, research by Kaysoki (1997) found that there was a significant difference between the stress levels of special needs education teachers and regular classroom teachers with special needs teachers reporting significantly higher levels of stress than normal classroom teachers. Special needs educators also perceived paperwork to be one of the greatest causes of stress.

Teacher Efficacy

The implications of teacher efficacy are great. Research has shown that those teachers who are highly efficacious or teachers who are confident in their ability to teach students regardless of extraneous factors are more likely to better manage classrooms and greater academic success. In Special Needs Education given the unique demands of teaching special need students teachers must believe that they, through their teaching skills, can influence the academic outcomes of these students in a positive way. This notion is reflected in many studies which have shown that highly efficacious teachers developed more helpful strategies such as praise and

reinforcement of desired behaviours. Contrastingly teachers low in self-efficacy adopted more restrictive strategies such as suggesting help for students outside of the general classroom (Almog & Sheckman, 2007; Coladarci & Breton, 2001).

Nonetheless, although the literature is replete with research findings on teacher efficacy in mainstream school settings there is a paucity of research examining this concept in Special Needs Education. However, the research that has been conducted provides some useful insights. For example, Allinder (1994) using the teacher efficacy scale developed by Gibson and Dembo (1984) found that resource teachers high in personal efficacy exhibited greater organisation, planfulness, enthusiasm and clarity of instruction. Similar research conducted by Coladarci and Breton (1997) found that most special needs resource teachers (74%) believed that if they tried hard enough that they could get through to even the most difficult students. Further research by Podell and Soodak (1993) found that teachers with a low-self efficacy were more likely to recommend special education for underachieving students. Contrastingly teachers with a high self-efficacy were less likely to make such referrals.

Learning Styles

The literature is rich with research on learning styles and laden with different learning styles models. However, even though the literature indicates that there is strong acceptance of the concept of learning styles, there is much disagreement over how to measure this psychological construct.

Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone (2004) have identified five learning style families and select theorists in these learning style families were explored to determine which measure of learning style would be best suited

to investigate the learning styles of special education needs students. The family of learning styles include: learning styles and preferences that are largely constitutionally based of which the major theorist is Dunn and Dunn (1993); those that reflect deep-seated features of the cognitive structure Gardner (1962); the third learning style family, of which Myers-Briggs (1998) are the leading theorists, is learning styles that are one component of a relatively stable personality type; learning styles as flexibly stable learning preferences is the fourth family and Kolb (1984) is noted as the leading theorist; and finally a move from learning styles to learning approaches, strategies, orientations, Entwistle (1983) and Schmeck (1983) have been identified as being the leading theorists (see Table 5 for the classification of the learning styles families).

"...learning styles are consistent individual differences in the way people learn, that there is no 'good' or 'bad' learning style"

Dunn's learning style inventory was the first instrument to assess learning styles in Grades 3 through to 12 (Dunn, Dunn, & Price, 1975). Dunn and learning styles researchers with the same approach are of the opinion that learning styles are consistent individual differences in the way people learn, that there is no 'good' or 'bad' learning style, and that it is of prime importance that education meets the specific strengths and weaknesses of learners. Dunn defines a learning style as "the way in which each learner begins to concentrate on, process, and retain new and difficult information" (Dunn & Dunn, 1993). Their model of learning styles can be classified as multidimensional.

Table 5: Family of learning styles by orientation from Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone (2004)



Learning styles and preferences are largely constitutionally based including the four modalities: visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, and tactile.	Learning styles reflect deep-seated features of the cognitive structure, including 'patterns of ability'.	Learning styles are one component of a relatively stable personality type.	Learning styles are flexibly stable learning preferences.	Move on from learning styles to learning approaches, strategies, orientations and conceptions of learning.
Dunn & Dunn	Riding	Apter	Allinson & Hayes	Entwistle
Gregorc	Broverman	Jackson	Herrmann	Sternberg
Bartlett	Cooper	Myers-Briggs	Honey & Mumford	Vermunt
Betts	Gardner et al.	Epstein & Meier	Kolb	Biggs
Gordon	Guilford	Harrison-Branson	Felder & Silverman	Conti & Kolody
Marks	Holzman &	Miller	Hermanussen, Wierstra,	Grasha-Riechmann
Paivio	Klein Hudson		de Jong & Thijssen	Hill
Richardson	Hunt		Kaufmann	Marton & Säljö
Sheehan	Kagan		Kirton	McKenney & Keen
Torrance	Kogan		McCarthy	Pask
	Messick			Pintrich, Smith,
	Pettigrew			Garcia & McEachie
	Witkin			Schmeck
				Weinstein,
				Zimmerman & Palmer
				Whetton and Cameron

The five stimuli groups encompass environmental, emotional, sociological, physiological, and psychological areas, and contain 21 subcategories, which Dunn and Dunn refer to as elements. These elements do not impact equally on all learners.

Those that affect individuals strongly are referred to by Dunn and Dunn as strong preferences; others that are important, but of less influence, are called preferences (Dunn & Dunn, 1978).

The environmental stimulus includes the elements of sound, light, temperature, and design (Dunn, 1987).

Emotionality includes motivation, persistence, responsibility, and structure. The sociological stimulus includes the elements of learning alone, in a pair, with peers, or as a part of a team, with an authoritative or collegial teacher, or in varied treatments – in other words, a combination of social patterns. Physical elements include perceptual modalities (auditory, visual, tactile, and kinaesthetic), the need for intake while learning, time-of-day energy periods, and the need for mobility versus passivity. The psychological dimension includes global/analytic, hemisphericity, and impulsive/reflective characteristics, although this stimulus is not assessed separately through the Learning Style Inventory.

Dunn and Dunn's model has come under much scrutiny.

Kavale and Forness (1990) have charged that an examination of Dunn and Dunn's studies have revealed data so inadequate that their data were essentially meaningless. Grigorenko & Sternberg (1995) declared that the greatest problem is its (Dunn and Dunn's model) lack of attention to the learning process, stating that learning is a triadic relationship made up of three critical and constant elements: teacher, student and subject matter and not a dyadic relationship between teacher and student only. In other words its connections are too simplistic. Hughes (1992) even went as far to label the LSI as a psychometric disaster.

The theorists surrounding the cognitive structure family could easily be grouped since they possess the shared view that learning styles are 'structural properties of the cognitive system' (Messick, 1984).

Styles are describe by this group as the enduring foundation for behaviour (Messick, 1984) and therefore cannot be trained. It is a common criticism

that this learning style family is overwhelmed with unstable and inconsistent findings (Messick, 1984). Some theorists have moved away from cognitive styles - while maintaining some of the underlying concepts - into theories of intelligence, for example, Gardner (1962) and Guildford (1980). Others have built on the work done in this learning style family before moving to focus more on approaches and strategies for learning.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) (1998) was designed by Katherine Cook-Briggs and Isabel Briggs Myers.

The measure falls squarely into the learning style family that believes that learning styles are one component of a relatively stable personality type. It focuses more upon the description of normally observed types, and has been strongly linked to personality instruments using the 'Big Five' personality factors (See Figure 1). It has been included in this review because of its significant academic impact with over 2000 articles being written about the instrument over a ten year span (Thorne and Gough, 1999). The instrument has a series of forced-choice questions relating to four bipolar discontinuous scales, as shown in Figure 1 below. Despite the commercial success of the MBTI, the research evidence to support it – both as a valid measurement of style and as an aid to pedagogy – is inconclusive (Coffield, Moseley, Hall, & Ecclestone, 2004).

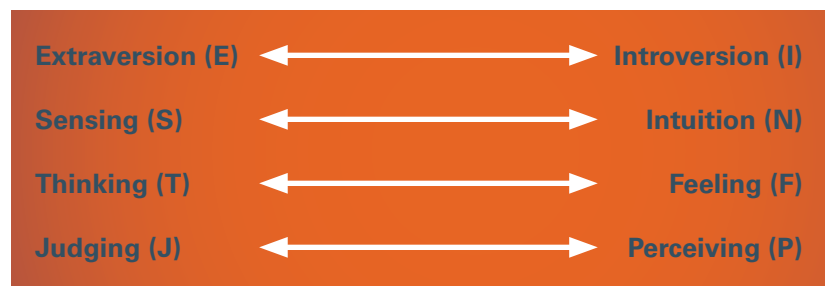


Figure 1. The four bipolar discontinuous scales of the MBTI.

Within an experiential learning framework, Kolb (1984) defined learning styles as distinctive individual differences in the learning process that arise from consistent patterns of transaction between the individual and his or her environment. This theory subscribes to the view that learning styles are flexibly stable learning preferences. Kolb's theory provides a holistic model of the learning process and a multilinear model of adult development. His theory is referred to as the Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) to pay homage to its intellectual origins. Taken together, Dewey's (1903) philosophical pragmatism, Lewin's 1938 social psychology, and Piaget's (1970) cognitive developmental genetic epistemology form a unique perspective on learning and development (Kolb, 1984).

The ELT model portrays two dialectically related modes of grasping experience – Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) – and two dialectically related models of transforming experience – Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE). This model (see Figure 1.4) suggests that learning requires abilities that are polar opposites, and that the learner must continually choose which set of learning abilities he or she will use in a specific learning situation. Life experiences, the demands of the present environment and our heredity equipment forces us to develop a preferred way of choosing a particular dimension. Conflicts are resolved between concrete and abstract and between active or reflective in patterned, characteristic ways (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 1999). Kolb (1984) refers to these patterned ways as learning styles.

Kolb's Learning Styles

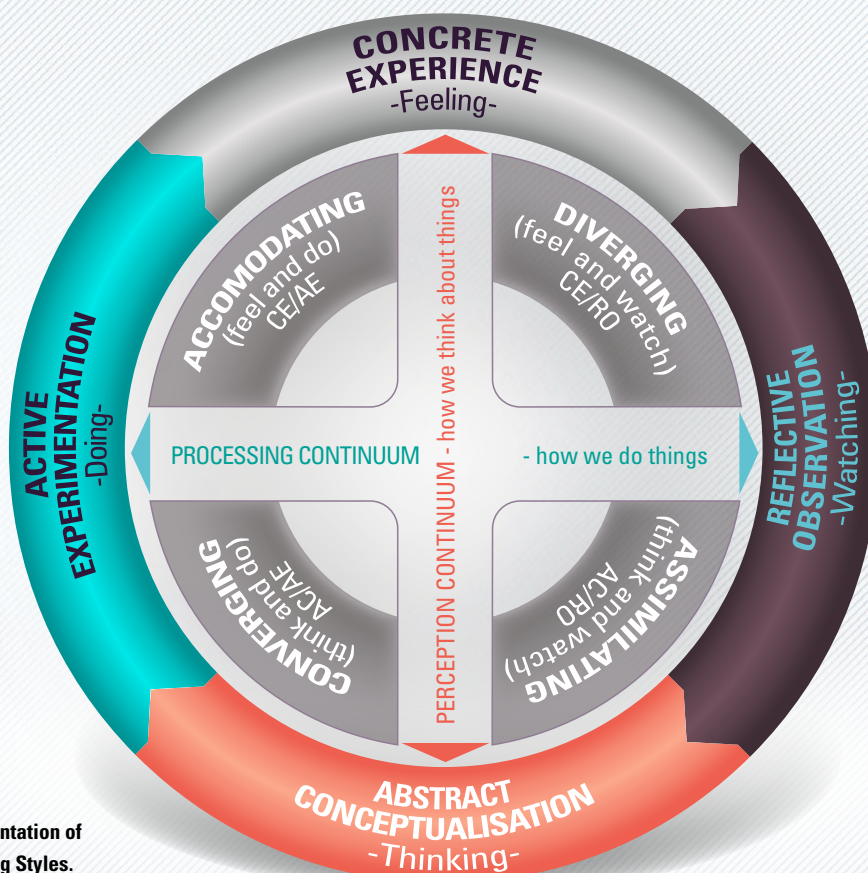


Figure 2. Pictorial representation of Kolb's ELT model and Learning Styles.

Kolb (1971) developed the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) to assess individual learning styles. Although individuals tested on the LSI showed various scoring patterns, statistical analysis reveal four learning styles: Diverging, Assimilating, Converging and Accommodating. The diverging style's dominant learning abilities are Concrete Experience (CE) and Reflective Observation (RO). People with this learning style are best at viewing concrete situations from many different points of view. The style's dominant learning abilities are Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) and Reflective Observation (RO). People with this learning style are best at understanding a wide range of information and putting it into concise, logical form. The Converging style's dominant learning abilities are Abstract Conceptualisation (AC) and Active Experimentation (AE). People with this learning style are best at finding practical uses for ideas and theories. Finally, the Accommodating style's dominant learning abilities are Concrete Experience (CE) and Active Experimentation (AE). People with this learning style have the ability to learn primarily from hands-on experience. Despite the fact that Kolb's theory has been heavily criticized, his theoretical orientation has contributed significantly to the learning styles literature.

Kolb's ELT model has come under much criticism by theorists on the grounds of low reliability, not enough empirical evidence to support its use and much to refute it and that it accounts for only a small amount of variance (Freedman & Stumpf, 1978, 1980; Stumpf & Freedman, 1991). Even after the instrument was revised in 1985 to overcome some of the psychometric limitations of the original instrument, factor analysis failed to support the bi-polar assumptions of the LSI (Ruble & Stout, 1990).

Approaches to learning – the family that focuses mostly to learning

“... the ILP, according to Schmeck et al (1977), Schmeck (1982), and Lockhart & Schmeck (1983) is based on behavioural-process orientation”

strategies, orientations and conceptions of learning – derive largely from the work of Marton & Säljö (1997), combined with Entwistle & Ramsdem's (1983) descriptions on a strategic approach to studying. The defining features of the approaches to learning are: 'deep approaches' which suggest that students understand, and vigorously and critically interact with the content examining the logic of the argument while relating evidence to conclusions; 'surface approaches' where the learner simply reproduces part of the content by passively accepting ideas and memorising facts and procedures routinely without recognising guiding principles or patterns; 'strategic approaches' or 'achieving approaches' which can be summarised as a very well-organised form of Surface approach, and in which the motivation is to get good marks.

Schmeck, Ribich, & Ramanaih (1977) adopted the approaches to learning positioning as well but assessed learning styles using a different orientation. They developed the Inventory of Learning Processes (ILP), a learning style instrument which unlike traditional personality, attitudinal, and cognitive style inventories that measured outside classroom settings, the ILP, according to Schmeck et al (1977), Schmeck (1982), and Lockhart & Schmeck (1983) is based on behavioural-process orientation and used to study actual classroom behaviours. This inventory would be used in this study.

GOALS OF THE STUDY

1. To document Quality Education for children with special education needs in Barbados
2. To inform the provision of a seamless programme of special education services, transition and education options for children with special education needs in Barbados
3. To inform the creation of a socially just, equitable education policies that foster the inclusion of children with special education needs into the wider society through optimizing their educational and career experiences

Objectives

- To conduct quality assurance exercises to evaluate policies, settings, and services for children with special needs in Barbados
- To examine programmes and interventions that guide the development, education and transition options for students with special needs
- To investigate curriculum options, assessment practices and pedagogical practices of settings that cater to students with special education needs
- To investigate the learning styles and strategies of students with special education needs
- To investigate stakeholder perspectives about the education of children with special needs in Barbados
- To create a holistic and indigenous framework that would guide policy and programme development in the area of special education in Barbados.

METHODOLOGY

This research used mixed method approaches to evaluate the quality of the learning environment and the teaching methodologies at schools providing special education in the island of Barbados. All instruments used in the study can be found in Appendices A through D.

Quantitative Approaches

Quantitative Approaches will be used to gather data on psychological factors which influence teacher practice in special education; it will also examine psychological precursors to work i.e. the role of transition and planning for older students with special needs at Irving Wilson and Ann Hill Schools.

Instruments

► *Teacher Stress and Teacher Efficacy*

The Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) a 36 item questionnaire developed by (Schutz & Long, 1988) was utilised to assess the perceived causes of stress among the sample of special education teachers. However, for the purposes of this study 33 of the most relevant questions were chosen. The items that were removed from the scale include: "My life is currently quite lonely," "I find my life currently quite boring" and "My administrative head pays attention to what I'm saying." The TSI was informed by the earlier work of Pettigrew and Wolf (1982), it comprises seven scales, most notably Role Ambiguity, examples of items on this scale include: "I am unclear on what the scope

and responsibilities of my job are," "I am uncertain what the criteria for evaluating my performance actually are") Role Stress, examples of items on this scale include "I find that I have extra work beyond what is expected of me," "I receive conflicting demands from two or more people or groups in the school setting"; Organisational Management, examples of items on this scale include: "I have influence over what goes on in my school," "My administrative head asks my opinion on decisions that directly affect me"; Job Satisfaction, examples of items on this scale include: "All in all, I would have to say that I am extremely satisfied with my job," "My job is extremely important in comparison to other interests in my life, Life Satisfaction, examples of items on this scale include: "I currently find my life very enjoyable"; Task Stress, examples of items on this scale include: "Trying to keep my work from being too routine and boring puts a lot of stress on me," "Trying to complete reports and paperwork on time causes me a lot of stress" and Supervisory Support examples of items on this scale include: "My administrative head stands up to outsiders for the people (s)he supervises," "When I really need to talk to my administrative head, (s)he is willing to listen."

Participants responses are rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Items which are positively-worded are reversed-scored for analysis so that a score of 5 represented high stress. Further details about the reliability and validity of the TSI are given in Schutz and Long (1988).

The Gibson and Dembo (1984) Teacher Efficacy Scale (TES) was utilised in this study to measure teacher efficacy.

The original scale comprised 30 items. However, after further analysis Gibson and Dembo (1984) found that only 16 of these items had adequate reliabilities. Although the 30 item questionnaire was utilised for this study, only the sixteen (16) items highlighted by Gibson and Dembo (1984) as having adequate reliabilities

“When the grades of my students improve it is usually because I found better teaching strategies”

were subjected to data analyses. The scale consisted of two factors: factor 1 Personal Teaching Efficacy and factor 2 Teaching Efficacy. It is scored using a Likert scale format, each respondent selected a number which corresponded to his/her level of agreement (1=strongly disagree, 6 = strongly agree) with the particular item. Of the sixteen items comprising this scale nine (9) of these items measured Personal Teaching Efficacy, that is, a teacher’s belief that their abilities and skills are important factors in bringing about learning outcomes (Woolfolk & Hoy, 1994). Examples of items on this scale include: “When the grades of my students improve it is usually because I found better teaching strategies” The remaining seven items measured Teaching Efficacy, which is a teacher’s belief that external factors such as family background and parental support are the most powerful influences on student outcomes, for example, “The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background.”

Scores on the Personal Teaching Efficacy scale can range from 9-54. High scores on this scale are indicative of teachers who are highly

efficacious. More specifically, persons who obtain high scores on this scale have a strong believe in their ability to influence student learning. Conversely high scores on the Teaching Efficacy Scale are indicative of low levels of teaching efficacy; scores on this scale can range from 7-42. Thus persons who score high believe that external factors are the most powerful influence on student learning. Gibson and Dembo (1984) reported acceptable reliability coefficients for each of these two factors. The following reliability coefficients were reported by Gibson and Dembo (1984) for each scale, for factor 1 (Personal Efficacy) .78; for factor 2 (Teaching Efficacy) .75 and .79 for the total items on the Teacher Efficacy Scale.

Quantitative approaches were also used to investigate the existence or efficiency of transition education at Irving Wilson and Ann Hill Schools.

► **Transition and Planning Taxonomy**

Kohler’s (1996) Taxonomy for Transition Planning- a comprehensive, conceptual organization of practices through which transition-focused education and services are developed, delivered and evaluated was used to guide this area of inquiry. This taxonomy is reported to have emerged from several investigations that reviewed research literature (Kohler, 1993), evaluation studies (Kohler, DeStefano, Wermuth, Grayson, & McGinty, 1994), and model transition project outcomes (Rusch, Kohler, & Hughes, 1992). Through a three-phased research process, effective practices emerging from these studies were synthesized and organized into five categories: (a) student-focused planning, (b) student development, (c) interagency collaboration, (d) family involvement, and (e) program structure and attributes (Kohler, 1996). The practices included in the model were evaluated using criteria proposed by Peters and Heron (1993) to determine “best practices”

Qualitative Approaches

Qualitative approaches were used to investigate the substantive areas of the study i.e. special education policy and quality assurance practices, teaching and learning and the environment at the four schools under investigation. The research strategy that was employed is a multiple case study of special education programmes at Case site 1, 2, 3, and 4. Case studies are utilized when researchers wish to understand phenomenon at the process level, and compliments quantitative research which paints a broad picture of what is going on at the surface level in schools.

We want to recognize that schools represent an embedded context, that is, schools are a part of the communities they are in and this can have either a direct or indirect influence on teachers and students in the classroom. In addition to this, schools are organized in a hierarchical fashion with principals, senior teachers and coordinators of special education influencing what teachers do in their classrooms. To add to this complexity, schools also come under the ambit of the Ministry of Education and their policies help to shape everything from curriculum to pedagogies used by teachers to teach children in the classroom. Another variable to consider is that what happens in and at school is also of interest to parents and their views are also critical to understanding whether schools are accomplishing their goals of educating students with special education needs. These various factors exert a bidirectional influence on what children are able to accomplish and therefore in order for the researchers to investigate the multiple layers and influences that exist at these institutions, it was necessary to employ a research strategy that could help us understand how schools in the study operated and what factors influenced the delivery of special education in these settings.

“In order to triangulate data collection methods, video recording of lessons were also incorporated into the study”

Data Collection Approaches

A combination of systematic and narrative observations, interviews and open ended questionnaires and focus groups were used to gather data in the study and document the perspectives of teachers, parents, principals, Ministry of Education officials and other stakeholder perspectives in the study.

► *Observations*

To investigate the section on teaching and learning both systematic and narrative observations were used to capture teaching and learning events at the four case sites. In order to triangulate data collection methods, video recording of lessons were also incorporated into the study. This provided opportunities to accurately document what teachers did in their classrooms, assist teachers and researchers in the interview process and reduce any researcher bias which could influence findings in the study. Another approach to triangulation was the use of systematic observation schedules which were developed by the research team entitled the Researchers' Classroom Assessment Instrument, teachers were also provided with a feedback sheet which was used to document their reflections on their lessons and compare findings with those of the researchers.

► *Procedures used during observations*

The research team made a request to schools in writing and collected timetables and curriculum documents from schools in December of 2010.

Timetables outlined teachers' assigned classes, subject areas being taught and times classes were scheduled at the four case sites. Curriculum documents outlined themes and topics to be taught for the school term and highlighted their interrelationships. This data was circulated to all team members and a schedule or timetable was organized for three team members conducting research in the area of teaching, learning and curriculum. The timetable was also used to plan concurrent activities undertaken by other team members who were careful not to overlap these activities with days slated for classroom observations.

“sessions were usually one to one with teachers and researchers engaging in a dialogue about classroom teaching and learning”

The school term officially commenced on January 04th 2011, and data collection at the four case sites commenced on January 17th 2011. A time schedule was devised on a rotated basis (two - three days a week) so that teaching at all four institutions could be seen on a weekly basis. The duration of this first wave of data collection was 6 weeks in total with observations and post-observation interviews being conducted across a number of content domains like Language Arts (inclusive of oral language lessons), Mathematics, Social Studies and Science. Observations were videoed and DVDs supplied to teachers who were seen so that post-observation interviews could be conducted. We also undertook an intensive observation period in February (4 days) at the Irving Wilson School to further understand how that institution operates on a daily basis.

In addition to academic areas, observations of the non-academic aspects

of schooling i.e. the social aspects of children's experiences were undertaken; some attention was paid for example to activities like the celebration of African Heritage by Ann Hill School, Carol Service at Christmas and Special Olympics for the Special Needs schools. Many of these 'non-formal, non-academic, non-classroom activities' gave good insight into relationships among teachers and students and, in some cases, assisted with understanding the nature of relationships between teachers and students.

► **Interviews**

A semi-structured interview post observation guide was developed to excavate teachers' opinions of and reflections on their lessons. These sessions were usually one to one with teachers and researchers engaging in a dialogue about classroom teaching and learning. Where possible, interviews were conducted as soon as possible after observations were conducted. However when this was not convenient for teachers or team members, suitable times for viewing the DVD and conducting the interviews were negotiated.

► **Procedures for interviews**

Interviews with teachers were held in their classrooms at times designated as non teaching periods. Teachers were provided with a copy of DVDs of observed sessions and asked to view and provide a commentary on what was done during the lesson. Researchers walked with a copy of the relevant DVD for the session observed in case copies given to teachers were faulty, all laptops for viewing were provided by teachers. An interview guide entitled the Special Education Research Project Post Observation Interview Guide was designed to help guide the researchers' conversations with teachers. This guide was semi-structured and allowed for other pertinent topics to be covered outside of those specified in the interview guide. The interview guide was divided into three main sections: the first on

teacher's objectives for their lessons. Items in this section included 1) What did you want students to learn 2) What determined your use of strategy for the lesson. The second section of the guide was on teacher's assessment of student responses to the lesson. Items in this section included 1) what response did the children give which suggested that they understood the content of the lesson? 2) How easy is it for you to communicate ideas to the children in the classroom? Section 3 of the guide examined adaptations or modifications made to or needed for the lesson. Items on this section included 1) are there any other strategies that you could use to convey ideas in the lesson? 2) What kinds of resources would have made teaching easier? Interviews were also held with the four (4) principals at the 4 case sites to ascertain their views about issues associated with quality assurance and special education policy and practices across the four case sites. These were usually face to face and in-depth.

► *Learning styles*

Teachers were interviewed and their assistance requested to provide an insight into the learning styles of students from their perspective.

Schmeck, Ribich, & Ramanaih (1977) developed the Inventory of Learning Processes (ILP), a learning style instrument which unlike traditional personality, attitudinal, and cognitive style inventories that measured outside classroom settings, the ILP, according to Schmeck et al (1977), Schmeck (1982), and Lockhart & Schmeck (1983) is based on behavioural-process orientation and used to study actual classroom behaviours. This inventory would be used to guide questions asked of teachers during interview sessions.

► *Qualitative Open-Ended Questionnaires*

A lengthy open-ended qualitative questionnaire was designed for teachers across the 4 case sites based on Booth, Ainscow and Vaughan (2002) Index for Inclusion Framework to investigate

teacher's perspectives on the quality of the environment. Questions were organized into five sections which examined: teachers' philosophy, their opinions of the school environment and its location, the nature of relationships between teachers their principals, students and parents, school culture and classroom environment set for learning. An example of items asked in the questionnaire were 1) what beliefs guide your practice with respect to teaching and interacting with students with special needs? In your opinion is the layout of the school and classroom adequate for catering to the needs of students? How would you describe the nature of the relationship between staff in the special unit or classroom?

► *Procedures used to distribute questionnaires*

Questionnaires were organized into packages with sealed envelopes and distributed to teachers in units and schools.

A letter was prepared which asked teachers to reflect on the questions asked and then provide as truthful a response as possible. Teachers were told that all responses would remain confidential and would not be shared with colleagues. They were also asked to place their names and name of the institution on the questionnaire should members of the UWI team have questions about responses to the items on the instrument. Once questionnaires were completed by teachers they could be placed in sealed envelopes and given to principals for collection.

► *Focus Groups*

Focus groups inquired into parents, teachers' and older pupils' perspectives on various aspects of the study.

The purpose of the focus groups were to get a greater insight into the issues and concerns that parents of special needs students are confronted with, both in the teaching-learning environment and the home environment. Three (3) focus groups

were held at three different schools that cater to special needs students, these were: The Special Education Unit of the All Saints Unit, the Special Education Unit of the St. Stephens Primary School and the Ann Hill Primary School. Efforts were made to organise a focus group meeting at the Irving Wilson Primary school but all attempts proved futile, due to the unwillingness of parents to participate in such an activity. Although each school catered to special education needs students, all three schools were different from each other in terms of school roll and how the special education needs programme was designed and implemented. At the All Saints Primary, the Special Education needs department is a unit within the main stream. At the St. Stephens Primary School the model utilised is one of inclusion, where students who are in the unit are also a part of the mainstream; students float from the unit to the mainstream and vice versa depending on their educational needs. Ann Hill is a primary school and caters specifically for special needs education students. An interview protocol was used to guide the questions asked in the focus group.

This approach was also used to gather the perspectives of teachers and students on various issues ranging from special education needs policy, curriculum and teacher practices. It was also used to elicit the views of students who were eligible for an evaluation of the current transition and planning practices at schools with a secondary school aged population.

► *Focus group participants*

1. Parents

The group composition at All Saints was the research team and 11 parents comprising 7 females and 4 males. At St. Stephens, the focus group comprised both teachers and parents 3 and 13 respectively. The Ann Hill's focus group was also made

up of teachers and parents as well; there were 20 participants in attendance 16 females and 4 males. The participants welcomed the opportunity to dialogue on issues and used the opportunity to offer suggestions as well. The three groups were very open and shared freely

2. Teachers

The teachers were interviewed either individually or in groups of 2 or more. The largest grouping was a focus group of 10 teachers at the Ann Hill School. Where possible, interview data were corroborated with other data (e.g. teachers' instructional plans, school records).

Data Analysis

Data for the quantitative sections were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Scientist (SPSS). Descriptive statistics in particular Means and Standard Deviations are used to describe trends within and between teachers at the four case sites.

Qualitative Data on the other hand were analysed using data reduction techniques similar to those suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). First level coding or descriptive codes were assigned to words, paragraphs or sentences and then gathered at upper level codes called inferential codes used to signify themes in the data. Microsoft Word was used by some team members to cut and paste relevant codes into thematic frameworks and then displayed in Meta Matrices. The section on teaching and learning benefited from the use of NVIVO software which assisted the researchers working in this area to manage the numerous kinds of data collected i.e. interview transcripts, observation notes and some video evidence. Data aggregation was therefore easily facilitated so that themes were easily distilled from descriptive codes.

Ethical Issues in the Study

According to the American Psychological Society and the British Education Research Association an important principle which all social science researchers must subscribe to is 'do no harm'. In an effort to ensure that this guideline was met an application was made to the University of the West Indies Institution Review Board, in May 2011 for approval to conduct the research in schools. The present study commenced in September 2010 and approval was received on the 17th December 2011, before data collection began in January 2011.

An important feature of this research was the use of video to collect data on what teachers do and their interaction with students across the four schools. This kind of approach to data collection is intrusive and required the permission or consent of teachers, children and parents in order for researchers to proceed with this aspect of the study. The issue of informed consent was a key component focused on in the study and researchers ensured that all vulnerable participants i.e. students with disabilities were given consent forms to take home to parents and guardians. Informed consent forms were also prepared for principals, teachers and parents of students with disabilities in the study. As part of our recruitment of participants in the study, a brochure was prepared to highlight the nature of the study, its goals and the aims of the research. These were then packaged for parents and teachers and distributed across the four schools prior to the Christmas break in December 2010.

We also recognize that confidentiality is another important issue when researchers work with vulnerable populations.

Participants in the study were therefore assured that their identities would not be revealed especially since video and interviewing figured prominently in the study. They were also told that pseudonyms would be used to report what was said in the context of interviews.

Limitations

1. A case study strategy has been utilised so that findings are not generalisable to other settings outside of those used in this study
2. Younger pupils' perspectives are not represented in this study and therefore the report relies heavily on what adults said about pupils. Another important factor which militated against the inclusion of pupil voice was the nature of their impairments and lack of parental consent.
3. Parental consent for students to participate in the study was not secured until the end of the data collection period in April 2011. Only one parent consent form had been returned to the team up until the middle of February from a pupil at the Irving Wilson school.
4. Observers sampled some classroom settings and therefore results reflect findings for those lessons observed and should be viewed as informative and for description only.
5. The study of transition and planning was limited to two Government owned schools providing educational services to children with special education needs. It cannot be assumed that the findings apply to privately owned secondary schools providing educational services to children with special education needs.
6. Seven (7) of the nine (9) Informal Transition Inventories left to be completed by staff the Ann Hill School were incomplete/unreturned. The small sample size (two students) does not allow a representative sample for all students enrolled at the Ann Hill School who were nearing their graduation from the institution.
7. Because of unavailability of school personnel, and conflicting schedules, only two (2) teachers (one from each institution) were assessed on their knowledge of key transition related processes. The small sample size (two teachers) does not allow a representative sample for all teachers at the Ann Hill School and Irving Wilson Schools.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS THAT GUIDED THIS EVALUATION WERE SUBDIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS AND THESE ARE INDICATED BELOW.

1

Policy and Quality Assurance

1. What bodies or whose jurisdictions drive the design of policy for the special education sector in Barbados?
2. What policies, philosophies, standards and frameworks (legislative) guide the development of special education in Barbados?
3. What educational services are available to assist students and parents of students with special education needs in Barbados?
4. What career development and transition services are available to assist students with special education needs at the post secondary school level?
5. What are the qualifications of the professionals who work with students with special education needs?
6. What types of staff development activities are available to staff, teachers and professionals working in the field of special education?
7. What levels of certification do students with special education needs obtain within segregated and inclusive settings?
8. What role does the Ministry of Education play in ensuring that institutions and settings provide quality education for students with special education needs?
9. What role(s) do parents play in assuring that educational settings provide quality service for students with special education needs?
10. What standards do inclusive, segregated and annex setting seek to maintain in order to ensure that they are providing quality educational and socio-emotional experiences for students with special education needs?

Teaching and Learning

1. What curricular options, assessment and intervention strategies are utilized in inclusive, segregated and annexed settings
2. What pedagogical and intervention strategies are utilized within inclusive, segregated and annexed settings
3. What approaches are taken by teachers to assist them with adapting and modifying the curriculum for instructional purposes in segregated and annexed settings?
4. What are the learning styles and strategies of students with special education needs in inclusive, segregated and annexed settings?
5. How do students with special education needs view themselves and pedagogies used by teachers in inclusive, segregated and annexed settings?
6. What are student's achievement levels across basic skill areas within inclusive, segregated and annexed settings?
7. What factors influence the achievement of students with special needs in inclusive, segregated and annexed settings?
8. What kinds of adaptive, assistive and augmentative and alternative devices are present in inclusive, segregated and annexed settings?
9. How do teachers and students in inclusive, segregated and annex settings utilise assistive, adaptive and augmentative devices during instruction and classroom interaction?

The Setting/School Environment

1. What are the philosophies of the staff regarding educating students with special education needs?
2. In what kind of location, physical infrastructure and environments are schools and settings for students with special education needs?
3. What is the nature of the relationship between management and staff within settings that provide services and educational options for students with special education needs?
4. What kind of classroom environment, climate and school culture is set for learning within settings for students with special education needs?
5. What are the perceptions of students, parents, teachers, management and care-givers of the school plant, environment and location of special and inclusive settings?
6. What is the nature of the relationship between staff, parents and students with special education needs within the various settings that cater to students with special education needs?

FINDINGS FROM QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Teachers received a demographic survey instrument which collected descriptive information related to teacher experience, training, use of IEPs and the kinds of resources available to teachers at each of the institutions under study. The findings from this section are presented in the tables below. Only those teachers working in the special education units and schools associated with the study were sampled. The number of teachers surveyed was 33 but only 25 responded, this represents a response rate of 75%. Table 6 suggests that most of the teachers at All Saints School were beginning teachers with just about 10 years experience, only one teacher reported having between 31-35 years experience. At Irving Wilson, Ann Hill and St. Stephens

the staff complement comprised both novice and experienced teachers.

Table 6: Years of Teachers’ Special Needs Education Teaching Experience by School

Years of Teaching Experience								
School	≤ 5	6-10	11-15	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	Total
All Saints	0	3	1	0	0	1	0	5
Irving Wilson	2	0	2	1	0	1	1	7
Ann Hill	3	1	1	2	0	1	0	8
St. Stephens	0	1	1	1	2	0	0	5
Total	5	5	5	4	2	3	1	25

Special Needs Education is a very important component of the educational system in Barbados. Thus it requires both effective and efficient use of Individualized Education Plans, resources and technology to help facilitate the development of students. Therefore the purpose of this component of this research was to investigate: (1) the use of IEPs to guide instruction (2) the availability of resources and technology at each school and (3) the availability of assistive technology to guide the education of students in special needs settings.

Use of IEPs to Guide Education Planning

Table 7 presents findings from the schools on the use of IEPs. There were three (3) non-responses from Irving Wilson, one (1) non-response from Ann

Hill and two (2) from St. Stephens. The report shows that all the teachers at the All-Saints primary unit made strong use of IEPs to guide the teaching of children with disabilities. Contrastingly, however, all four of the respondents from Irving Wilson indicated that they did not use IEPs; six (6) of the seven respondents from Ann-Hill reported that they did not use IEPs and all three of the respondents from the St. Stephens Special Education Unit indicated that they did not use IEPs.

Table 7: Teachers’ Reported Use of IEPs to Guide Educational Planning by School

School	Use IEPs	Do Not Use IEPs	Total
All Saints	5	0	5
Irving Wilson	0	4	4
Ann Hill	1	6	7
St. Stephens	0	3	3
Total	6	13	19

Resources and Technology

When asked if resources were readily available to aid in the teaching process of the sample of 25 teachers, fourteen (14) reported that they have resources readily available (9) of these teachers indicated that they did not have any resources available and there were 2 non responses to this item. Responses are illustrated in Table 8. When one looks at the breakdown of resources available among the four schools, Table 8 indicates that All Saints Primary Special Needs Education teachers all reported having resources readily available, followed closely by Irving Wilson, St. Stephens and Ann Hill. However, the majority of Ann Hill teachers reported that resources were not readily available.

► All Saints Special Education Unit

The five (5) teachers from this school reported having access to financial resources, charts, videos, audio tapes, computer, flash-cards, text books, photo-copiers, television, radios, internet, laptops, digital camera, projector and sports equipment, VCRs, teaching aids and manipulatives.

► Irving Wilson

These teachers that indicated that resources were available listed, internet access, inclusion resources, books, games, sign language, tapes and CDs, computers, DVD players, educational DVDs, multimedia projector, television, digital camera, camcorder, software in Mathematics and Science, as the resources that they have available.

► Ann Hill

Teachers that reported resources were available from this school listed plastic canvas, rattan, wool and all natural fibres as the resources they have available

► St. Stephen's Special Education Unit

Teachers at this school identified Smart boards, puzzles, manipulators (games) and computer technology as the resources available.

Access to Assistive Technology

Table 9 shows the responses of teachers at each school to the question. Do you have access to assistive technology? Twenty-one (21) teachers of a total sample of twenty-five (25) responded to this question. Fifteen (15) of these respondents indicated that they have access to assistive technologies at their school. Four (4) of the teachers from Ann Hill stated that they did not have access to assistive technology.

Table 8: Availability of Resources by School

School	Resources		
	Readily Available	Not Readily Available	Total
All Saints	5	0	5
Irving Wilson	4	1	5
Ann Hill	2	6	8
St. Stephens	3	2	5
Total	14	9	23

Types of Assistive Technology Available by School

► All Saints Special Education Unit

Teachers from this school listed a laptop, projector, radio, video, television, DVD player, radio and television as the assistive technology that they have available.

► Irving Wilson

Special Needs teachers from Irving Wilson, listed Braille keyboards, embosser, tactile image enhancer, jaws, Ducbury, computer, projector and digital camera as the assistive technology they have available. Many of these are either obsolete or not working.

► Ann Hill

At Ann Hill the Special Needs teachers reported having laptops as the only assistive technology available.

► St. Stephens

At this school the Special Needs teachers reported having Smart boards and computers as the only assistive technology available.

In order to assess the quality of the education environment that teachers are in the researchers thought it was important to investigate variables identified in the literature which exert a direct influence on what teachers do in the classroom. We focused on two of the more problematic areas in special education that of Teacher Efficacy and Teacher Stress and sought to build a psychological profile of teachers at the schools under study. We also extend our psychological evaluation to older students in the study to investigate how well the teaching and learning environment prepared them for the world of work in the area of transition education.

Table 9: Access to Assistive Technology by School

School	Assistive Technology			
	Access Available	No Access Available	Missing Responses	Total
All Saints	4	0	1	5
Irving Wilson	5	0	2	7
Ann Hill	3	4	1	8
St. Stephens	3	2	0	5
Total	15	6	4	25

TEACHER EFFICACY

Table 10 presents scores on the Teaching Efficacy Scales of Personal Efficacy and Teaching Efficacy. This table provides the means and standard deviations for Special Needs teachers on the Teacher Efficacy Scale. Scores on the Personal Teaching Efficacy scale ranged from 22-52. The mean score for Personal Teaching Efficacy was (M= 36.3) which was indicative of a high level of Personal Teaching efficacy. On the other hand, scores on the Teaching Efficacy Scale ranged from 16-36. The mean score on this scale was (M=27.9) which suggests that the special needs teachers in this sample had low levels of teaching efficacy.

Data was disaggregated to inquire into teachers' efficacy levels across the 4 Case Sites, and the results can be found in Table 11.

When the data were analyzed by school, results showed that at the

Irving Wilson school teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teacher efficacy. At Ann Hill, teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching efficacy. Teachers from the All Saints Special Unit reported high level of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching Efficacy. At the St. Stephens Special Education Unit, teachers reported high levels of personal teaching efficacy and low levels of teaching efficacy.

Teacher Stress

An item analysis was conducted on the variable teacher stress and the findings are reported in a table in Appendix E. Results suggest that items which achieved a mean rating higher than 3.00 are item (5) related to Role Ambiguity. Item (6) related to Task/Environmental factors associated with teaching. Item (7) related to Job Satisfaction. Items (25) and (26) related to Role Stress. Least stress as indicated by mean ratings of less than 2.00 was generated by Item (23) which tapped into personal factors.

Summary of Findings for Teacher Stress and Efficacy

The overall results of this study indicate that the special needs teachers' responses varied depending on the particular item that they responded too. That is, on some items teachers reported higher levels of stress and higher levels of efficacy and vice-versa. Nonetheless in analysing the results special attention was paid to the items that were indicative of extremely high levels and extremely low levels of stress and teacher efficacy.

Table 10: Teachers' Scores on Personal and Teaching Efficacy

Efficacy Scale	N	Mean	SD
Personal Efficacy	23	36.3478	6.18362
Teaching Efficacy	23	27.8696	5.56208

Table 11: Teachers' Scores on Personal and Teaching Efficacy by School

School	Personal Efficacy		Teacher Efficacy	
	M	SD	M	SD
Case Site 1	35.40	5.02	26.40	3.43
Case Site 2	37.50	3.66	29.62	4.40
Case Site 3	36.40	1.94	30.40	4.82
Case Site 4	35.40	12.36	24.00	8.09

The results on the teacher stress component indicate that teachers reported experiencing the most stress in areas of Job Satisfaction, Role Ambiguity and Task/Environment and Role Stress.

These findings are consistent with other research internationally. High levels of stress related to job satisfaction among special needs educators was also reported by Fimian (1983) and Fimian and Santoro (1983).

The fact that teachers reported experiencing high levels of job dissatisfaction can be explained in light of the fact that there is a lack of human resources within the region.

Hence teachers might believe that they have to undertake a heavier workload. This could prove somewhat burdensome and lead to physical and emotional fatigue, which could then lead to stress. This result is also indicative of the fact that teachers believe that they are expected to do too much. This suggests that special education teachers might not necessarily be getting the extra support from outside stakeholders to aid them in executing their job as effectively and efficiently as possible. More specifically, this experience of job-related stress could be due to the fact that special needs educators in the chosen sample do not perceive parents and the Ministry of Education to be giving them the required support to assist them in carrying out their daily tasks.

Also of interest in the findings was the fact that teachers reported experiencing high levels of stress in terms of knowing what they are expected to do.

This was captured in the high rating on Item 5 used to measure Role Ambiguity. This result is consistent with research findings of Crane and Iwanicki (1986) which found Role Ambiguity to be one of the major contributing factors in relation to teacher stress in Special Needs Education teachers. In fact, the researchers found that Role Ambiguity explained a significant amount of variance in emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation. These findings indicate that special needs educators among

the chosen sample are not clear in what they are expected to do. This could be due to the fact that special needs educators are often required to execute a variety of tasks that they might not perceive to be related to what should be required of them. Hence, their view of their precise role as a teacher seems ambiguous. This finding could also possibly explain why this group reported experiencing role stress because of the extra work they have to do and the time frame that they have to complete these tasks. These research findings are consistent with the findings of Morvant et al (1995), who found that special needs educators reported that paperwork and the time allotted to complete such tasks was too limited. This finding may be due to the fact that special needs educators often have to give detailed documented progress of students in the form of IEPs. Additionally, they also have to maintain reports for parents and other educational stakeholders of the student's progress at school. These reports must be very detailed and hence may be very time consuming.

On the variable Teacher Efficacy teachers reported high levels of Personal Teaching Efficacy and low levels of Teaching Efficacy.

When the data was analyzed by school a similar trend was detected, with teachers from the Ann-Hill School reporting the highest level of personal teaching efficacy and teachers from the All Saints Special Needs Unit reporting the lowest level of teaching efficacy. The overall results indicate that these special needs teachers are confident in their abilities and skills to bring about student learning. However, they still believe that external factors have a powerful influence on students' learning outcomes (teaching efficacy). These findings highlight the need for special needs teachers to engage in a collaborative relationship with parents and students to give them an insight into how they could work together so that these external factors would facilitate rather than impinge on the learning outcomes of special needs students.

TRANSITION AND PLANNING

'STUDENTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL READINESS FOR THE WORKING WORLD

This component of the project sought to investigate:

- The practices/provisions and services which are in place to assist in transition and planning for students with disabilities;
- The needs for transitional services;
- Students' psychological readiness for the world of work on completion of their schooling.

The Irving Wilson School

On the recommendation of the Principal of the Irving Wilson School, a sample of five (5) students of the Living Skills group was selected for Transition Assessment in order to determine their psychological readiness for the world of work.

The assessment was guided by the following domains:

- Post-secondary education
- Vocational training
- Integrated employment (including supported employment)
- Continuing and adult education
- Adult services
- Independent living [daily living,

leisure activities, health, self-determination, communication, interpersonal relationships]

- Community participation (IDEA, Section 300.18)

Four of these five students completed the assessment activity, and it was found that 75% of the sample exhibited high competency levels in the specified domains, and can be classified as psychologically prepared for the world of work. Domains of

strength included independent living with particularly high performance in such sub-domains as daily living skills, health and self-determination. Areas of weakness were revealed in the communication sub-domain, which assessed whether students have the needed speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. 100% of the sample scored poorly in this section. When an examination of the overall means (see table 12) for each domain is done, the students of the Irving Wilson School seem strongest overall in the domain for leisure activities. This was recorded at a mean of 5.00. The domain employment also received a relatively high mean of 4.80 placing it second in the domains for the Irving Wilson School. Self determination ranked third overall with a means of 4.70, while health received a mean score of 4.50 overall, and interpersonal relationships, 4.40. The lowest mean overall for this school was 2.75 in the area of communication. The domain for daily living skills received a mean of 3.70 overall, while further education received mean of 3.38. Community participation ranked sixth overall with a mean of 4.12.

Domain	Irving Wilson School						Ann Hill				Domain Mean			
	Student 1		Student 2		Student 3		Student 4		Student 5		Student 6		Irving	Ann
	SCH	STUD	SCH	STUD	SCH	STUD	SCH	STUD	SCH	STUD	SCH	STUD		
Employment	5.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.8	5.0	1.0	2.5	3.2	2.0	4.80	2.17
Further Ed	2.2	2.2	4.0	4.0	4.3	3.3	5.0	5.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	3.0	3.38	1.00
		(2.2)		(4.0)		(3.8)		(5.0)		(0.5)		(1.5)		
Daily Living	3.5	3.3	5.0	5.0	2.2	2.2	4.2	4.2	2.7	1.0	3.8	2.2	3.70	2.42
		(3.3)		(5.0)		(2.2)		(4.2)		(1.9)		(3.0)		
Leisure	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	3.5	2.0	0.5	5.00	1.50
Activities		(5.0)		(5.0)		(5.0)		(5.0)		(1.7)		(1.3)		
Community	4.2	4.2	3.3	3.3	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	1.8	1.2	3.2	4.12	1.55
Participation		(4.2)		(3.3)		(4.0)		(5.0)		(0.9)		(2.2)		
Health		5.0	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	0.8	2.2	3.3	5.0	4.58	2.83
	5.0	(5.0)			(4.3)		(4.0)	(5.0)			(1.5)	(4.1)		
Self-	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	0.4	2.2	3.0	3.8	4.75	2.35
Determination		(4.0)		(5.0)		(5.0)		(5.0)		(1.3)		(3.4)		
Communication		4.5	1.0	1.0	2.5	2.5	3.0	3.0	1.5	1.5	2.2	3.2	2.75	2.10
	4.5	(4.5)		(1.0)		(2.5)		(3.0)		(1.5)	(2.7)			
Interpersonal	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	3.3	3.3	5.0	5.0	3.0	4.6	4.0	3.7	4.40	3.85
Relationships		(4.7)		(4.6)		(3.3)		(5.0)		(3.8)		(3.8)		
Mean			4.08	4.02	3.92	3.81	4.55	4.68	1.04	2.25	2.25	2.95		
Overall	4.23	4.21												
Mean of Means		4.22		4.05		3.86		4.65		2.00		2.60	4.16	2.19

The Ann Hill School

On the recommendation of the guidance counsellor of the Ann Hill, a sample of nine (9) students scheduled to graduate in June 2011 was selected for Transition Assessment in order to determine their psychological readiness for the world of work.

The assessment was guided by the same domains as for the Irving Wilson Sample. Two (2) of these nine (9) students completed the assessment activity, and it was found that (1) student exhibited moderate competency levels across the specified domains, and can be classified as psychologically prepared for the world of work. Domains of strength included independent living with particularly high performance in such sub-domains as daily living skills, health and self-determination. Areas of weakness were revealed in the further education and communication sub-domains, which assessed whether students have the needed speaking, listening, reading and writing skills, and whether they could gain entry to and succeed in a post secondary programme. 100% of the sample scored poorly in this section.

Table 12 presents the Means on the domains for the Ann Hill School.

The highest mean for the domains

overall was in the area of interpersonal relationships (3.85). The health domain ranked second with a mean of 2.83 and the daily living ranked third with a mean of 2.42. Except in the case of health and interpersonal relationships, the overall means on the domains fell below the expected mean of 2.50.

Pupils' perspectives at the two institutions were also investigated to assess their views about their readiness to enter the world of work and their future trajectories. Findings are recorded in a series of Meta Matrices across the two Case Sites.

Student Interview

The Student Interview was designed to investigate the pupils' perspectives of their abilities in nine (9) domains-employment, further education training, daily living, leisure activities, community participation, health, self-determination, communication and inter-personal relationships.

The employment domain (Table 13) investigated students' perspectives on their ability to make informed choices about employment, their knowledge of job requirements and their general job skills and attitude. Students reportedly feel confident in this domain. Many are involved in apprenticeship/ internship activities with experts who work in their selected careers.

Table 13: Employment Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Most students have selected career preferences, and have successfully begun internship/ apprenticeship activities with various experts in their selected fields.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I have an aunt who works in a hotel overseas. She and I talk a lot about the job and it is something I am very interested in. I know how to make beds, clean the house and wash dishes. I know about how to use cleaners properly <i>[disinfectants]</i> . <i>I also know that it is hard work. [IW Student 1- housekeeping]</i>
One of my family members is a farmer and I work with him sometimes. I really like that job. I am also good at dealing with money and would like to be a cashier at one of the supermarkets. I know how to get both of these jobs. I know that I can lose my job if I get to work late all of the time. <i>[IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
I love doing hair and nails. I do my friends' hair, and also some family members. I'm always promising my teacher to do her hair. I already work at a salon in St. George, where I mostly do nails. My boss says that I paint nails very well. I am paid \$100 a week. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I work with my uncle fixing refrigerators. I really like the job. Things I do on the job include, fixing, screwing, hammering, and using a torch. I also do some carpentry work sometimes. I know how to get a job. I would need to write an application letter and go to an interview. I know how to behave during an interview. <i>[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
Student 6 has some of the skills needed to be a housekeeper. She can make beds very well and does a good job when asked to wash the dishes. The 'Work-to-School' programme has helped her a lot. <i>[AH Student 6-Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

The further education training domain (Table 14) investigated students' perspectives on their ability to gain entry into an institution of higher education such as a college, university of community education programme.

They were also asked to indicate whether or not they believed that they would succeed in such a programme.

Students generally do not have a comprehensive understanding about the steps needed to pursue further education training in their selected occupation. One respondent identified Skills Training as a potential option. All students are confident that they would succeed in a post-secondary institution if they were given the opportunity.

Table 14: Further Education Training Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Students generally do not have a comprehensive understanding about the steps needed to pursue further education training in their selected occupation.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I'm not too sure about where I can go to learn about housekeeping, but I'd like to learn. [IW Student 1- housekeeping]
I am not too sure how to get into a school that can teach me about farming and cash- iering. If I was to get into one, I think that I would do a good job. [IW Student 2- farming/ cashiering]
I'm not too sure about where I can go to learn about doing nails. I think I would do really well in a nails course. [IW Student 3- Aesthetics]
When I leave Irving Wilson, I know that I will have a school leaving certificate. This will help me to get into Skills Training. I hope the instructors know sign language there. [IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]
She will need support in this area. Right now I do not believe that she knows how to get into an institution for training purposes. [AH Student 6 - Housekeeping/Basketry]

The daily living domain (Table 15) required students to give their perspectives on their personal hygiene and grooming practices, money management skills, use of transportation and their ability to 'set-up' a living arrangement. Students generally indicated very good grooming and hygiene

practices. Students believed that they can manage their own money, and many informed that they belonged to established financial institutions. Using public transportation was not identified as a challenge for most respondents. One student indicated that she has never used public transportation.

Table 15: Daily Living Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Generally a domain of strength for most students. Students can manage their own money, and maintain good hygiene practices.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I am very good at keeping myself clean and tidy. I love to dress up. I help out at home with cleaning and ironing. I use the bus on my own and I belong to a bank. I manage my allowance, and sometimes I save to buy fancy clothes so I can go out. I don't know how to find somewhere to live. <i>[IW Student 1- housekeeping]</i>
I am very good at keeping myself clean and tidy. I love to dress up. I get my hair cut regularly, and I usually have soap in my bag to wash my face. I help out at home with cleaning and ironing. I use the bus on my own and I belong to a bank. I manage my money, and I save to buy clothes so I can go out. To parties. I think that I would be able to find somewhere to live if I had to. One of my big problems is being late. I oversleep sometimes and end up missing school. My teacher said to set my blackberry on vibrate and to ask my brother to wake me, but he forgets to sometimes. <i>[IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
Press? Cook? I don't have to do any of that! My mother does everything for me. The most I will do is make up my bed sometimes. I want to learn how to drive. I have never caught the bus- because I don't have to. I am driven everywhere I need to go. I can manage my own money. I have a bank account and I save all of my money so that I can buy nail polish and brand name clothes. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I am very good at keeping myself clean and tidy. My mother is a hairdresser and she makes sure that my hair is neat and tidy. I use the bus sometimes, but my uncle usually takes me where I need to go. I belong to the bank and the credit union. I save the money that I work for on my jobs. It is usually about \$50. <i>[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
Student 6 loves dressing up. She saves her money in a piggy bank and uses some of it to buy clothing. She is very tidy. She can take the bus on her own. When there is a new route, I would travel with her on the bus to help orient her. <i>[AH Student 6 - Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

The leisure activities domain (Table 16) required students to inform on any extra-curricular activities they

might be involved in. These included self-defence, tennis, swimming, partying and going to church.

Table 16: Leisure Activities Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Varied indoor and outdoor leisure activities are undertaken by the students
STUDENT RESPONSES
I love outdoor activities. I play netball, and I love to swim. I also take self-defence classes. I love going on the Harbour Master to dance. <i>[IW Student 1- Housekeeping]</i>
I love outdoor activities. I play road tennis, cricket and I know all of the latest dances. I have a blackberry and I use it to chat with people in my spare time. <i>[gave researcher his pin]. [IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
I love outdoor activities. I play football and netball, and I also go to swimming. I have a face book account and an msn messenger account. I love using the computer. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I belong to **** Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. I like going to church. I know exactly where my church is located and I can get there on my own. <i>[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
She is not involved in leisure activities really . <i>[AH Student 6 Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

The community participation (Table 17) domain challenged respondents to consider their level of competency in such abilities as voting, locating community services

and obtaining financial assistance.

This was an area of weakness as most students indicated that they would need some parental/guardian support with these activities.

Table 17: Community Participation Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Community participation for respondents is heavily dependent on parental/guardian support.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I know some of my rights but I will need help in making legal decisions and locating community services and resources. <i>[IW Student 1- housekeeping]</i>
My social worker is helping me in this area. I can locate places such as the polyclinic and the pharmacy on my own. I had a bank card, but it got 'mashed up' so I need to get a new one. <i>[IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
I know some of my rights but I will need help in making legal decisions and locating community services and resources. I don't go to the polyclinic! I go to a private doctor. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I know some of my rights. My mother helps me with making legal decisions. I can locate community services and resources on my own. In fact, I went to the dentist yesterday. <i>[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
She knows about some of her rights but will need help from me in making legal decisions and locating community services and resources . <i>[AH Student 6-Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

The health domain (Table 18) required students to give their perspective on their ability to maintain good physical and mental health, address physical and mental problems, and make good choices regarding sexual behaviour.

Students generally reported that they

were in good health, and knew how to remain that way. Students seem to be making informed choices regarding sexual behaviour as one student reported the use of contraceptives while another has made the choice to abstain from sex until marriage.

Table 18: Health Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Generally good health maintained by all respondents.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I am in very good health. I take good care of myself. <i>[IW Student 1- housekeeping]</i>
My eye is a problem. I am supposed to have treatment in Canada but it is very expensive and my eye is getting worse. My social worker is helping me with this. I have a girlfriend, and I always carry a condom in my wallet. <i>[IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
I have a problem with my back- it is kind of hunched. It hurts a lot and I'm supposed to have surgery to fix it. This affects my self-esteem. I know about reproduction and sex- but I'm not doing those things until I get married. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I am in very good health. I take good care of myself. I do not have a girlfriend. I am single <i>[finger spelled single]. [IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
Student 6 is generally in very good health. She takes good care of myself. I talk to her all the time about boys. Her teachers also talk to her about these things. <i>.[AH Student 6 Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

The self-determination domain (Table 19) required students to give their perspective on their ability to recognize and accept their own strengths and limitations, make personal goals and

express feelings and ideas appropriately. Students report high levels of self-determination, and explained that they have an understanding of the limitations associated with their disabilities.

Table 19: Self-Determination Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Students report high levels of self-determination and an understanding of the limitations associated with their disabilities
STUDENT RESPONSES
I know that I have a hearing impairment, but I still want to be the best that I can be. [IW Student 1- housekeeping]
I know that I have a hearing impairment and a visual impairment , but I still want to be the best that I can be. [IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]
I know that I have a hearing impairment and a back problem. My mother helps me to believe I can be the best that I can be. One personal decision that I have made is that I want to get married. [IW Student 3- Aesthetics]
I know that I have a hearing impairment, but I still want to be the best that I can be .[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]
She knows about the limitations that come with her disability. I always encourage her to be the best that she can be. I am a little scared for her though.[AH Student 6 Housekeeping/ Basketry]

The communication domain (Table 20) required students to comment on their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. All students indicated

that these were areas of weakness for them. Some students made an appeal for further assistance in these areas.

Table 20: Communication Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Communication is a weak domain for all respondents. Basic literacy skills need to be developed and scaffolded.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I love writing but reading is sometimes hard. [IW Student 1- housekeeping]
I need some help in these areas, but my teacher always tells me that I have good handwriting. Whenever I find new words I bring them to her so she can teach me the sign for it. [IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]
I love writing but reading is sometimes hard. I need help with some of the bigger words. [IW Student 3- Aesthetics]
I love writing but reading is sometimes hard. I need help with the big words. My buddy ***** and I bring our new words to school for Mam/teacher to help us with sometimes. [IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]
She operates on the level of a 10/11 year old. She needs lots of support in this area. [AH Student 6 Housekeeping/Basketry]

The interpersonal relationships domain (Table 21) required that students give their perspectives on how well they relate with family and friends. This was a strong domain for most students. All revealed that they had many friends. Two students indicated that they used

modern technological tools [black berry messenger/facebook] to maintain contact with their friends. Interestingly, one respondent indicated that she preferred to associate with 'normal' [hearing] individuals, rather than individuals with hearing impairments.

Table 21: Interpersonal Relationships Domain: Identified Themes and Student Responses

IDENTIFIED THEMES
Generally good relationships maintained between respondents and family members and friends.
STUDENT RESPONSES
I get along well with my family members and I have a lot of friends. I know how to behave when I go out. <i>[IW Student 1- housekeeping]</i>
My teacher thinks that I should choose better friends. I don't always get along well with my family members and friends. I am a little shy and worried because of my eye. I have a bb <i>[black berry]</i> and I talk to my friend on it every day. <i>[IW Student 2- farming/cashiering]</i>
I don't always get along well with my family members and I have a lot of friends. I prefer 'normal' friends. I have a facebook account and an msn messenger account and I use these to communicate with my friends every day. <i>[IW Student 3- Aesthetics]</i>
I get along well with my family members. I sometimes take care of my 'grand-aunt' and my nephew. I have a lot of friends. I know how to behave when I go out. <i>[IW Student 4-Refrigeration technician/masonry]</i>
She gets along well with family members and friends. She is the only one with a special need, so the others tend to baby her. I always talk to her about how to behave when she goes out. <i>[AH Student 6 Housekeeping/Basketry]</i>

FINDINGS FROM QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

POLICY AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

This section of the report documents findings from qualitative research and is organised in two sections.

The first section will offer a general overview of areas related to the section on special education policy and quality assurance and curriculum inclusive of those for transition and planning. Section two will then present a case study of each institution on the teaching and learning context and the findings on the quality of the teaching and learning environment.

The status of a national policy on special education in Barbados is still in discussion. However there has been a draft policy in place for persons with disabilities for about the past decade. O'Toole (2000) reported that a draft policy on persons with disabilities was in place in Barbados around December 2000. Indeed the Green Paper on Persons with Disabilities was debated in Parliament in May, 2000. Through the work of the National Disabilities Unit, a White Paper on Persons with Disabilities was subsequently formulated (Ministry of Social Transformation, undated). While the White Paper addressed the holistic needs of persons with disabilities, there was specific reference to the education of such persons. The White Paper stated as one of its key principles "provision of access to education for all Persons with Disabilities at all educational levels, in an integrated setting whenever possible, with specialised facilities for those needing such facilities." (p. 8).

Participants' Knowledge of and Perceptions of Special Education Policy

A cohesive and comprehensive policy on special education would act as a blue print, a vision of goals to be achieved and ways to achieve those goals, for example through the consistent training of teachers in the area. On the other hand, a lack of policy could lead to inconsistencies in the provision of the same quality of education for all children. Good policy could ensure good quality of practice across schools, a cohesive (and legal) vision of the best ways to meet children's special needs.

All participants reported frustration with the lack of a national special needs policy. This frustration was best captured in the words of a veteran teacher, involved in teaching special needs students for over 3 decades:

"I think there is need for a comprehensive policy in special education which would include curriculum development, assessment of teachers, training of teachers; it should include the role of parent support, the role of the audiologist, the role of the paediatrician, the role of the teacher. When it comes to if they're going to do IEPs ... what should

be done with the children and who should develop them, who should supervise them, if there's a team... we have to start somewhere. If we are going to go anywhere we have to start somewhere and we must have a policy, a clear policy so that everybody who is involved knows what is what and where we are going. Otherwise everybody could be going this way, a person could be going that way... and I have a feeling right now that it's what's happening. "

Participants expressed little knowledge of even those documents on special needs policy that did exist.

When asked what policy documents on special education they were aware of and which of these were in their school, most of the teacher participants stated that they were not aware of any policy documents on special education. A few teachers stated that they had come across some documents but could not remember in the interview either the names of the documents or their contents. A few teachers recalled specific documents such as the White Paper on Education (1995) and a document that talked about writing Individualised education plans (IEPs). None of the teachers said that they were aware of or familiar with the Policy on Special Needs Education (2008). The quotations below represent a sample of participants' responses.

Researcher: Are you aware of a document called Policy on Special Needs Education in Barbados? It was written in 2008.

Principal 1 [teaching special needs students for more than 35 years]:

I heard about, I think it was said somewhere that teachers were taken from their different schools and their different units and they were meeting somewhere to formulate a policy.

Researcher: What special education documents do you have in the Unit?

Teacher 2 [teaching special needs students for 7 years]: *I'm trying to remember the name of the book... a large cream book... There's also an IEP booklet that we were given... I can't think of anything else off-hand.*

When Principals were asked about special needs policy documents they referred to the Barbados Teacher Education Act as their reference point for policy on education in general, including special education.

Some participants reported on failed attempts to create what could have become national policy documents. The principal at the Ann Hill School as well as a senior teacher there, made reference to the school's curriculum document which had been developed some years ago by a group of special educators, including themselves. They reported that the draft curriculum document was submitted to the Ministry of Education but that the document developers were never given feedback and they were unsure of the fate of the document. Similarly, a senior teacher at the Irving Wilson School recalled developing a plan for integrating technology into special education. This too was submitted to the Ministry of Education with no follow-through.

Factors that Affected the Quality of Curriculum and Instruction

Academic qualifications in special education as well as continuous professional development in this area could greatly impact the quality of curriculum and instruction in special needs schools. The qualifications of the participants in the study schools as well as their professional development experience will be reported in this section.

Qualifications of Participants in the Study Schools

Principals and Special Needs teachers in the 4 schools were asked to give their educational qualifications in face-to-face individual or focus group interviews. Where possible interview data on qualifications were corroborated with school records (however, only Ann Hill submitted teacher data although all schools were asked for these data). Participants were specifically asked to give any formal training whatsoever that was specific to special needs education. Qualification data are shown in Table 22 (by role) and 23 (by school) below.

From the table above it can be seen that only 2 of the 4 principals had specialized training in special education. The principals at the Ann Hill School and the Irving Wilson schools both reported masters from Mount Saint Vincent University, Nova Scotia, Canada.

The majority of teachers, 65% (22 of the 34 teachers interviewed), were trained graduate teachers. These teachers reported having a bachelors or masters degrees as well as teacher training. However, only 38% of the teachers reported qualifications in special education. The percentage of teachers reporting qualifications

in special education varied across the four schools. At the St. Stephens School both teachers reported qualifications in special education with the lead teacher (already with a masters in special education) pursuing an MPhil with concentration in special education. At the Irving Wilson School the majority of the teachers (60%) reported qualifications in the teaching of the deaf/hard of hearing or the blind/visually impaired with 1 teacher reporting a more general special

Table 22: Special Education Qualifications of Principals, n=4

School	Highest Qualification (* Special Education)
All Saints	BEd with Sociology and History
St. Stephens	BA Home Economics
Ann Hill	*MEd Curriculum & Inclusion
Irving Wilson	*MEd Psychology, Teaching of Deaf and Blind

Table 23: Professional Qualifications of Teachers, n=34

School (No. of Teachers)	Level of Qualification				
	Teacher Training plus Bachelors or Masters # (%)	Bachelors or Masters but NO Teacher Training # (%)	Teacher Training but NO Bachelors or Masters # (%)	Associates Degree or CXC but NO Teacher Training # (%)	Special Education Qualification # (%)
All Saints (5)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	0	1 (20%)	1 (20%)
St. Stephens (2)	2 (100%)	0	0	0	2 (100%)
Ann Hill (17)	10 (59%)	3 (18%)	1 (6%)	3 (18%)	4 (24%)
Irving Wilson (10)	7 (30 %)	0 (20 %)	2 (30%)	1 (10 %)	6 (60 %)
Total	22 (65%)	4 (12%)	3 (9%)	5 (15%)	13 (38%)

Note: Percentages may not sum to 100 due to rounding error

education qualification (BEd with concentration in special education). At the Ann Hill School, just under a quarter of the teachers (24%) reported qualifications in special education while at the All Saints school only one of the five teachers (20%) reported qualifications in special education.

It should be noted that the depth of training in special education varied across the 4 schools: 4 of the 6 teachers at the Irving Wilson School reported qualifications in special education at the masters level while the only teacher who reported special education qualification at the All Saints School reported a certificate in special education.

Professional Development Opportunities in Special Education

Principals and Special Needs teachers in the 4 schools were asked to individually record, on a given form, any special education professional development activities they had participated in. Attempts to corroborate these data were made in 2 ways. Firstly, in an interview with the Education Officer for Special Education, the officer was asked to recall professional development activities in Special needs education offered by the Ministry of Education over the time of her tenure

(the past 11 years). Secondly, a record of professional development (PD) activities in special needs education offered by the Ministry over the past decade as well as the names of teachers who had participated in these events was requested from the Ministry (by way of the Officer). However, it was not possible to easily obtain these data as records were paper-based, not electronic and therefore very time intensive to retrieve. Hence, the data reported here are dependent on the participants' memories. However, it should be noted that most participants referred to their resumes or consulted with their colleagues when they could not remember dates or duration.

A caveat here is that the duration of the PD experience reported, the total amount of time spent in professional development, is inflated as some participants did not indicate hours of PD as requested. For example, some participants reported that a PD session took 3 days but failed to indicate the number of hours per day. The decision was taken to report total PD time in terms of days with time indicated by participants taken at face value: 1 week was counted as 5 days; twice per week was counted as 2 days and so on. Hours reported were converted to days by dividing total hours by 8. That is, it was estimated that 8 hours represented 1 day.

Table 24: Special Education Professional Development Activities 2000-2011

(Principals, n=4)

School	PD content focus	Offered By	Total Time	Relevance (mode)
All Saints	None	NA	NA	NA
St. Stephens	None	NA	NA	NA
Ann Hill	TEACCH Autism Program	Univ. North Carolina	7 days	Very relevant
Irving Wilson	None since 2000	NA	NA	NA

Only professional development activities that took place from the year 2000 to the present and that were specific to special education were analysed.

Data were analysed according to the following: What were the types of PD reported by the participants (principal and teachers)? Who offered the PD? What was the total time spent in professional development? Did participants find the PD relevant to their needs? Data are shown by role (principal versus teacher) and by school in Tables 24 and 25.

In general, participants reported that the professional development (PD)

activities in which they participated were relevant or very relevant in meeting their needs. If this is taken as one indication of the quality of the PD, then it could be said that the study participants judged the quality of their PD to be good. Only the 2 teachers of the blind/visually impaired

at the Irving Wilson School noted that the professional development offered was at times not relevant to them when activities were specific to education of the deaf/hearing impaired.

While PD was perceived as relevant, the perceived relevance was

Table 25: Special Education professional development activities 2000-2011

(Teachers, n=32)

School (No of Teachers)	PD content focus	Offered By	Total Time (days)	Relevance (mode)
All Saints (5)	Down Syndrome	Min. Of Education	18	Relevant
	Writing IEPs	Min. Of Education		
	Behavior Management	Min. Of Education		
	Stress Management	Min. Of Education		
	Creating teaching aids	Min. Of Education		
	Ekwall Shanker (reading)	Min. Of Education		
	ADHD	CASA with MOE		
St. Stephens (2)	Teaching dyslexic students	Caribbean Dyslexia Assn	20.6	Relevant
	Creating IEPs	Min. Of Education		
Ann Hill (15)	Writing IEPs	Min. of Education	153	Relevant
	Creating teaching aids	Min. of Education		
	Intro to Special Needs	Min. of Ed/Erdiston		
	Managing Sp.Ed classroom	Miami Dade Comm. Coll.		
	Behavior Management	Ministry of Education		
	Autism	Ministry of Edn/UNICEF		
	Teaching dyslexic students	Caribbean Dyslexia Assn		
Irving Wilson (10)	Testing hearing	Ministry of Education		
	Audiology & Autism	Canadian International Hearing Services	96.6	Relevant
		Univ. of South Florida		
	Cued Speech	Central Institute for the Deaf, Missouri		
	Language assessment & Creating manipulatives	Ministry of Education		
	Software for SpEd	FETC		
	Florida Ed.Tech Conf'nce	Min. Of Education		
	Technology and Pedagogy	Caribbean Dyslexia Assn		
	Teaching dyslexic students	National Disabilities Unit		
	Sign Language			

counterbalanced by infrequency.

Whereas the quality of the PD might have been good, both principals and teachers reported a very limited amount of time spent in professional development during the period 2000 to the time of the study interviews in 2011. Only one principal reported PD activities and that was for 7 days over a period of more than a decade. Thirty two of the 34 teachers (94%) reported a total of about 293 days (almost 15 months) across the same period of 11 years. The types of PD experiences reported were workshops that took place over a few hours to about a week. Only one teacher, at the Irving Wilson School, reported attendance at an education conference, the annual Florida Education Technology Conference (FETC).

“...how then did the Ministry of education keep track of the kind and quality of professional development offered in special education?”

The Ministry of Education was reported as the primary source of professional development in special education in 3 of the 4 schools.

However, attempts to corroborate the number and content of PD sessions offered by the Ministry and attended by study participants was frustrated by the lack of electronic records of this information. This begged the question, how then did the Ministry of education keep track of the kind and quality of professional development offered in special education? How did they know which teachers had expertise in what areas? In addition, teachers expressed the need for certification/ recognition for their participation in professional development offered by the Ministry of Education so that they themselves would have a record.

Also, there seemed to be some inconsistency in access to PD.

While some teachers in three schools reported participation in IEP writing workshops, the teachers in the fourth school did not report this type of training. This seemed to be counter to the Ministry of Education's espoused policy to have Individualised education plans for all special needs students.

Initial Referral and Placement of Students for Special Education Services

Timely referrals and adequate placement in a setting that can meet the special needs of the student are critical to the quality of the education that a student receives. This section reports on the system used to refer and to place special needs students. Data were based on content analysis of one-on-one interviews with personnel in Student Services at the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development (henceforth referred to as the Ministry of Education or the MOE): the 2 Special Education Officers (SEOs) and the Senior Psychologist.

The participants from the MOE reported that assessment of students for special education services involved a series of steps. The process began with referral of a school-aged child (3 years old or more) to Student Services. The child could have been identified by the class teacher or the parent/ guardian or one of the SEOs. Following referral to Student Services, they would then issue a letter of invitation to the child's parent/guardian to bring the child for an interview with personnel in Student Services. The parent/guardian was asked to bring the child's school reports and records and any formal assessments done, for example by the Children's Development Centre.

The one-on-one interview with the parent and child was usually conducted by the 2 SEOs using the in-house Special Education Interview protocol. The protocol asked about the child's early developmental history, medical

history, basic life skills (feeding, toileting, dressing) as well as any assessments done by medical professionals (developmental paediatrician, speech therapist, audiologist, occupational therapist, physiotherapist) and psychologist. In addition, SEOs reported doing “basic” assessments using for example, the Caribbean-normed Mico Diagnostic Reading Test and other standardized tests normed in the United States such as the Ashton Index and the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test. Total time for the interview was usually about 45 minutes. In addition, at a future time, students were given a psychological assessment.

Following the parent and child interview, placement decisions (which could also mean remaining in the same setting) were made in April/May by the Special Education Eligibility Committee for placement in September of the upcoming academic year.

This committee was comprised of the Head of Nursery and Primary Department, the Special Education Officers (2), the Senior Psychologist and the Senior Teacher in charge of a Special Unit or Programme or the Principal of a Special education school (rotated on an annual basis).

There were several limitations to the quality of the process described above.

SEOs reported that frequently parents brought in little medical assessment information on the child at the time of the interview with School Services. In addition, the 45-minute Student Services interview conducted by the Special Education Officers limited the amount of testing that could be done with any one child. Further, teachers and principals reported that there was usually a delay in getting the psychological assessment from Student Services. This seemed to have been due to the limited availability of the 3 private psychologists hired as consultants to Student Services.

Limited spaces in special education settings limited the number of children

who could access special education services. One of the SEOs estimated that in any given year there would be about 70 children referred for Special Education services whereas there would be about 55 spaces available.

Children who were in need of special education services but who were not placed in a special education setting needed support in the mainstream setting. Given that every year there were students who were assessed as needing special education services but who were not placed, then their teachers in the mainstream setting need training in order meet their needs. The SEOs reported that one of them was assigned to monitor children with special needs in mainstream schools, but given the number of such children scattered across several schools, the time spent with any one child or his/her teacher was severely limited.

School-Based Assignment to Class/Group in Special Needs Setting

The quality of the instruction that any child receives is directly related to the quality of the information the teacher has on the instructional and other needs of that child. Students were assigned to “the least restrictive” setting by the members of the Special Education Eligibility Placement Committee as described above. Once assigned to a particular school, placement into a group or class became the job of the school. However, despite the assessment tests that the Special Education officers reported that they administered, a major issue reported consistently across all 4 schools was the limited assessment information available on an incoming (and continuing) student so that initial (and future) placement in a group/class on the basis of special need was quite challenging. Examination of the school records for the Ann Hill School revealed that information on a child’s disability was recorded for 22 of the 94 (23%) students currently on roll. Also of note, is that some

disabilities were recorded simply as “non-specific learning disabilities”

At the Irving Wilson School children were assigned to the school with an assessment of either deaf/hearing impaired, blind/visually impaired and more recently, autistic. However, the principal reported that there were oftentimes undiagnosed mental challenges along with hearing or auditory challenges.

“...it was often difficult to assign a student to a group due to insufficient information on the student’s special needs”

Another issue reported by teachers in particular was that oftentimes when assessment information was provided by the MOE, the information was not necessarily useful to them as it was not easily translatable into instructional practices. Examination of a sample of assessments (from the Childhood Development Centre, the Learning Place and the Caribbean Dyslexia Centre) revealed that it was only in the assessment of the latter that the teacher was given an indication of the instructional activities that would address the identified literacy needs of the child.

A third issue reported by some teachers was that at times the assessment information provided did not seem to match the student before them. In interviews conducted at the Irving Wilson School teachers and the Principal told of a student in the Deaf/Hearing Impaired Unit who had been assessed as deaf but who could echo his teacher’s voice and, in their opinion, appeared instead to be on the Autistic spectrum. Yet both the principal and the teachers perceived that they did not have

recourse to challenge the medical/psychological assessment. In the words of one veteran teacher:

... There should be a team that should consult on these matters and it should not be just a single individual or a single professional calling the shots and you know pontificating and sending down things for teachers to do. For instance the audiologist here might write up something for [a child at the] school and then we see the child it’s a far cry from what we see on the document and we have no recourse to go and say, “Well look, we don’t think this is so. This child needs another test, this should be redone.” I think that it should be cross-fertilization of ideas and we should be able to talk to one another, teachers should be able to talk to the audiologist or ophthalmologist or whatever and get the best for the child.

At the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson Schools, placement in a class/group was usually done by the Principal in consultation with his/her management team of senior staff members. In the Special Unit at All Saints School, group placement was done by the Senior Teacher in charge in consultation with the 4 teachers in the Unit. At the St. Stephens School, students were grouped according to their mainstream class: students in Class 1 were in the special education Class 1 Tulip group; students in Class 2 in the Class 2 Tulip/Sunflower group and so on.

Principals and teachers were asked to give the criteria used to place students in a particular group or class in the school. Except for the St. Stephens School, all principals and teachers reported that it was often difficult to assign a student to a group due to insufficient information on the student’s special needs. Principals and Senior Teachers reported that initial placement criteria tended to be a mixture of chronological age, data from teacher-made assessments, and assessment data from the MOE,

where they had them. Follow-up placement was based on teachers' direct observation of the student in the first few weeks of placement; a change of group could occur if the teacher or the Special Education Officer felt that the student was incorrectly placed.

School records were also examined to look at the student groupings in the 4 study schools. At the Irving Wilson School records showed that their 35 students were placed in either the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Unit (25 children), the Blind/Visually Impaired Unit (6 children) or the class for children with Autism (4 boys) who were neither Deaf/Hard of Hearing nor Blind/Visually Impaired. Within each Unit, students were somewhat grouped according to chronological age (Infants, Juniors, Form 1, Form 2) although, given the small number of children, there was an age range of several years within some groups. For example, Juniors ranged in age from 12 to 15 years.

At the Ann Hill School, the 94 students were placed in 11 groups roughly according to chronological age or according to special need. There was a group of students who had come to Ann Hill from mainstream schools where they were deferred from the Common Entrance Examination (Barbados Secondary Schools Entrance Examination, BSSEE).

At the All Saints School the 31 students were placed in 4 groups, each with a designated teacher while the Senior Teacher in charge oversaw the unit. With the exception of the group being prepared for the BSSEE, where the children were between the ages of 10 and 12 years, the other 3 groups had children whose ages ranged from 6 through 12 and who had a variety of quite disparate special needs. At the St. Stephen's School the 25 students were in 4 groups according to their regular school-based class. The Senior Teacher taught Classes 1, 2 and 4 while the other teacher taught Class 3.

Planning for Curriculum and Instruction

The way in which curriculum is planned can affect the quality of the instruction that flows from that curriculum. For example horizontal articulation of content at a particular grade level can be accomplished if teachers at the same grade level come together during a common planning time to see how their various content areas relate to each other. In this way they can create a somewhat seamless, rather than disjointed experience for the students at that grade level. Similarly, vertical articulation of content across all the grades of a school can be achieved with whole school planning so that student experience from one grade level to the next is coherent. Data reported in this section are based on interviews/focus groups, analysis of curriculum documents and attendance at a term 3 curriculum planning meeting at the Irving Wilson School.

"School-level curriculum planning occurred 3 times in the school year..."

All participants in the 4 study schools reported common curriculum planning time at both the school and individual level and reported a similar curriculum planning sequence. School-level curriculum planning occurred 3 times in the school year, usually on the first non-teaching day of each term. At the beginning of the school year teachers and principals met as a group to decide the theme for the year. Whole-school Thematic Webs were then developed for the academic year.

At the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson Schools, all teachers met face-to-face to plan curriculum at least once on the first day of each of the 3 terms of the academic year. Observation at the curriculum planning meeting at the beginning of term 3 at the Irving

Wilson showed that all teachers were present at the planning meeting and discussed opportunities to create a cohesive content framework at each year level. Teachers at Ann Hill reported a similar process.

On the other hand, there were varying degrees of participation in whole-school curriculum planning in the other 2 study settings. At the All Saints Special Unit- teachers in the Unit voted on and adopted the school-wide theme then planned the Unit curriculum, based on the theme, but only amongst themselves. At the St. Stephens School, teachers in the Unit reported that they were “not invited” to attend the school-wide curriculum planning meetings and therefore did not plan their curriculum alongside the mainstream teachers.

"...I take out the topics that I know would best suit my class because of their ability"

Further, in the 2 primary schools, although there were subject area coordinators in the mainstream schools, these coordinators did not oversee the curriculum in the special unit/special programme. Principals reported that they held curriculum planning and monitoring meetings with their Subject Coordinators as well as the Senior Teacher in charge of the special unit/ programme. Subject Coordinators were Senior Teachers who either co-ordinated curriculum at the subject level (St. Stephen's had Subject Coordinators for Early Childhood Education, Language Arts and Science) or at the school organization level (All Saints had Subject Coordinators of the Infants and the Juniors). However, apart from these meetings, principals reported no direct supervision of the special education curriculum by the Subject Coordinators.

Class-level curriculum planning drew

on the school-level Thematic Webs; Curriculum Webs were developed at the class level with the theme as their nucleus. That is, a correlated curriculum design was used where the theme was integrated into each of the content areas to be taught. Curriculum webs were either planned as a whole school (Irving Wilson), as a group (All Saints and St. Stephens had the same web for both teachers in the Unit) or planned among teachers at the same year level (Ann Hill). Based on the Curriculum Web, teachers then created a series of Instructional Plans for their classes. An Instructional Plan usually described the learning activities for about a 6-week period of teaching.

The typical curriculum planning process was described by one teacher at the Irving Wilson School [teaching at the school for 14 years]:

"... We all do the same thematic web and the same curriculum web but then we do different instructional plans and lesson plans. "

Researcher: so how do you then develop your instructional plan?

" ... I go into the curriculum web and I take out the subject areas, I go into the subject areas and I take out the topics that I know would best suit my class because of their ability ... I take the topic areas that would be suitable for their age level and then I go into the attainment targets, I use the Texas (curriculum) to see how best then to bring over the concepts to the students- what materials I can use."

All teachers reported multi-level curriculum planning within the same class. Teachers at All Saints and St. Stephens planned at the level of each child while teachers at the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson Schools planned according to the needs of groups of children in the same class. For example, a teacher at Irving Wilson explained:

"[I have] three boys and three girls,

all of them have been diagnosed as hearing impaired children. [The ages range] from 12 to 15... I use the attainment targets ... It depends on the subject area, Infants A and B and Class One attainment targets... for my class, because of how my class is, I have its divided in terms of the boys, they're higher academically... in comparison to the girls, so for math and language I would try to use mostly the Class One attainments. Well sometimes I still have to go back to the Infants but mostly I would use the Class One attainments. But for the girls I would use Infants or sometimes come back to the Early Childhood for the girls."

Teachers reported that in addition to using the Barbados 2000 Attainment Targets as curriculum standards, they had to source curriculum materials and pedagogy that were specific to the special needs of their students. At the Ann Hill School, there was a school-wide curriculum developed some years back by a team of special education teachers. However teacher interviews revealed that the majority of the teachers did not use the curriculum. Further, since the national curriculum did not cater to the needs of the blind/visually impaired or the deaf/hard of hearing, teachers in the Deaf Unit at the Irving Wilson School, used 2 Texas-based curricula to reference curriculum standards for deaf/hearing impaired students.

Teachers generally reported the use of on-line resources to create lessons specific to their students.

For example, at the Irving Wilson, one of the teachers of the children with Autism reported that she searched on-line for curriculum that addressed gross motor skill development.

Similarly, the Craft teachers at Ann Hill reported that they used internet resources quite heavily in lieu of any national curriculum standards in that area.

All teachers reported the need for more emphasis on a Life Skills curriculum.

However, two of the 4 schools reported a lack of resources to support a curriculum in that area. The Ann Hill School had a well-established Life Skills curriculum supported by an in-school laundry and one-bedroom "apartment"; funding for the facilities had been donated by private businesses. At the All Saints School, the principal mentioned that there was no space that could be allocated for life skills due to the already limited classroom space for the special education students. The Irving Wilson School had a designated but still unfurnished space for Life Skills. In the words of one of the teachers at Irving Wilson:

"...there was no space included in the timetable for teaching the children to "find their voice" "

... You need that hands-on, you need to have materials and resources. It's ok to say that you want to teach children to press but if you don't have an iron and an ironing board then it's challenging.

On the other hand, examination of the timetable for the students at the St. Stephen's School showed that Life Skills was not included. In interviews with the 2 teachers in the Special Education Programme they reported that stigmatization and bullying were among the problems that the "unit children" had to face. Yet there was no space included in the timetable for teaching the children to "find their voice" and stand up for themselves- an important life skill that should be actively taught in any special education curriculum.

Observation at the curriculum planning session at Irving Wilson indicated that while there was an emphasis on horizontal articulation of content among teachers at the same year level, based on the school's curriculum web, there was little

attention paid to vertical articulation from one year level to the next.

Corroboration of teacher data with other data was sought through examination of a sample of curriculum documents. Principals or Teachers-in-Charge were asked to collect the school's Thematic Web, a sample of Curriculum Webs and a sample of teachers' Instructional Plans for the academic year 2010-2011 (at least one plan per teacher), including Individualised Education Plans (IEPs). Where teachers prepared IEPs, they were asked to provide a sample of IEPs that reflected the types of special needs of the students in their class. Only one school, All Saints, systematically used IEPs as a matter of school (unit) policy. In the other 3 schools, IEPs were not used (Irving Wilson), used at the discretion of the teacher (Ann Hill) or adapted (St. Stephen's). In the latter

school, the teachers referred to their education plans as "modified IEPs"

Instructional Plans were obtained from all teachers at Irving Wilson and from 7 of 11 teachers at Ann Hill. Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) were obtained for all of the students at All Saints and "modified IEPs" were obtained for 8 of the 25 students at St. Stephens. See Table 26 below.

Curriculum documents were examined in terms of the extent to which goals and objectives in the instructional plan reflected national Attainment Targets as well as the extent to which instructional differentiation was made to meet the needs of students.

All teachers reported that they chose their lesson content/goals by referencing the national Attainment Targets (Curriculum 2000). They said

Table 26: Instructional Materials Received and Analyzed

School	Curriculum materials received from school
All Saints	Curriculum web for all teachers;
	IEPS for ALL students
	Sample of Term 3 reports across all teachers
St. Stephen's	Instructional Plans (2) for the Unit;
	Sample of "Modified" IEPs for 8 students of 25 (32%)
	Term 3 reports for 1 of 2 teachers (80% of students)
Ann Hill	Curriculum document for school
	Curriculum webs and Instructional Plans from 7 of 11 teachers
	Sample of Term 3 reports across all teachers
Irving Wilson	Thematic web for 2010-2011 for whole school
	Instructional Plans from all teachers except Computer Studies, Industrial Arts
	Term 3 reports for ALL students

that they chose those Attainment Targets that they judged (based on the results of teacher-created assessment of basic literacy and mathematics skills) to be appropriate to the needs of their students.

Although content area teachers reported that they made reference to the national curriculum standards (Attainment Targets), none of the teachers in the vocational areas (Industrial Arts, Information Technology, Agricultural Science) reported that they referenced the regional curriculum standards (Caribbean Examinations Council, Caribbean Vocational Qualification) when creating their instructional plans.

Instructional Plans obtained were examined in the content areas of Language Arts and Mathematics.

These content areas showed evidence of content differentiation based on the national Attainment Targets. That is, in general, lesson objectives reflected the national Attainment Targets in Language Arts and Mathematics but the Targets chosen by teachers were mainly at the basic literacy and numeracy skill level. There was also evidence of the inclusion of social and behavioural objectives, a central thrust in the Barbados national curriculum.

Pedagogy, instructional strategies, in Language Arts and Mathematics as reflected in instructional plans and IEPs showed much direct teaching with repeated practice for reinforcement of knowledge and skills. The goals instructional plans showed little integration of either Language Arts or Mathematics across the content areas where teachers were teaching all the core areas and had the opportunity to do so (For example at the All Saints School).

On the other hand, there was evidence of attempts to provide hands-on learning activities through the inclusion of games, puzzles, colouring activities and the direct manipulation of materials.

In-School Assessment Practices

The data in this section are based on interviews as well as examination of a sample of end-of-term reports and instructional plans as indicated in Table 26. At the school-level, it was a requirement that teachers generated progress reports for students at the end of each of the 3 school terms.

At the Class or group level, teachers reported that all students were given an initial assessment of entry knowledge and skills, then a series of assessments to monitor progress throughout the year. Usually each student's work during the term, including class tests, worksheets and projects, if any, was kept in folder that most teachers referred to as a "portfolio". Teachers reported that they used both paper-and-pencil as well as alternative forms of testing such as oral reporting.

Several inadequacies in assessment practices in the study schools surfaced.

Schools were asked to give the researchers a sample of matched (same student) reports for terms 1 and 3. Although some schools could do this, others could not. All schools gave each student his/her report at the end of the term to take home to be signed by a parent/guardian. It was expected that reports would be returned in the following term or school year. The problem was that most of the students did not return the reports and two of the schools (Ann Hill and Irving Wilson) did not copy the reports so had few records on most of their students. This was a critical issue since the students in these schools do not receive certification other than a school leaving certificate. Indication of performance/achievement level could be useful information for potential employers.

Also, teachers sent home students' "portfolios" at the end of the term or school year and therefore, again, missed an opportunity to keep a record of continuous, formative assessment data on their students.

The lack of assessment records for students was also an issue because of the lack of academic certification for the students. As indicted earlier, although these students were taking vocational subjects, they were not assessed according to either national or regional standards.

Monitoring of the Quality of Instruction

Feedback on the quality of one's instructional practices usually improves that practice. Feedback on effective instructional practice would be particularly important in the 4 study schools where, as indicated in an earlier section of this report, more than half the teachers did not have training in special education.

"Participants reported different levels of instructional monitoring in the study schools"

All participants reported that there were school-based mechanisms in place to monitor the quality of a teacher's classroom instruction. All schools reported a system where teachers translated their Instructional Plans into daily lesson plans that were recorded in a Scheme Book that was submitted on a regular basis for scrutiny by a more experienced teacher (usually a Senior Teacher or the Principal). In addition, it was the responsibility of the Special Education Officer to monitor the quality of instruction.

Participants reported different levels of instructional monitoring in the study schools. At the All Saints School the Senior Teacher in charge of the unit reported that she collected and gave feedback on the scheme books that the teachers in the Unit submitted to her on a regular basis. The principal reported that he examined

the scheme books every 2 weeks. At the St. Stephens School the teachers reported little interaction with the principal or with any of the Senior Teachers in the mainstream school. The principal reported occasional informal visits to the Programme.

At the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson Schools the principals described a system where certain senior teachers were assigned to a small group of teachers so that monitoring occurred in a mentorship-like model. Teachers at the Ann Hill School were very positive in their description of how the model worked at their school. In the words of 3 teachers interviewed:

Senior Teacher 1: You had asked about how the seniors [Senior Teachers]... in terms of evaluating teachers within the setting. A lot of the times its observation or if I'm working with (teacher who she is supervising) while we're doing a particular thing I'll go over quietly I'll go over and say, "Don't do a particular thing like this here, do it like this." Or even at the end of the lesson I'll ask, "How was it for you?" or I'll say, "I like this here" or "next time work on this here" or that kind of thing, but not a written it's always verbal.

Teacher 2: Sometimes for the principal when she sees and she observes certain things actually it helps to strengthen us because I might be doing something good to work with my students and she might see another teacher in need of that assistance and she would say, "Well let [teacher] show you. She did a very good thing with her group." So it's positive.

Teacher 3: It's good teamwork

Regarding the role of the Special Education Officer, principals reported that the Special Needs officer would occasionally check scheme books on a visit to the school. However, teacher reports indicated non-systematic monitoring of classroom instruction by the Special Education officer. Some

teachers reported a few visits while others reported no visits at all.

Primary School Status of Schools with Secondary-Aged Students

A final factor that affected the quality of instruction in the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson schools was their classification by the Ministry of Education as “primary” rather than “secondary” schools.

Two main consequences of a “primary school” classification were reported by principals and teachers. One was the strangling of vocational education due to MOE under-funding since funding for resources for content areas was less for primary schools than for secondary schools. The words of two teachers expressed the frustration felt in one school:

Researcher: What would you say are the three greatest challenges in your job...?

Teacher 1: First of all is the small pittance that the Ministry has given to a primary school to do technology education. That is my biggest challenge. I am stressed to the limit of how to spend \$300 for a full school year! When I do a breakdown that's \$20 per student for a project that they would make mistakes [on] for a full year. That is our greatest challenge.

Researcher: How do you

meet your challenge?

Teacher 1: I don't meet it. You do a lot of reinforcing, and you just don't meet it.

Researcher: You mean the subject is not as practical as it should be?

Teacher 1: ... a student may be capable of doing four projects but at the end of the year he does two and there is no way to meet it, no way because as I said it is at the primary school so technology education does not exist at the primary school ...

Teacher 2: Likewise in Home Ec. because we're under primary and Home Economics is not a primary subject, there is no grant for Home Economics. So I have to depend on the principal to give some funds from wherever, I have to ask the children to bring in, I have to dig into my cupboard and bring stuff or sometimes we make products and sell in order to get funds to support the programme so then the programme is not as extensive as it could be because of the unavailability of the resources.

The second consequence was the stunting of the career ladder for teachers. One principal pointed out that while secondary teachers could be appointed as Heads of Departments, no such option was available to primary teachers even if they acted in positions of similar responsibility.

TRANSITION AND PLANNING PROGRAMME AND CURRICULUM

Transition practices/provisions and services are designed to empower students with special needs, and their families, with the practical and experiential skills and knowledge that will assist in a successful transition to adult life. Research revealed that there are some practices/provisions and services in place to assist in transition and planning for students at both institutions. These include the 'School-To-Work' programme at the Ann Hill School monitored by the Guidance Counsellor Ms. J. Goodridge and the 'Job Exposure Program' monitored by the principal of the Irving Wilson School. Teachers at both institutions have adapted and modified the National Curriculum (Primary School) to ensure that taught content is structured with a strong emphasis on living-skills. It was also reported that the creation of micro-businesses and in-house training on 'The World of Work' were two approaches which were successfully utilized in developing the skills-base of students enrolled at both institutions. The in-house initiative provided children with authentic work experiences such as interviews, signing time sheets, reporting to supervisors and collecting payment.

Through these programmes, both schools have established linkages

with such businesses as hotels, barbershops and restaurants across Barbados. Findings have also revealed that there is a small scale mentorship programme in place in both institutions. Mentors - usually past students and parents, visit the school and assist where necessary. Although these mechanisms are in place, there is a great need for their improvement and development.

Areas of priority included the need for transition planning specialists, the adoption of a multi-disciplinary approach to special education, training in transition planning assessment for teachers, training in special education for teachers, increased funding from the Government of Barbados to develop quality transition activities for students and their families, and more structured linkages with post-secondary institutions and businesses. Although there is evidence of skills training and living skills activities, structured transition planning services was an area of weakness for both institutions.

Administrators were asked to complete a SWOT analysis of their institutions and the findings are reported in the tables following.

Irving Wilson School – Administrators Interview

The Administrator Interview was guided by a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis format, and was designed to audit the key transition

issues outlined by Kohler (1996).

The administrator's responses (Table 27) revealed that the school has many areas of strength, which include: access to reliable and valid assessment tools, a highly creative and innovative staff, low teacher to student ratios and a 'Work Exposure Programme' designed to expose children to authentic work experiences.

Table 27: Administrator's Report of Institutional Strengths and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Various programmes and initiatives evident within the school's structure.
Administrator Responses
The development of a 'Work Exposure Programme' which has created linkages with such businesses as the Casuarina Hotel
Access to the use of reliable and valid assessment tools such as the W.I.A.T. <i>[child's strengths and weaknesses]</i> and the P.A.T. <i>[personality]</i>
Irving Wilson School, through the National Disabilities Unit has trained teachers/instructors at various Skills Training programmes, to ensure the least restrictive environment
Highly creative and innovative staff who take initiative, often times using their own money, transportation and other resources to provide services to students.
Ideal class sizes. <i>[low teacher: student ratio]</i>
Strong focus on students with Autism which has resulted in the development of a programme catering to this population of students
Staff is willing to participate in professional development opportunities

The administrator highlighted some weaknesses in the school's day-to-day provision of services (Table 28). These include the lack of staff training in curriculum modification and adaptation, and the lack of staff training in the transition planning process. Teachers are also expected to provide services to new students without having received any background information from parents/previous schools about the nature of their disability. This results in students

receiving a 'general' programme, rather than an individualized programme. Lack of funding/support from the Ministry of Education was also highlighted as a weakness and was reported to have been the cause of the failure of more than one initiative the school sought to undertake. Other weaknesses identified included the lack of support personnel-including a guidance counsellor, as the school is expected to 'share' one counsellor with the Ann Hill School.

Table 28: Administrator's Report of Potential Weaknesses and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Lack of a structured transition planning programme and relevant support personnel.
Administrator Responses
Hesitance to adopt programmes from outside institutions
The Guidance Counsellor only visits the school one day a week [Tuesdays]. There is no real depth to this service as the counsellor deals mainly with family life issues, not necessarily transition services
There is no formal process for acquiring background information from schools previously attended by students
No formal transition and planning assessments are conducted
No formal psycho-educational assessments are conducted. Teachers therefore have no background information on children, and often have to 'play the guessing game'
The school made an attempt to address the need for transition planning services. This included sourcing personnel to conduct informal assessments, the development of individualised transition plans, and numerous interagency collaborations. The Ministry of Education refused to fund the programme and it has 'fallen flat'
Staff has no real training in curriculum adaptation and modification
Staff generally has no formal training in transition planning

The administrator revealed that, despite its challenges, there are unique opportunities that the school provides to its students and their families (Table 29). He indicated that the school is staffed by a cadre of highly qualified teachers who utilize

EDUTECH resources such as the lap top, overhead projectors and white boards. The school is also outfitted with structural modifications such as 'cork flooring' and a lift, which ensure that students are educated in a comfortable space.

Table 29: Administrator's Report of School's Unique Opportunities and Characteristics and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Varied technological and infrastructural systems in place within the school's structure.
Administrator Responses
The school has highly qualified staff, some with Masters level degrees in Psychology, who are prime candidates for further training in special education- once the Ministry of Education would oblige
The school is equipped with modern technology and other infrastructure to support the needs of students with visual and hearing impairments such as cork flooring, a lift [though not presently functioning], the use of contrasting colours on walls and door ways, laptops, overhead projectors and white boards. <i>[EDUTECH initiative]</i>
The school has made some linkages with business houses across the island

Threats to the school's functioning (Table 30) were largely hinged on the general lack of support from the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development. The administrator reported constant refusal from the Ministry to release funds for staff training/professional development. Emphasis was placed on the lack of funds needed to mobilize transition initiatives that have been developed by the school. Additionally, the school

is experiencing increasing difficulty with the Ministry's instruction that they must use the Primary School curriculum to cater to the special education needs of children with visual and hearing impairments. He believed that the absence of the appropriate curriculum will continue to cause some children to 'fall through the cracks'. Limited parental involvement was also cited as a threat to the school's functioning.

Table 30: Administrator's Report of Potential Threats and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Lack of support from the Ministry of Education, and limited parental involvement continue to threaten the school's functioning.
Administrator Responses
The Ministry of Education refuses to fund a transition programme. The school has to curtail transition planning initiatives as the limited resources are directed towards the general running of the school
There is an extreme lack of resources from the Ministry of Education
Although funds have been made available to the school- donated through charitable organisations, the Ministry of Education refuses to release the funds. This has hindered many initiatives the school is willing to explore such as a recent 'soft garment' making programme
The school is expected to follow the Primary School curriculum, which does not adequately cater to the needs of children who need to learn life skills and various other technical and vocational skills. A curriculum needs to be developed for use with children with special education needs.
The Ministry of Education does not readily accept requests for overseas training / professional development
Parental involvement needs to be improved.

Ann Hill School – Administrator Interview

The Administrator Interview was guided by a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis format, and was designed to audit the key transition

issues outlined by Kohler (1996).

The administrator's responses revealed that the school has many areas of strength (Table 31) These include a highly organised in-house 'School-to-Work' programme, a highly creative and innovative staff, and a fully functioning Enrichment Programme. External visits to various job sites are frequently organised to provide students with valuable exposure to various career options.

Table 31: Administrator's Report of Institutional Strengths and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Various programmes and initiatives are evident within the school's structure.
Administrator Responses
The creation of an in-house 'School-to-Work' programme, an initiative which 'employs' students in areas such as school meals service, housekeeping and maintenance. This authentic experience requires children to be on the job and follow instructions given
Students are taken on tours to observe various work sites- hotels [housekeeping], bars[bar-tending] and several other skill areas to 'bring to life' career options
Highly creative and innovative staff who take initiative, often times using their own money, transportation and other resources to provide services to students
The school has an enrichment programme which allows students to select from list of extra-curricula subjects/clubs. These include sign language, aesthetics, 4H Club and the Cadet Corp
Staff has expressed a willingness to participate in professional development opportunities overseas
Strong focus on promoting saving and money management skills.

Some weaknesses highlighted (Table 32) include the lack of staff training in curriculum modification and adaptation, and the lack of staff training in the transition planning process. Teachers are also expected to provide services to new students without having received any background information from parents/

previous schools about the nature of their disability. This results in students receiving a 'general' programme, rather than an individualized programme. A major concern was the schools classification as a Primary school- a classification which affects all areas of functioning at the school, especially funding.

Table 32: Administrator's Report of Potential Weaknesses and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Lack of a structured transition planning programme and the school's classification as a Primary School are reoccurring themes.
Administrator Responses
In the absence of a vocational/technical curriculum, school personnel has not adopted a programme from outside institutions
There is no formal process for acquiring background information from schools previously attended by students and as there is no formal psycho-educational assessments conducted, teachers are providing generalised services, rather than individualised services to the students and their families
The school is classified as a Primary School and is expected to follow the Primary School curriculum. This curriculum does not adequately cater to the needs of children. They need to learn life skills and various other technical and vocational skills. A curriculum needs to be developed for use with children with special education needs.
No formal transition and planning assessments are conducted
Funding provided by The Ministry of Education is less than adequate
Staff has no real training in curriculum adaptation and modification
Staff generally has no formal training in transition planning

Various in-house initiatives have been developed to provide students with unique opportunities. These include the 'School-to-Work' programme, the creation of a 'living quarters' and school wide tours and visits which provide students with the opportunity to use such skills as saving, and purchasing items. The school is also

in discussion with Ministry officials with respect to establishing CVQ programmes in some areas. The school is also equipped with technological resources such as the lap top, overhead projectors and interactive white boards [EDUTECH initiative]. See Table 33 for school's unique opportunities and characteristics.

Table 33: Administrator's Report of School's Unique Opportunities and Characteristics and Identified Themes

Identified Themes
Varied technological resources and in-house initiatives are utilized at the school.
Administrator Responses
The in-house 'World of Work' programme an initiative which 'employs' students in areas such as school meals service, housekeeping and maintenance. This authentic experience requires children to be on the job and follow instructions given
School personnel has successfully set-up a thrift shop where leather-craft and bead-work items have been offered for sale.
School personnel has been dialoguing with a Ministry official with reference to establishing CVQ programmes at the school in the near future
The school is equipped with modern technology laptops, overhead projectors and interactive white boards/SMART board [EDUTECH initiative]
The school has made some linkages with business houses across the island
A school wide visit to Sheraton Mall in December of each year allows children to have an authentic shopping experience, as they purchase gifts for themselves
A living-skills 'quarters' has been set-up to provide students with practical experience. The 'quarters' contains household items such as a bed and a small kitchen area. These facilities are used to develop such living skills as washing dishes and making up the bed.

Teacher Focus Groups – Ann Hill School

Participants in teacher focus-groups were invited to comment on current practices and services offered by their school in the area of transition planning, and on perceived transition planning needs. Guided by Kohler's (1996) Taxonomy of Transition Programming evaluative model, an interview schedule was developed to examine five (5) key areas: evidence of student focused planning, student development activities, interagency collaboration, family involvement and the overall transition programme structure.

Qualitative data yielded from these

focus groups are presented below.

Student-Focused Planning

Student-focused planning activities focus on using assessment information and facilitating students' self-determination to develop individual education programmes based on students' post-school goals. Subcategories include IEP development, student participation and planning strategies (Kohler, 1996). Participants in the focus groups noted that there is no structured student focused planning at the school. Individual respondents indicated that they attempted to meet student needs 'in their own way'. Students enter the institution and instruction begins before teachers are able to acquire background information on the students.

Table 34: Student Focused Planning

Identified Themes
There is no structured student planning system at the school.
Teacher Responses
Previously the school did not let students enter without a report. That helped to prevent problems.
The school used to have a check list, and teachers wouldn't move from one stage until a child completed that stage. I don't know where the checklist went.
I plan based on my students. It is not about what I want them to learn it's what is going to help them, it's all about them.
Although there is a skills development programme, it is a general programme, and does not cater to each student's individual needs.
Children are not coming with the information that teachers need. The first few years are like a testing period for us.

Student development

Student development practices emphasize life, employment, occupational, and academic skill development through school-based and work-based learning experiences (Kohler, 1996).

Sub-categories include academic skills, life skills instruction, and structured work experience. Participants in the focus group believed that the school's classification as a Primary School is a serious limitation to student development. As a result of this classification, schools are required to use the

Primary School curriculum, which has little value for the education of young adults. They are also allotted meagre funds because of this classification. Despite these challenges, teachers make use of a thematic approach in the instruction of living skills and develop initiative to teach various work-related and job seeking skills through the 'School-to-Work' programme. Although there are no existing Career and Vocational curricula, the school is in discussions with the Ministry of Education with reference to implementing a CVQ curriculum.

Table 35: Student Development

Identified Themes
Teacher Responses
In mathematics, children are taught skills like identifying coins and making bus fare, so when they have to go to buy snacks, people will not rob them or unfair them.
Children are learning their names, addresses and telephone numbers.
Children are prepared to fill out a form. To open an account you have to fill out a form at the bank. They need to know how to write their names and addresses.
In home economics, they are taught their utensils and kitchen equipment. We do basic things, so that when mummy is not at home they could go into the fridge and see, 'Oh mummy only has bread. I can make myself a sandwich.'
Teachers try to use the thematic approach when teaching the children. It helps to bring the concepts together.
Children in the 'autistic group' are taught filing, how to use the telephone directory, how to do laundry, and how to make their bed.
The 16-18 group members are on internal job attachment. They are assigned to duties like janitor, school meal servers, production line workers, general worker along with the agricultural teacher.
Some children are capable enough to do the visual arts CXC exams.
The school is classified as a Primary School and receives a meagre sum of money from the Ministry. This limits our ability to offer them living-skills-based instruction.
The Guidance Counsellor has been having talks with a Ministry representative about offering CVQ programmes at the school

Interagency Collaboration

Interagency collaboration practices facilitate involvement of community businesses, organizations and agencies in all aspects of transition-focused education (Kohler, 1996).

Sub-categories include collaborative service delivery and collaborative

framework. Participants revealed some evidence of linkages with post-secondary schools and various business houses. Artefacts provided by the Guidance Counsellor show evidence of the School's attempts of bringing structure to the collaborative framework by developing a directory of business houses and resource personnel.

Table 36: Interagency Collaboration

Identified Themes
Evidence of linkages with various institutions in the community.
Teacher Responses
Over the years some of our children have gone out on the day release as day nursery assistants and have worked in supermarkets
Artefacts provided by the Guidance Counsellor revealed linkages made with the following business places: Channel Supermarket, Samuel Jackman Prescod Polytechnic- Hairdressing and Nail Care, Growing Things, John Beckles Day Nursery, Digicel and Esso Culloden Road

Family Involvement

Family involvement practices are associated with parent and family involvement in planning and delivering education and transition services (Kohler, 1996). Sub-categories include family involvement, family empowerment and

family training. Respondents revealed that the school makes many attempts to promote family involvement through meetings and conferences. Many of these attempts prove to be futile, as parents hardly ever respond in a favourable manner. All staff members are committed to empowering families.

Table 37: Family Involvement

Identified Themes
Family involvement is an area of concern. Most parents are unaware of their child's progress and do not offer support in helping to develop the skills taught at school.
Teacher Responses
Parents make it difficult. We teach children skills at school and when they go home, their parents- especially their mothers, want to do everything for them. They do not get a chance to practice the skills.
Parents hardly attend meetings that the school calls. They start off 'good' but then we don't see them again until graduation time.
If a structured program was in place, then parent involvement would be in place- in terms of the parent knowing exactly just what is happening with their child. A structured programme would also mean that IEPs would be in place and the parent would have some input as to what we need to do as a team.
A lot of the parents have disabilities themselves. This makes it really hard.
Parents tend to make it difficult for us when we first meet them. They 'paint a pretty picture' of the child, especially in terms of behaviour, then we find out the opposite much later.
The parents don't let the children go by the stove so they can't even catch a kettle of water. They can't wash their clothes and can't cook. There are some very basic things that the children cannot do. If they are like that during this time and the parents are the ones restricting them from developing, there is nothing we can do after 3:00. There are agencies that would employ the children, but not without the basic skills. I've lived to see a lot of them go to the 'mental'.
One or two parents come around during the day to offer assistance, especially with the practical areas.

Programme Structure

Programme structures and attributes are features that relate to efficient and effective delivery of transition-focused education services including philosophy, planning, evaluation and human resource development (Kohler, 1996). Organized strategic planning as it relates to transition needs is an area of weakness for the institution. Teachers indicated that many documents

have been submitted to the Ministry of Education expressing needs and requesting assistance, but there has been no 'follow-up'. Staff members have varied academic qualifications with a high percentage having attained the Diploma in Primary Education. Very few staff members have had training in transition planning and special education. Financial support from the Ministry of Education is limited and has hindered many school-developed initiatives.

Table 38: Programme Structure

Identified Themes
Teachers have given the programme structure a very poor rating.
The school's classification as a Primary School, and a lack of resources [human and financial] surfaced as major concerns.
Teacher Responses
Periods of Social Studies mean that we can't find the time to really work on the areas that the children need, in terms of combing their hair, brushing their teeth.
Staff members possess qualifications in areas such as Social Work, Psychology and Literacy Studies. Some teachers are Erdiston trained in Primary Education. Very few teachers are trained in Special Education.
The government doesn't deal with special needs, they need to pay more attention to the school.
We have been asked thousands of times to present documents. We have been writing and doing and I don't know what happened with them.
They [Ministry of Education] say the children should be screened and they don't screen, they just send them here.
When Ms. St. Hill does internal assessments, she realizes that we have students that could sit the 11+ and probably get to, St. George or St. Leonards. Children are placed here for bad behaviour.
We need help with behaviour. Some children are on par in their English, but they are very aggressive. They gave a new meaning to bad. They are perfect at coming together to disrupt.
The school has to depend on the ministry too much for what ever is needed.
We need more non- teaching [lessons]. Often we are 'off' and still have to be teaching. It is stressful and a lot of teachers and there is a high rate of absenteeism. People are burnt out.
We had to stop selling the 'Chilly-Ice' because we needed a 'sealer'. We told the Ministry, but they take so long to give us money. The programme failed as a result.
Students used to come at 13 because normally the children who are slow learners are usually like 2 years behind the others. It is a better age to start them at in terms of transition.



CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONS

IRVING WILSON SCHOOL

PEDAGOGY

The Irving Wilson School is peculiar in its setting since it caters to three distinct groups of children, these are: children with visual impairments, those who are deaf and a small group of children with Autism. These three groups of children require different modes of communication and teaching and therefore teacher’s practice must reflect and cater to children’s distinct needs and respond to their impairments. The pedagogies used by teachers are therefore as heterogeneous as the groups of students that they serve. The discussion on teacher’s practice will make within the group as oppose to across the school comparisons based on the organization of teaching and students in this school setting. In this study the term pedagogical practices is an umbrella term that comprises a number of themes and these include: learning goals, teacher strategies and techniques, teacher-student interaction and teacher preparation.

The findings presented in this section are based on observations of teacher’s classroom sessions and the post observation interviews of those sessions. Researchers sought to understand how teachers make their pedagogical decisions and document teacher’s cognitions about the lessons that they taught.

The Unit for the Blind

The Unit for the Blind is organized into two groups located in adjoining

classrooms at the Irving Wilson School.

There are two teachers assigned to the Unit who serve a total of six students. An important theme which influences the kinds of pedagogies and level of teacher student interaction in the Unit is student characteristics. How teachers describe their students is noted in Table 39.

To understand these characteristics in context a case study of one of the students in Ms. James’ classroom is presented. Ms. James says that she teaches some of the “slower” students with visual impairments. Jolie is one of her students.

Case Study Jolie

Table 39: Reported Student Characteristics in Unit for the Blind

Learning challenges
Inability to transfer knowledge
Visual challenges
Recall
Normal hearing
Challenges with speech
Expressive challenges
Difficulty with writing
Global developmental delays
Very bad posture

Jolie is 12 years old but is in a classroom with peers who are four years younger than herself. Ms. James says, [Jolie] “... she’ll have learning challenges...she came from a private school and I right off knew that she has some serious challenges...

When asked whether or not students could reason things out, Jolie’s teacher noted this about her ability to reason “Jolie is mostly recall ... I mean Jolie can repeat anything for you. You can get her to recite a poem but maybe if you ask her a question related to the poem, she will not be able to come up with the answer.” According to Ms. James, Jolie can however express herself quite well, she notes “She’s okay orally, she can express herself quite well. She’s okay, yeah her verbal language isn’t bad”

Another teacher, Ms. Tudor, notes the challenges Jolie has changing for games each week.

She notes “one of the amazing things about it is that changing for games every week and this is something that happens every week. My classroom (inaudible) before and Jolie will come “Ms. Tudor” “Yes Jolie” “My uniform is this the right side?” “No Jolie it is wrong” and she stand up there “Jolie do you need help?” “Yes Ms. Tudor” “Ok lets come try together” but try together won’t work, eventually it will be that Ms. Tudor have to turn it the right side and say “Which side going over your head now” Jolie will stand up there in a daze. So I’m teaching a class... so you have to eventually do it and that is an every day, every week.

► Learning Goals

Instruction proceeds from the learning goals and objectives that teachers set for learning and the objective set for the lessons observed can be described as primarily lower ordered in nature. These are listed in Table 40.

Table 40: Learning Goals set by Teachers

Sequence
Write
Express
Recall
Say
Classify
Define

An example of this is Ms. Pax’s oral expression lesson where students were asked to brainstorm and talk about their weekend before writing about it. She noted that,

“the main aim was for the others to be able to express themselves freely. To be able to give, because you know there was some verbs and stuff that weren’t too right and we corrected them. So for them to speak freely and to speak correctly. That’s mainly what the oral lesson, so if you have to go and speak to anybody you can represent yourself, you can speak to them; you can express your needs as clearly as anybody else. So that was mainly the aim of the oral lesson to get them to speak, put their ideas in a sequential order for the most part. So that was mainly it.”

► Teacher Technique: Brainstorming

The brainstorming technique (a series of teacher initiated questions) utilized in this session produced some meaningful responses from some those students who were able to articulate themselves very well. But for other students like Jade, participation in the session seemed difficult, and she was asked fewer questions that most students during the lesson. It was noticeable that Jade not only experienced difficulty clearly articulating

herself but for most of the session, she sat hunched over her desk for most of the lesson with her head bowed almost touching the top of the desk.

TQ: How was your weekend?

Jolie: Watched Double draw

Teacher: Did you go to church?

Teacher: How was your weekend?

Kevin: noted he went to the airport and saw planes from England

Teacher: what else?

Teacher: what else did you do at the weekend?

Kevin: watched airplanes

Teacher moves to Jade (head down, turned away to the left)

Teacher: (loudly/assertively) speak up and sit up

Jade - speaking in muffled tones

Teacher: when did you watch morning B'dos?

Jade: I saw a man cooking food (muffled) pump-in [pumpkin]

Teacher: hold your head up and sit up

Jade: She recalls she went to Chefette playground and saw a duck and fish (Extract from Classroom Observation)

In a post observation interview session we asked Ms. Pax about the difficulties Jade experiences, she noted that,

Q: What's the situation with Jade? You know you had to say to her "Well sit up," you know.

Ms. Pax: She has what they call global developmental delays, she walks with her head down all the time, she has very bad posture so you always have to

be reminding her to sit up, hold up your head, look at me, that kind of thing. So that's a constant reminder for her. Sometimes she does it, sometimes you still have to remind her about it.

► Teacher Student Interaction

The theme **teacher student interaction** comprises the intersection between **teacher's techniques and strategies, students' responses to what teachers do and say and the challenges teachers experience teaching students with special education needs.** The kinds of challenges teachers experience in the Unit for the Blind cannot be divorced from the characteristics of the students that they teach or the techniques that teachers employ during instruction in the classroom.

► Teacher Technique: Question and Answer

In this section, we highlight how one teacher deals with the challenge of **her students' 'unexpected responses to her questions'.** In response to the question: How often does that happen where you ask a question and you get something that you just didn't expect? This teacher noted that,

Ms. James: Every day. It's an everyday occurrence and I find that lots of times it stretches me because then I would have to dig in, I would have to search deep within my mind to see how best to respond to these children so that they get the correct answer and the correct teaching so I don't mislead them. So I can ensure that they're understanding what I'm saying because there are times when I would be explaining certain concepts and when I'm finished and I ask a question they're telling me something totally different and I would have thought well I was going quite well, I was explaining this quite well and you all were showing such great interest so what's this you're giving me now at the end of the lesson? And it would show me well these children really didn't know what I was talking about. So, it calls for

a lot of creativity, in my belief I think that you have to be really creative and there are days when the creativity it doesn't seem to really be there.

The topic for the lesson was resources and Ms. James had explained what man-made and natural resources are and had given students examples of each. To see if Jolie and other students in the class could distinguish between the two kinds of resources, she used a question and answer technique. It was noticeable that Jolie and Kevin were not giving the answers that Ms. James expected from the exchange that took place. In the post observation interview session the researchers asked Ms. James about her intentions and the reactions that she received from this student and other students during the session.

Researcher 2: Let's watch this clip, on the section I think on when you're trying to get them to identify what things are made from. So let's look at this section. (Beginning of Video clip) Teacher is in the classroom standing in front of students

*Ms. James: What about the shirts you are wearing? Feel your shirt, look at your shirts
Students touch shirts*

Ms. James goes over to Jolie and places her hands on her shirt, she then tells her to look at her skirt.

Ms. James: what is this material made from?

Jolie (in a monotone voice): material.

Ms. James: what type of material?

Jolie: red material

Ms. James: pardon me Jolie?

Jolie: the material made of pleats. (End of Clip)

The post observation interview

provided the opportunity for feedback on this section of the video, what Ms. James had to say is noted in the excerpt below.

Researcher 1: Did you expect them to say material?

Ms. James: (laughs) Somehow, I had expected to hear cotton so when they said, when she said material I was like "Oh dear, what do I do with this now?" But it is material it's a type of material so I just had to have them identify cotton as a type of material. (Video)

Researcher 1: Alright she's saying the material is made of pleats, were there pleats in the material?

Ms. James: The skirt has pleats, the skirt has pleats, the skirt is pleated. I'm glad she recognized there were pleats in the skirt so I could quite dismiss it because she's a child who doesn't really show a lot of interest in detail so to give me an answer like that I was quite pleased actually. Because she recognized that the skirt has pleats. I mean it would not have been an accurate answer but knowing her and knowing her nature I thought that was a pretty good answer.

Researcher 1: Right, then you said what was the...

Ms. James: here material comes from, what material is made from?

Researcher 2: Yeah, what material is made from? She said the material has pleats.

Researcher 1: So she's responding to you but not in the way that you... Ms. James: Anticipated.

Researcher 1: Right, now is this something, what do you deduce from that as far as this student is concerned? Would you have had expected the same answer say from [calls the names of other students in the class]? Would they have said

something different or would they have said the same sort of thing?

Ms. James: I'm not sure.

The researchers also asked Ms. James to comment on another instance of 'getting the unexpected answer' from another student, this time Kevin.

Researcher 2: Well actually there's an interesting clip in here with Kevin when you're talking about the breakfast. You move onto the food items, which is manmade and you ask him about his breakfast, what he had to eat, he told you biscuits so let's see if we could find that clip.

Researcher 1: What I found interesting was you were asking questions but they were not giving the kinds of responses that you were expecting but yet still they had a certain element of truth about them. Now, does that tell you anything about how they're functioning cognitively or anything like that?

Ms. James: Yes, it tells me that they are not aware of things that we would naturally be aware of, they don't have an awareness of those things and I find that it's a regular thing with students who are visually impaired because their visually impaired I find that they don't have many experiences. So, many times I would have to tell them things, you know they say you're supposed to ask children first find out what they know first but I find with these children many times you have to tell them things in order to get back information so it's not like you could just ask a question and get the quote unquote correct answer. It would have to be something that you have to teach them in order to get back the response you want.

Ms. James' assessment suggests that within student factors like lack of background knowledge and life experiences were responsible for the kinds of responses she received from her students. There is also the

suggestion that getting the right answer depends on teaching students how to regurgitate information. However Ms. James also admits that her questioning technique might also have contributed to students giving the kinds of responses to her questions that she received. She notes that,

Researcher 1: Alright, so if you had say to redo say this aspect of the lesson how would you deal with it given that when you ask certain kinds of questions you're getting certain sorts of responses. How would you modify that?

Ms. James: I can't think right now, but I would think that I would probably rephrase my questioning. I don't think I ask what were the things made from, I don't think I asked that, I think I ask where did they come from so I guess I would have rephrased how I questioned the students. I would have said well what is that made of, you know, what it is made from and stuff like that. And I would have liked to have the actual resources there, so that they can see and have the real experience of the resources if you understand what I'm saying. So I think that is what I would have done differently.

► **Teacher Preparation**

Both teachers report that planning for students with visual impairments does present some challenges. They note that although class numbers seem modest the nature of the child's impairment determines what kinds of accommodations, adaptations and planning will be needed. This is expressed by Ms. Pax in the excerpt below,

Researcher 2: So in terms of planning for your lessons, this is generally now, not just the oral lessons, how do you go about making decisions about how you're going to teach these kids that are visually impaired certain concepts about, whatever those may be? You're talking about something experiential here, you weekend, do you actually

plan how you're going to do the session from brainstorming right through to when they're actually going to write?

Ms. Pax: Yeah, I normally plan it, but then sometimes with children they can throw you off so you always have to have a backup plan as to what happens when they deviate from what you had previously planned. When it comes to planning lessons for the older ones, like the little boy that sits here, he has the potential for secondary school. So I stick to the regular Class 3/Class 4 curriculum, and I plan his work from that. These two don't, so what I try to do is to teach these two more functional things that when they leave here they would still know what to do. For example now, in Math they are doing time, so we are doing the digital clock as well as the analogue clock. So these are things that they will need as they leave. So we try to base, I try to base their planning around that. The other three, well Ms. Harding she follows the preschool, early childhood curriculum based on their academic level, where they are at. Because we base on what he is capable of and what these two are capable of then I plan the lesson around that.

Researcher 1: So in a sense you have to plan like mini lessons for different groups?

Ms. Pax: Yeah, at some times I can find myself doing three lessons at the same time. He (Jimmy) is easier to plan for because I can give him the work and set him to work but these two need a lot of one on one attention. Because like in things in comprehension, because her reading is not that well and she's been diagnosed with dyslexia, I have to do listening comprehension lessons with the two of them. They're on the same level, and then Katie can write the answers on her own, Michelle, I have to help her, I have to let her give me the structure of the sentence and then as she's writing it, since she has issues with spelling, I have to spell words for her. But I can give him his work and let him work on his own. So there are some times when

I have three lessons going on at the same time, or I have two. With maths, Michelle is better than Katie, so there are instances where Michelle is way ahead of Katie and he's by himself, so that's three different lessons as far as Maths is concerned. So it can be very hectic for the want of a better word.

The Unit for the Deaf

The Irving Wilson School also comprises of a group of students who are thought to be predominantly Deaf but whom teachers believe also have other co-morbid disabilities, that are undiagnosed. The number of students in this section of the school is also small with the pupil teacher ratios ranging from 1:3 to 1:6. In addition to this, the ages of students are also diverse, with younger students in the 6-12 age group and older students in the 14-18 age groups. All four teachers in this section of the school use total communication; that is teachers sign and use cued speech as they teach. As mentioned in the section on the Unit for the blind student characteristics is an important theme that plays a pivotal role in teacher's pedagogical decision making. How teachers describe students is noted in the Table 41.

Table 41: Reported Student Characteristics in Unit for the Deaf

Slow
Does not show interest
Aware of their surroundings
Mentally retarded with deafness
Processing very slow
Low functioning
Anxious
Disinterested in school

A case study of one student will be used to illustrate how co-morbidity influences pedagogy.

► **Case Study: Max**

Ms. Church Hill has three students in her class two of whom she describes as:

'hearing impaired and they are aware of their surroundings and what's happening so they participate, they think they know signs so they use the signs that they have to ask a question and to explain themselves but their signs are still not advanced as the other classes cause they are now learning sign language'.

However there is another student in her class, 8 years old Max who is sitting, humming and looking at the computer screen in front of him. Ms. Church Hill suspects that Max is autistic, she says that:

'Max is autistic but he has been ... to the school as being hearing impaired so what happens is that Max when he comes in the morning he doesn't participate in the activities and he doesn't say much repeats certain words, colours, numbers but he loses interest very fast and sometimes he doesn't show interest at all. He seems to be highly medicated and he's almost like if he just wants to sleep but he just stares, sometimes he would do an activity and he would count with you with numbers but it's very very short and that's it for him for the rest of the day'.

She also says that Max was placed in her class because his clinical assessment said that he was only hearing impaired, but she says that Max is not up to the same level as the other two students in the class and that teaching can present some challenges for her, she says that:

'yeah he's way beyond their level. He's way way beyond, cause its

challenging its hard sometimes too have these two to work with and have to sometimes find activities for them work with them set them to work so I can go over and work with him at times'.

Observations provided an insight into how Ms. Church Hill works with Max in her class along with her other two students.

► **Teaching Techniques: Use of Technology**

In a Language Arts lesson on story writing there is a picture of two boys playing football hung on a black board in the class room. Two students sit side by side and using sign, they tell Ms. Church Hill what is going on the picture. She writes each point on the boards and includes it in the concept map. Max sits at the teacher's desk in the back left hand corner of the classroom, humming as he stares at the screen of Ms. Church Hill's laptop computer. Ms. Jones sits next to Max softly coaxing him to say the names of letters on the screen. (Excerpt from Observation). In a post observation interview session Ms. Church Hill is asked about the use of technology and how she prepares instruction for Max in the classroom. She notes that,

'what we have on the computer is phonics, the alphabet that he can see and hear and respond, he likes the music so he dances and sometimes he would repeat the letters but it depends on how he comes to school, cause some mornings he comes to school he just cries and its hard to find out what is happening to him or sometimes he just laughs, he get attacks and throws things around so it depends what you can get from him ... like early in the morning and you can ... him because we get through as much as we can with him. Like after break that's it'

The above suggests that her decisions to utilise technology is influenced by

not only by Max's temperament but also his behaviour during the day.

► Teacher Preparation

Ms. Church Hill notes the importance of establishing a clear routine and guidelines for Max to follow and reward structures to keep max motivated during the day. She notes that,

What I have tried to do is to build a routine. So when he comes in the morning after prayers he knows he has to put his bag in the bag cupboard, he put his bag in the bag cupboard he goes to his seat. I come in early in the morning and I have his activities sorted out so we would ... depends on what the subject is for the morning, if its English sometimes I would give him an English activity, a colouring activity, something with the alphabet. He doesn't sort puzzles as in such, what he does is bites them up or the throws them away so it's difficult giving him puzzles and so on cause he just breaks them in half cause we have board puzzles so I would try to do a little activity, yes to colour or what I do, you write, he recognizes colours. If I write red, blue, yellow in a square and I give him the crayons, that's it, he colours on his own. So I give him a little sticker and compliment him, say well done so after that morning activity he goes to break, goes to the bathroom if he have a problem ... there are things he doesn't do on his own so what I try to do it to approach the mummy to let him do these things at home so it becomes easier ... problem that we're facing because his mum does everything for him. So now I have to try to get him, I decently got him to walk to the bathroom on his own but the others have to turn on the pipe and put the soap in his hands. He rubs his hands sometimes, sometimes they do it, he comes back ,he takes his bag ... open the bag take a snack and a drink out, close back your bag, line up and your going down to the lunchroom, you go down to the

lunchroom this is like a daily routine, something you have to keep up every day, so I have to do this every day for almost a month before he actually got just that ... he drinks his drink, eats a snack then we have to ... walk back to the line to line up with the others then to come back to class. When he comes back then you give him another activity but sometimes when he comes back after break he does nothing, you get nothing.

The Autistic Unit

The Autistic Unit is a recent addition to the Irving Wilson School and presently serves four students with Autism ages 5-6 years old.

The principal of the school in an informal interview noted that the Ministry of Education asked the school to initiate the programme for these students. He also noted that the room which serves students with Autism at the school is still being furnished and that the school was in need of a laminator and printer for the teacher to work with. It was however noted that private funding was received from the Canadian Women's Association who assisted with the purchase of toys and folders for the Unit. Presently only one

teacher serves this unit and she undertook an intensive training course in the Treatment and Education of Autistic and Communication –Related Handicapped Children (TEAACH) programme at the University of North Carolina.

The teacher noted that the programme was presented in weekly modules and combined observations of children with Autism with practical training on how to teach children with Autism. There are some key principles which guide this approach to teaching and working with these students and they include:

1. The utilization of a learning modalities approach to communicate with students with Autism, for example instruction is usually

delivered using visual cues and haptic approaches. Visual supports to make individual tasks understandable.

2. The construction and utilization of an IEP and Individualized Family Service Plan to guide the delivery of Education independent of the regular education curriculum
3. Structuring the physical environment
4. Using visual supports to sequence daily activities predictable and understandable

The team's observation of activities in this Unit revealed that the teacher was still trying to find ways of working with the students that would facilitate their learning and enable her to effectively manage instruction of all four students. A key theme which emerged here is Teaching Method in particular this teacher utilized differentiating instruction by activity to assist her in dealing with the different characteristics of students in the Unit. A related theme is teacher strategy speaks to the kinds of activities employed to assist this teacher in differentiating instruction.

► **Teacher Strategy - Visual Cues and Hands On Activities**

The materials used during one period of instruction with one student comprised a series of laminated circles with Velcro attached to the bottom to allow the student to stick squared pieces of velcroed paper onto during a mathematics counting activity. Buttons were used as objects for manipulation during the activity, but the teacher reported that these materials and activities did not always hold the attention of the student. In a post observation interview session the teacher noted that,

Ms. George: ok so then I said

"buttons they can roll too" they were rolling them, the only thing that they would not roll is the things to stick them with, I tried this activity with ... so they stick. Sometimes I would stick and they would have to put in the number but he is not, he can't write so well, he is now writing his name trying to write his name so I would give him the numbers to stick on. My problem with sticking on...

Researcher 1: so they have to stick the numbers on here?

Ms. George: sticking on here

Researcher 1: five and then they count these put the number here

Ms. George: then they put the total over there

Researcher 1: now how would they get the total because they can't move them? Ms. George: no then I would give them extra ones and they would stick them in this box here and ...: I'm trying to find something that they would not see it as something to play with, because whatever things I give them, the covers they did it, he didn't do it today but they would take the covers and they would roll them.

► **Hands on Activity**

In another part of the room another student worked on a discriminating activity, when asked about the objective of the exercise Ms. George noted that,

Researcher 1: this one with the different colours, what was the, you were trying to get them to differentiate the colours or I don't know

Ms. George: I'm just trying to for that activity what I want them to do is to put all the colours together.

When asked if direct instruction was used in the Unit the teacher noted that

Researcher 2: so you don't ever have a session where then either you could do a bit of direct teaching, where you could work on the board, then move from working on the board to then having them working on an activity. Is it always like a small group or individualized?

Ms. George: I don't, sometimes I do that activity like when you're really stressed you do you bring them all together and you ... [name of student] is not going to sit quietly and do an activity. Ok now an activity that we do together we do like art and craft activity you would sit and they like sticking or doing collage, that's their favourite and that's one thing that would keep them really quiet they would stick chair, and stick Those sort of activities like art and craft but I don't go

From the comment above one could note that the way instruction proceeds is not only influenced by the student's characteristics, their preferences and a need to maintain a well managed classroom, but also by the need to reduce teacher stress.

► **Challenges Working with Kids with Autism**

Non compliance with teacher directives, difficulties getting students settled for instruction, difficulties communicating with students and disruptive behaviour can present challenges during periods of instruction with students in the Autistic Unit. Ms George notes that, non compliance with teacher directives.

Researcher 1: nine plus four and he didn't want to do that, he then sees, he had the buttons and he kept some, didn't want to give you some. What is that?

Ms. George: I'm trying to find something that they would not see it as something to play with, because whatever things I give them, the

covers they did it, he didn't do it today but they would take the covers and they would roll them. She also indicated that getting students settled is also challenge that she is faced with she notes that,

Getting students settled

Researcher 2: what's the most challenging part for you of working with ...?

Ms. George: my most part is like we have four students these two can work together those two are at two different levels and the most challenging thing is to get them all settled and sit down and go from child to child to child cause you see I've been working with Julian I still have to pay him attention if not he's going to get all flustered and then he would get up and walk around good?

► **Communication**

Ms. George notes that sometimes she needs to seek the assistance of one of the students to facilitate communication with some of the other students in the class, she says that,

Ms. George: I use [name of student 1] a lot to get over the things that I want from them or you know he does a lot of communication, he will go he will talk to them and then he would say "teacher, [name of student 2] needs this and [name of student 2] needs that" they're not a lot of things he would ask for or he would communicate during the day like "bathroom" sometimes he will say he's going to the bathroom next time he will just run out "I'm going to the bathroom"...

► **Behaviour**

Behaviour sometimes can be a challenge for this teacher as well especially when the student is non-compliant during classroom instruction. One student while undertaking an alphabet activity

began to swing from left to right in a vigorous manner in his swivel chair and scream as Ms. George attempted to make him stay on task. When asked about his behaviour in a post observation interview session Ms. George noted the following,

Ms. George: [name of student] I don't know his problem is that when you push him, if you try to push him beyond his limit, he retaliates by screaming and crying. Sometimes you don't push him at all as he sits down to do a structured activity you get the tears you get the loud ... yes ... he doesn't like it I don't know why he keeps crying all the time. Even something when I say come lets get ready we going to do that activity days of the week we going to go through the calendar and things like that he would just start to cry he would cry I don't know I guess I have to spend a lot more time with him to really settle him

► Classroom Environment

The one classroom allocated for the delivery of instruction to students with Autism has a television set, individual stations, some visual aids on the walls (days of the week, calendar, months of the year). Ms. George was asked about the functions of the individual student stations, she noted that,

Individual student stations

Researcher 2: what's the function of the cubbyholes besides dividing the kids so they have their own individual space ...?

Ms. George: the function of the cubbyholes is for the individual activities so I put an activity here, activity here ... I think this is eight, one of them is eight the others are ten you got five and five. And I put it ten activities and you come and you sit down and start with your activities, work on your activities when you're finished

put it at the side and you go on until you finish all of your activities.

While it is evident that this facility is available to the student, there is a noticeable lack of other structures that are needed to support these students' routines in the classroom.

For example there are no classroom rules to guide behaviour, no classroom schedules to assist in following daily activities and no reward schedules to motivate students.

► Classroom Schedules

Ms George notes while she would like to implement classroom schedules for high functioning students there will still be need for her to teach students how to follow the daily schedules, she says that, [Name of student 3] is high functioning so I want to be able to give them a schedule so that they would come in look at the schedule see what they have to do for the day. I tried it once and it didn't work out because I would have to teach him what I want him to do for the schedule so that is going to take a little while to work it out. So when he comes in on mornings when I say go to your seat and start your activity he would look up there, go there and take off the activity put it over there and work on his own. On the issue of establishing and using reward schedules, Ms. George noted that she tried to implement a reward schedule for one student but did not think that the student was able to fully comprehend the meaning of the rewards. She said that,

Ms. George: I don't think, I haven't tried it really on a large scale but I've tried it but he doesn't understand rewards as yet I don't think he understand, [name of student 1] would understand well that was good work and the teacher give me a star but it has no meaning as yet to him.

THE SETTING/ SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

This section of the project presents findings from the evaluation of what teachers, at the Irving Wilson School, Ann Hill School, All Saints Primary School and St. Stephens Inclusive Unit had to say about the setting and school environment. Researchers sought to identify key themes that emerged from participant's narratives in the study. The findings will be presented in a number of tables that outline areas targeted by the research questions, themes that emerged and a distillation of participant's views.

Table 42: Philosophy of Teachers at Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
- Children have the capacity to learn - Productive citizens of Barbados
Teacher Philosophies
Teachers can make a difference,
Right support and resources needed to teach students,
Taught a special way,
Right communication tools needed to teach children,
Opportunity to be educated,
Only some students academically inclined,
More practical curriculum needed,
Just like regular peer,
Have potential,
Develop skills,
Children have rights,
Children can learn,
Become productive citizens

Teacher Philosophy

Table 42 presents findings on the philosophy of teachers at the Irving Wilson School.

'Children have the capacity to learn' was the most frequently referenced idea in teacher's responses to questions about their philosophy.

To illustrate one teacher noted that:

"All students have the capacity to learn. However these special students need the support and resources to assist them in this process. Meaningful aids."

Another teacher stated that:

"I believe they can learn much as long as they are determined to do so. I believe that our deaf children somehow imbibe from an early age the fallacy that they cannot do much. This makes the teacher's job very hard. It is very important that deaf children get exposed from the toddler stage to positive enabling stimulation that will set the stage for future success."

However it is also important to note a related idea which is that students also needed to be given the opportunity to show what they can accomplish, and this is ably illustrated in the following comments,

"I believe special needs students should be given opportunities and exposure to positive experiences to help him develop to his/her full potential. Ultimately I want to see a well rounded successful individual well prepared to face the world."

And similarly,

"I think if given the opportunity, the patience and love and with the right kind of resources each child has the ability to gain some concepts taught and enough skills to survive in the world."

Teachers' comments also indicated their beliefs that it was their personal responsibility to ensure that students of the school could become productive citizens once given the necessary skills, knowledge and training. This is best capture in the comments below by three teachers,

To provide my special education students with the skills and attitudes that would enable them to become productive citizens and to be able to fit into any social situation

To provide my students with the necessary skills so that they can develop an appreciation for life beyond school, to become independent citizens

I believe that every child has the ability to learn and each child is important. It is my duty to provide each child with current information and to impart knowledge to help them to develop and improve in every area of their lives so that they can become productive and influential members in our society. Also to encourage them to be independent so that they can lead fulfilling lives

The open ended questionnaire also inquired into teachers' beliefs about their students as part of the section on teaching philosophy. It reveals teacher's cognition about students' future trajectories and likely contribution to the wider Barbadian society (Table 43).

The consensus among teachers who answered this item on the questionnaire was that students from the school could make a valuable contribution to Barbadian society once they were given the opportunities, assistance and skills to show their talents. The most frequently referenced idea was that students needed to have the opportunity to show their skills, knowledge and talents. These ideas are revealed in the following comments below,

Once these students are provided with the necessary skills and attitudes they can be

valuable contributing members of society. They just have to be given the opportunity

And,

They can contribute just as much as their able bodied counterparts given the opportunities like hearing students they can and some have done very well especially where hearing isn't important. Cashiers, clerks, artisans, electricians, plumbers, tilers

An important precursor to such however, was the recognition that students of the school needed to be better prepared for their future, this is captured in comments by one teacher, she states,

Also I believe that the Ministry of Education and some schools do not do enough to make transition from school into the workplace possible for some students who have the potential to work. Teachers were

Table 43: Teachers' Opinions on Student Contribution at Irving Wilson

Identified Themes
Valuable contribution once given opportunities.
Teacher Opinions
Transition programme needed
Student need the opportunities
School needs to prepare students
Need opportunities to show talent
Government assistance needed
Going to work and contributing
Children can make a meaningful contribution

also asked what they think about the career pathway of students of the school (Table 44) and the findings of this section are discussed in the section on student trajectory.

It is interesting to note teachers' ideas here especially since they seem in stark contradiction to their cognitions about students' contribution to society. The most frequently referenced idea in this section was that many teachers saw students not making a valuable contribution in their adult lives. This is captured in the excerpts below,

Many have potential to go much farther than they will actually go instead they are distracted by negative peer pressure to join the band wagon that goes nowhere.

Another teacher notes,

Table 44: Teachers' Opinions on Student Trajectory at Irving Wilson

Identified Themes
Dependence
Teacher Opinions
Successful lives for the ambitious
Going to work
Getting into the trades
A decision that parents must make
Staying at home
Parent support needed
Not making a valuable contribution
Dependent on welfare
Dependent on government

Many just give up, lime and are involved in negative lifestyle they lack motivation

And,

However most deaf students for one reason or the other do not fulfil meaningful jobs roles in society but is society prepared to deal adequately with special needs

In fact, individual teachers suggested that parents would need to make a decision about their children's future and would most likely be the persons whom these students will dependent upon most. Other teachers expressed the view that financially, students would mostly likely dependent on disability benefits from the government.

On a more positive note, they were some teachers who felt that some students could become self employed or find work in the trades.

These comments are noted below,

A few of them I believe have some opportunity to find vocational employment but usually attitudes of some potential employers are no so positive.

And,

A few students have successfully done courses offered by Vocational Training Board, Hospitality, tiling, furniture, masonry

Location and Physical Setting

The Irving Wilson School is located in the Pine St. Michael near the Pine Housing area. The school itself is a two storey building with a privacy fence delineating the entrance to the school only. The compound is not enclosed and therefore is easily accessible by the general public. Table 45 presents findings on the location and physical environment at the Irving Wilson School.

This section of the open-ended questionnaire asked teachers to comment about the physical infrastructure of the school and its location. The most frequently occurring idea in this section was that most teachers did not have a problem with the location of the school. This is captured in some of the following comments,

The physical environment accommodates students fairly well

Similarly,

The layout is adequate and the location of the school is quite central

Table 45: Teachers Opinions on Student Location and Physical Environment of Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Accessibility of the School – Adequate Physical Environment
Teacher Opinions
Spacious classrooms
Space needed
Small classrooms
School not accessible
School not accessible for students
Need for emergency exit
Location is not a challenge
Location facilitates interaction with surrounding school
Architectural changes needed
Appropriate physical environment
Accessibility of schools

Another related and frequently occurring idea was that the school was fairly accessible especially for students at the school, this is captured by teachers' comments below.

The location is central and easily accessible (most one bus to terminal)

I think the location is central enough for everyone to get here.

It is easily accessible by any mode of transportation and in case of medical emergencies it is well situated near the hospital and the polyclinic

It is centrally located in the area of a polyclinic, supermarket, drugstore and transportation is readily available plus it is located between two schools

In spite of the above two teachers noted that the school's location was not ideal because it did not facilitate expansion and it was not central enough for students who might come from more 'distant parishes'.

The layout of the school is not too badly done because of the small numbers of the school at present the classrooms are adequate I do not think the location is ideal because there is no room for expansion of the school plant

And,

Our school is the only on its kind in the island and children have to travel from distant parishes to get to school. Perhaps deaf education could be decentralized where it would become closer to those who need it.

It is important however to note teachers' concerns about the school plant, in particular teachers made reference to the need for maintenance and an emergency exit. One teacher noted for example that, Recently a member of staff was stuck in the elevator and slid in the corridor Another teacher commented that,

Maintenance of the physical plant leaves a lot to be desired. Elevators are constantly in need of repairs. School needs a proper cleaning to rid it of dust mites, which causes some discomfort to both students and teachers. (e.g. wheezing, sneezing, swollen eyes etc)

Another comment on the issue of maintenance was:

Since being rebuilt in 1999 the school has not had a proper cleaning which is much needed thus jeopardizing the health of staff and students

The need for an emergency exit was indicated by one teacher who notes that,

[There is a] need for an emergency exit

There were few references to the size of the classroom found in teachers' questionnaire responses. One teacher noted the following,

The physical environment is adequate in that each classroom is spacious which provides the student with comfort.

Another said,

I think that the layout of the classroom may be too small for the kind of activities you would like to

Table 46: Relationships between Staff Members at the Irving Wilson School w

Identified Themes
– Cordial
Teacher Opinions
Good staff relationships
Respectful
Professional

have and also not enough room for the charts or poster with valuable information to put on display

Relationships

A key aspect of the open ended questionnaire asked teachers to comment on the nature of relationships between teachers at the school and parents, management and other staff members.

The results for this section of the questionnaire are discussed next.

Staff Relationships

Responses to this question were limited, but for those teachers who did respond, two suggested that the relationship between staff at the school can be described as fairly good in spite of the differences which can be expected within any organisation (Table 46).

The nature of the relationship between staff members is good to a certain extent. Mostly the younger teachers' work well together, we share teaching resources or share valuable opinion to each other.

Another teacher notes,

They share resources and help by mentoring younger teachers. We try to cooperate so the children are benefitted. Relationship is fairly good. We have difference but that is expected in any situation.

Teachers were also asked to comment about the nature of the relationship between themselves and parents of students at the school. These findings are presented next.

Teacher and Student Relationships

The most frequently reported idea in the data was that teachers and students of the school enjoyed a good relationship. These were characterised in a variety of

ways as noted in Table 47.

Teachers who noted that they enjoyed good relationships with their students reported the following,

I do think my students and I have a good relationship. Sometimes they may become a little familiar but they are usually good

And,

The relationship is a good one very comfortable. Students are encourage to express their ideas and feelings openly to their teachers so it is a very relaxed environment

A similar idea is expressed by this teacher,

It's quite pleasant I think that I respect my students and they in turn respect me also

Good relationships here encompassed a variety of things such as creating a

Table 47: Relationships between Teachers and Students at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Good relationship
Teacher Opinions
Students not doing homework
School as a haven for troubled students
Relaxed environment
Make learning fun and interesting
Good relationship with students
Counselling students

relaxed environment and engendering a feeling of respect for each other.

Teachers and Partents

Another aspect of relationship that was investigated is the nature of the relationship between teachers and parents of Irving Wilson School. The findings are presented in Table 48.

The reaction here is a mixed one, since teachers reported opposite views on the issue of parent-teacher relationships. References in the data can be described as positive and negative for example teachers whose comments can be described as more positive include those who said that,

Some parents are always willing to help their children with their development and are easy to work with

Another teacher reported that,

Usually however the parents were quite approachable and were willing to provide the necessary resources for their children

On the other hand there were those teachers who describe the relations with parents as difficult

Table 48: Relationships between Teachers and Parents at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Mixed reactions
Teacher Opinions
Open door policy
Not involved enough
Some parents difficult to work with
Dependent on parent's education level

Others can be quite difficult and the relationship between both them and the teacher suffers because of this and the best interest of the child

An area of concern raised in teacher's comments was that some parents were not as involved in their children's education as they ought to be as captured in the comments below,

The PTA should be the main body that would foster this. For a very long time this has not been operational. Teachers have to take the initiative to strike up a relationship with parents. Parents show very little interest in the performance or future of their children.

Some may attend if there's a problem with conduct but efforts should be made to revive the PTA!

And,

Parents only respond when asked from my experience, parents do not approach and ask what can I do to help my child. I realize that I had to approach them to encourage them to work with their children

Peer Relationships

Table 49: Relationships between Students at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Mixed response
Teacher Opinions
Students at schools do not mix
Hearing and visually impaired students assist each other
Interaction between students who are blind and deaf
Friendship with others outside of school

Teachers were also asked to comment on their observations of peer relationships at school. Their comments are recorded in Table 49.

Teachers' responses to this item on the questionnaire revealed a mixture of opinions on the nature of peer relationships at the school. These comments can be classified as positive and negative. For one teacher, she notes that the more positive aspect of the relationship between students can be seen in the way the students 'assist each other', she notes that,

Because the school has always been a school for the hearing a visually impaired the relationship between the students have been good there have been times when the hearing impaired looked for the visually impaired and assisted them when necessary

On the other hand some teacher expressed the view that at peers really did not integrate as well at the school, a feeling that is also captured in the section on school culture.

For me there is little interaction between students in the unit and the others as well as the autistic class. At times it feels like three different schools.

And,

The blind and deaf students do not mix with each other because of communication. The blind do not know sign language and the deaf do not speak enough language for the blind to understand. However, the older deaf still help the blind students when necessary

Another teacher notes that,

The relationship between the students is fairly good the blind and deaf don't do a lot together. PE, (voiceover), sing/ sign, daily prayers – Muslims are separated. Playtime and lunch time they don't know signs so little interaction

Support from School Management

Teachers were asked what kind of assistance they received from management of the school in the area of further training, resources and support. The responses to this section are presented in Table 50.

Some teachers noted that they received support in the form of resources needed, training and teaching aids from management of the school. These comments are noted below,

Need for resources: there are more than enough resource provided by the principal. Need for training: the principal is always looking for good training opportunities for his staff. Need for teaching aids: although this may take a while the principal does his best to provide teaching aids that are necessary

Table 50: Teachers' Opinions on Support from School Management at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Mixed response
Teacher Opinions
Teachers make resources
Some resources provided by the principal
Resources provided do not always take student's needs into consideration
Not enough support
Resources are insufficient
Dependent on external resources
Costly resources

And,

The principal is very supportive of any initiative put forward by teachers that will benefit the children

On the other hand, they were other teachers who expressed the view that resources and support were not as forthcoming as they would have liked and these can be attributed to a number of reasons: that resources needed are costly and some of the training offered did not meet her needs,

With regards to resources many of the things we can need can only be sourced from overseas so we are able to obtain them. Local resources are given dependant on your relationship with the principal at the time. Often times the in-house workshops does not cater to the population which I teach thus questioning its relevance to me Again most teaching aids have to be sourced from overseas and depending on their cost are not easily provided

And,

Need for training and so on do not come from the principal as often as they should

School Culture

A very important aspect of the section on school environment is the issue of school culture. In this section of the report teachers express their views on the nature of the school's culture at Irving Wilson (See Table 51).

The most frequently cited response was that the school was supportive of students with special needs.

Teachers noted for example that,

Our school is very supportive of students with special needs. Teachers try to provide as many opportunities as possible for the students' development.

And,

This school is a special school and it is very supportive of students with special needs. All of the students here have special needs, although each special need may be different.

A similar comment is noted by this teacher,

Generally speaking the school is supportive of students with special needs.

However, an issue of concern is that some teachers report that there are other teachers who are not as facilitative of student integration as they should be; these are captured in the theme teacher factors and in the comments below,

Table 51: Teachers' Opinions on School Culture at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Social Integration
Teacher Factors
Teacher Opinions
Supportive school culture
Integration through activities
Teacher beliefs hinder integration
Limited participation of some groups of students
Children not treated equally by some teachers
Personal issues hinder support
More interesting social activities needed
Limited in some areas

Some teacher don't give students an opportunity to highlight their talents and abilities because they do not treat them equally, because of this type of behaviour towards those students the other children looking on treat them the same.

Another comment noted that teacher's personal issues hindered student integration,

Sometimes personal issues may hinder certain things

Other comments highlighted the need for the school to do more to assist students in their pursuits after they left the institution. One teacher's comments noted that,

School can do more in speech therapy for students who would benefit. Older students need to be involved in programmes/projects that would help them after graduation. SJPP offers practical subjects government skills training need to learn sign language to accommodate deaf students

Classroom Environment

Teachers were also asked to comment on the kind of classroom environment that they created for learning at the school. What teachers said is presented Table 52.

Teachers who reported on this section of the questionnaire indicated that they wished to create classrooms that were student friendly; although this has a variety of individual interpretations there is the commonly held view that a student friendly environment is: comfortable, child centred, safe, and a place where children wish to come and learn. The methodologies teachers use to accomplish this are primarily through activity and engaging pupils in dialogue.

A typical example of teacher's comments is expressed in the excerpt below,

I try to create an environment where everyone is comfortable where there is order and everyone knows what is expected of them with regards to behaviour and work ethic. This is accomplished by teachers and students having conversations not only about academics, but also about their lives and activities outside of school, their feelings, goals and aspirations for the future

And,

I try to create an environment where students feel happy, comfortable and confident. Encourage pupils to respect each other and show tolerance and patience. Emphasize they are all deaf and need to support each other. We listen to each other's news and questions, discuss problems they face and try to find solutions. Use of drama to help relieve stress or find different ways to solve problems and help each other and find a peaceful solution for problems now or future
Another teacher notes that,

Table 52: Teachers' Opinions on Classroom Environment at the Irving Wilson School

Identified Themes
– Student Friendly
Teacher Opinions
Students wish to come and learn
Safe comfortable and student friendly
Positive learning environment
Discovery oriented
Create activities and nurturing environment
Comfortable classroom environment
Child centred and friendly

I always strive for a nurturing and learning classroom environment. I ensure that each of my students is comfortable emotional and that he/she feels important. Each morning, they're greeted with pleasantries. In respect to the learning environment I try to ensure that teaching aids are appropriate and activities are provided which they can relate to.

Student Accommodation

Teachers at the school were asked what kinds of accommodations they felt students in the school needed to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Teachers' comments included suggestions for: curriculum changes, better transition programmes at the school, better security at the school and more aesthetically pleasing classrooms. These captured in the comments below,

The curriculum be adjusted when students reach age 13. More vocational subjects be introduced, to cater to students individual needs.

And,

I would like to see a more active transitional programme for students who are leaving school. Also a change in the current curriculum to cater to the needs of the older students.

Another teacher noted,

I'd like to see someone paid to stay at school before and after teachers leave so they'll be safe. At the moment one caregiver caters to Ann Hill and Irving Wilson. Students could be settled and have a snack and be engaged in useful supervised activities or homework as they will get home late and be tired.

CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONS:

ANN HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

FUNDING

This principal identified funding as one of the major issues for the school, which was previously highlighted by Principal 1. It was her view that more interest was seemingly taken by the Ministry of Education, in students of mainstream schools because such students were seen as being potentially the main contributors to the economy

HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES

The rationale for this focus group was to determine what the issues and concerns that parents of special needs students are confronted with, both in the teaching-learning environment and the home environment. Parents with children attending the Ann Hill's Primary School were participants of the focus group. Ann Hill's is a primary school and caters specifically for special needs education students.

Issues of Concern to Participants

Parents believed that the teachers do a tremendous job. The major issues that arose from the focus groups are:

1. The amount of resources that are allocated to the school
2. The level of training and specialisation of staff
3. The content of the curriculum.

Adequacy of Resources

Parents indicated that there is a need for money to run the school and that the school should benefit from and special funding. Another concern raised by parents was that the school had only one janitor and no security personnel attached to it. There was a strong need for teaching aids and other staff members who can take care of the students when they have difficulties. Among these other staff members, the need for speech therapists and physiotherapists were highlighted.

When a student has seizures the teachers need to stop whatever they are doing and attend to that particular student. Some of the students are very aggressive and difficult to handle reinforcing the need for teacher aids and more personnel in general. The need to use more technology within instruction was also highlighted.

One parent asked that an analysis should be made about the environment here and the one overseas, so that where there are gaps we can see what needs to be implemented. To pursue the point of lack of resources further, one of the parents stated that government speak about education but their focus seems to be on the more productive. When asked what parents can do to assist the school in general, one parent responded that they can do fundraising and lobbying.

Training and Specialisation of Staff

Also stated as a necessary area for consideration is the fact that some teachers need refresher courses in teaching and dealing with such a wide area of disabilities, since the challenges of the students at

the school are wide and varied. They need training materials to work with 'basic stuff', is needed

The Content of the Curriculum

Relating to the curriculum, one parent wanted more focus in the area of sports. Another parent made the valuable point that some of these students are not going to be able to work and as a result they need other activities other than the traditional methods of teaching, they need music, she stated.

PEDAGOGY

This report is based on 7 separate instructional sessions, five (5) of which were video-recorded. In addition there were two (2) self-evaluation feedback sheets completed, four (4) post-instruction interviews and one (1) pre-instruction interview.

About the Students

A class of about 10 or 11 students about 12 years old, allocated to the Ann Hill School because they were considered too weak to do the BSSEE (11-Plus) exam. These students have weaknesses in reading and writing and in mathematics apart from challenging disabilities which include Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Williams' Syndrome, Learning Delays, as well as heart and vision problems;

A class of 7 boys, aged 14-16, and another class of 7 girls also aged 14-16; both classes being seen in life-skills development "work-shops", the boys doing leather craft and the girls doing fibre arts.

A group of four (4) students with ages ranging from 14 – 17; these students seemed to have the most severe manifestations, in the school, of autism and Down Syndrome; A class of six (6) boys, [15-16 years old] described by their teacher as "having physical impairments as well as

speech and mild visual impairments and are mentally challenged." Two of these students can have a seizure, an occurrence which causes great disruption as one of the students is a big person and very difficult to control when a seizure takes place.

Goals and Objectives

The school is particularly focused on the development of basic 'fit-for-life' skills, the major aim being to reduce the likelihood of the students 'being taken advantage of' by others in the society. The aim is also to provide students with a set of basic skills "so that when they leave school, they will have something to take them on in life" (VC). In one lesson on "money", the teacher (SC) stated,

"Well, today's lesson was basically to get my boys involved in learning money which would actually help them when they leave school, in terms of when they are working and getting a job, making money, that no one will rob them and they will be able to identify their money...and know how much they have to give and how much they have to receive." It was evident that the process for helping students to develop basic life skills started from the youngest age group and there was a planned development (devised by the school) to ensure a great likelihood of student success. The teacher in charge of Agricultural Science at the school gave an overview of the present process and plans for Agricultural Skills development which may be summarized as follows:

- Devising a curriculum that was interesting, realistic and achievable by Ann Hill students
- Developing an interest in "farming the land", recognizing that the land can produce, that produce is expensive, that proper crop preparation and marketing leads to profitable returns

- The Programme “takes them through to marketing” Apart from involvement of the produce preparation, there would be practical consideration in ‘making contact with customers, training in how to speak to speak to customers, how to sell their product; what to say and what not to say, and so on.

- Marketing would be (and has already been) done on a real-time basis. [an example was given]

- Over the course of a year, assessment was carried out by means of a checklist of knowledge and skills, appropriate to different levels and characteristics of students. For students leaving school, they would be presented with a certificate indicating the knowledge and skills they would have acquired. This certificate would be of benefit to them when they are looking for a job as the prospective employer would be able to see “what they are coming with”.

It is evident, then, that there is a clear focus on preparing the students to be able to cope in society, ensuring that, as far as it lies within each student’s capability, they attain basic understandings about living and leave with dependable life skills.

The Ann Hill School has undertaken a responsibility to help students make the most of the potential that each has and encourages them to strive to excel in spite of any impediment they may have. This element of the school’s focus has been brought out in the overall involvement of the school in cultural activities. There is, first of all, the recognition that a great deal of learning and development takes place outside the classroom setting and, with the zeal and determination of some of the school’s teachers, the pupils (and in particular the school choir) have taken part in fund-raising

“Corey (one past member of the school who suffers from cerebral palsy) is an inspiration to all and is an outstanding musician”

concerts, celebratory cultural events and special programmes (at least once in conjunction with the Royal Barbados Police Force Band) and seem to have derived much pleasure and benefit from them. Corey (one past member of the school who suffers from cerebral palsy) is an inspiration to all and is an outstanding musician. There is great enthusiasm over the music, singing and dancing which has helped persons to improve their coordination and timing as well as the ability to work as a unit, and to play their own little part in contributing to an overall successful product.

An article by Healy (2010) entitled “The hope of music’s healing powers” provides information from research studies which seem to indicate the benefits that may be gained by persons with various physical and mental challenges through the medium of music. One extract from this article reads as follows:

“Music might provide an alternative entry point to the brain, because it can unlock so many different doors into an injured or ill brain,” said Dr. Gottfried Schlaug, a Harvard University neurologist. Pitch, harmony, melody, rhythm and emotion – all components of music – engage different regions of the brain. And many of those same regions are also important in speech, movement and social interaction. If a disease or trauma has disabled a brain region needed for such functions, music can sometimes get in through a back door and coax them out by another route.”

The Classroom Environment

For the older students involved in life-skills development, the classroom settings were unsuitable for their work. A 'normal classroom' had to be converted into a workshop setting and the pavement outside the classroom had to be used to provide space so that the students could 'spread out' the items with which they were working. There was also insufficient cupboard space for materials and finished products to be stored.

"Leah showed herself to be a diligent worker and at the recent Graduation ceremony"

In at least one situation where the class size was small, a classroom had to be shared by two different classes which included students with autism in one case and Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy in the other. It was noticeable in this classroom, background music was supplied by at least one teacher {when this class was visited, Pachelbel's "Canon in D" was being played}.

Teacher and Pupil Activities

The major characteristics of the lessons seen were: focus on individual progress, monitoring each person's activity, providing immediate feedback and giving assistance, carrying out demonstrations, providing opportunity for peer-peer involvement, checking responses, requiring explanations, meaningful practical tasks – within the student's frame of reference, at a relevant level of difficulty.

An example from a lesson in Fibre Arts: The teacher explains:

"Erica...is doing an African fan (part of a project for African Heritage Day)... Leah is starting hers right now, so she is getting the sticks together

so she would make one similar to Erica, so they would be a pair. They are fans to be put on a wall...Leah has a little problem with her hands [she suffers from cerebral palsy and this requires her to receive help with some aspects of manipulation] so she cannot work as fast as Erica. While Erica can work on her own, I have to assist Leah...in starting to wrap (a particular part of the fan)."

The teacher then demonstrates and explains to the students how they are to set about their task. Leah, though slower than Erica, was able to help her in finishing one part of the fan as she had a clearer idea of what to do. Leah showed herself to be a diligent worker and at the recent Graduation ceremony, received a special prize for outstanding work in basketry – despite her physical challenge. That she could be motivated to produce work of outstanding quality is testament to the school's positive policy in helping students to achieve – one step at a time.

The atmosphere in some classes which involved reading, writing, mathematics and which required some degree of "seat work" was not as positive as those which involved more practical work. There are evident weaknesses in these areas and students have a tendency to be more restless in such classes. However, the teachers seen used games and role-playing to make the lessons 'fun and more interesting' to keep students on task.

A post-instruction interview with one teacher reveals some of the difficulties faced by a class of 11 students who have disabilities such as cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, William's syndrome as well as global learning delays, and her attempts to deal with them. The topic is "Ordinals"

... the ordinal numbers they need it to learn dates and we have a calendar in class and so a lot of them needed to know, a lot of them we take for

granted. They don't know when their birthday is, they don't know when they're born. They don't know how to read a calendar. So they'll see two and they'll call it "it's the two of the month" and sometimes when we started doing the calendar when they would come and stick stuff up every day I realized that well hey they don't know the ordinal numbers and so then when I decided to do tourism I opted to do ordinal numbers because there's a particular season for tourists to come and so if we're dealing with months, then you're going to be dealing with dates, and if you're dealing with dates then you need to know ordinal numbers. So that's how the ordinal numbers came in. But basically I would probably have to keep doing ordinal numbers probably until next term again because for the first term we've been doing number recognition and we've been doing number recognition from then until now because James is up into hundred thousands but the others, Andre can't make it past 50, Kya can't make it past 100, Tricia can't make it past 40, Jamie can't make it past 2, Tony can't make it past 5, Alexa can go all the way up to 19 but then to recognize, she can count up to 19 but she just knows it by rote. So she doesn't recognize, if I show her certain numbers but past 20 she doesn't recognize numbers and so we've been doing number recognition to kind of build their skills and we'll probably have to be doing that for the rest of the school year so...

Researcher 2: So ... in a previous lesson you would have got them to associate numbers with their ordinals. So like this is number one, so this is first, and two would be second, and three would be third, but then there are some where the number and the start of the ordinal would be more or less similar, like four and fourth, five and fifth, six and sixth. ..well what difficulties did they have with associating the numbers with the ordinals?

Teacher: They had, some of them had quite a few difficulties, which is why most of my math concepts and my language arts concepts will run for the entire week and sometimes the week after. Some of the problems that they had was because some of them cannot read some of them still, so because most of my lessons are PowerPoint based I usually make them pretty interactive and stuff like that so my first lesson would have accompanied a PowerPoint presentation and stuff like that where they can actually go up and it clicks and it goes to the web and they can play an interactive game and stuff like that but some of the problems that they had is because they a lot of them don't know phonics, it's such a big problem with them so because of their problems with reading they will hear fifth, they would know you say five and fifth go together but then in their minds when it comes time to ask them "ok what position is this thing in" they're trying to figure out "okay what number did they say represents fifth? If I count in order" and some of them if they don't write the numbers down in order they don't remember even they would count to five but they cant remember what comes before five, what comes after five and then you throw in, you're asking them to visually discriminate between the word, to match the word to the you know like the word fifth. So in other words because that phonemic awareness is not there, they don't see an F or hear the sound "f" they think F. It's like a guess almost to their point. So some of them have missed those foundation skills that we know have to work on...

Researcher 2: To try to get them better

Teacher: Right so that's one of the problems that we had that some of them still, they would know how to count to five they would know ok 1,2,3 and that person down there would be the five

person, but some of them still have problems with five, fifth. They still didn't think and still didn't get it.

Researcher 1: What I was interested in, in this particular clip, looking at the different kinds of activities, and how do you make decisions about differentiating the content that you give your students?

Teacher: It comes from knowing them. So before I even decided to split them up I took a good three weeks of the first term to just assess them. And so I know who recognizes numbers up to what, and I always write that stuff down and if they learn something new I add that to it and so then I have this one place that I go back to look before I start another concept so that I know okay, this person's going to have problems with this because they still have not grasped this particular concept, so then I will need to find this activity for them. This person's going to have problems with this so I would need to find this particular concept for them and so then that's just basically how it all decides.

With regard to that lesson, two students merit specific mention – Philip and Tanya. Philip had a tendency to be very disruptive and attention seeking, usually by unsocial means. Although it might seem that the teacher was somewhat lenient towards him and praising what seemed to be contrary to the class' instructions, it was revealed that he had a great inability to use his fingers, so much so that he was not able to hold or manipulate a pair of scissors. The teacher had been working with him steadily to increase his competence in that area. His obvious enjoyment in cutting up strips of paper was not 'of evil intent' but rather the exuberance that comes when one masters something that one has not been able to do before. The teacher's praise was not misplaced. In Tanya's case, at the end of the lesson, even though she was experiencing some

difficulty, she had to try to manage to use the pipe to wash her hands, to help her not to lose a measure of self respect by having someone do a simple, but daily necessary individual task. In another maths lesson, the teacher used various types of role play to interest students and help them focus on the tasks in hand:

Well, My students, they like fun. All I have to do is make sure the lesson is interesting, and it's lots of fun, and it is something not too high up, but down to their level. ... so in order to get my ideas and my strategies and whatever over I let them become involved. Instead of me doing everything, as they've realized, there is a point in time when they are going to pretend to be the teacher and they have to do just like how I did ... and they have to call another student. Instead of me being at the front, and to me, this is preparing them to go into the world of work and to be able to work amongst people. Some of them may be managers, supervisors, and should be able to give a directive, right, so I am just training them from now. I don't really have the bad behaviour as much in my class because when they are at the front they know how it feels because each and every one of them go to the front and pretend to be the teacher at some given point in time.

Assessment

Immediate feedback, monitoring, use of questions, checklist of knowledge and skills. Most, if not all of the assessments were carried out informally. There was a great deal of on-going individual and whole class questioning and immediate teacher response accompanied by demonstration where necessary. One teacher used a checklist of skills, with the intention of providing a certificate at school leaving time indicating what had been accomplished.

THE SETTING/ SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Teachers at Ann Hill School also filled in an open ended questionnaire which sought to examine the nature of the school setting or teaching environment at this institution. The discussion that follows highlights what teachers at this institution had to say about the school, its location and the relationships between teachers, parents, students and management.

Teacher Philosophy

The most frequently cited comment from teachers' data suggests that they view students as teachable and in need of opportunities to show their talents and potential. Another related idea was the belief that teachers could make a difference in the lives of their students with respect to assisting students in realising their potential (see Table 53 for responses). These ideas are captured in the comments of teachers who stated that,

All students can and do learn. How they learn varies and has a lot to do with their interest and in the delivery of material. The learning styles of students is absolutely necessary for transfer of learning as well as to keep them motivated to learn

Another teacher said that,

I believe these students specifically those in the class I am currently teaching have the potential to learn. While some may have challenges with reading with an intensive reading programme these students will be able to make significant strides in their capacity to learn

And,

Every student can learn. I believe that the pre-conceived ideas which would have been learnt from persons not really can fail with the students

could be eliminated – some students are trainable and others educable – There are a number of learning disabilities and there are many ways of learning and expressing knowledge. Most can learn by simply finding alternative methods of instruction with the needed accommodation and assistive technology to stimulate the learning to the best they can be

For those teachers who noted that students needed to have the opportunity to learn the following excerpt captures what these teachers said,

Students with special needs are human

Table 53: Philosophy of Teachers at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Children have the capacity to learn
– Provide opportunities
Teacher Philosophies
Children can learn
Give students the opportunity
Every child is teachable
Children need interesting content
Meet their potential
Social interaction
Structuring teaching and learning environment
Student centred teaching
Support those who are employable
Teachers make a difference
Transfer of learning

beings who need love, care and attention like any other students. They need to be given the best resources, human and material, in order to allow them opportunities to develop to their fullest potential and to become productive students and citizens in our country

Teachers also saw themselves as powerful agents and catalyst to empowering their students with the skills and knowledge they would need to meet their potential. These teachers viewed their methodologies as instruments which needed to be varied to cater to the diverse needs of student's abilities and learning styles. This idea is best captured in the following comments,

My beliefs are that I must be organized, patient, and be able to motivate students. I have to be understanding of the students special needs, and accepting of differences in others. I also believe that it is very important to interact with these students as frequently as possible in their various levels of development. The importance of displaying a positive attitude toward students

Another comment which captures the importance that teachers place on themselves is,

All students can and do learn. How they learn varies and has a lot to do with their interest and in the delivery of material. The learning styles of students is absolutely necessary for transfer of learning as well as to keep them motivated to learn

Student Contribution

A related idea is that of student contribution and teachers' beliefs about this area could also inform the philosophies that they hold (see Table 54).

One of the most frequently cited idea in this section on student contribution is that teachers felt that students of the Ann Hill School had the capacity to make a valuable contribution to the society. This

view is tempered however, by other comments which suggest that some students will not go on to positively impact the Barbadian society.

Teachers who believed that students would make a positive contribution noted that,

Some will make a positive contribution others a negative one. Some of these students will go out and work hard to make two ends meet

Another teacher noted that,

These students are talented and creative individuals. They can excel in the non-traditional sectors such as artisans, musicians, additionally with guidance some can become small business owners. They may do very well as many have the will to succeed and because of their disabilities they will work harder to achieve these goals.

And,

Very positive if given the help, support and exposure to work in the various fields mentioned earlier

On the other hand, some comments were less optimistic with respect to students' ability to make a positive impact to society, one

Table 54: Teachers' Opinions on Student Contribution at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Positive contribution
Teacher Opinions
Negative
Positive
Same as others

comment which really captures the sentiment well is noted below,

However if they sit at home idly, they will make little or no contribution to the society. These students will become a burden on the society and the welfare system

Another teacher notes that,

If not given opportunities to be productive some would get involved in negative behaviours

Student Trajectory

Teachers at Ann Hill School also indicated the likely trajectory for many of their students in their adult lives.

Their comments are noted in Table 55.

Teachers' views about students' trajectory can be characterised as positive, the most commonly occurring idea was that teachers saw students from Ann Hill articulating into other vocational programmes at other institutions. This comment is supported by the following,

Some may have to go to another

Table 55: Teachers' Opinions on Student Trajectory at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Employable and Vocation Education
Teacher Opinions
Dependent on relatives
Doing nothing
Going into the trades
Going to work
Other skill based institutions
Self-employed

institute that caters and focuses only on skills based programmes then to move on in the world of work

And,

Other skilled based learning institutions. Work

Another comment notes,

High functioning students can go onto polytechnic, skills training with support

Going to work was another comment which featured prominently in the data collected on this area, one teacher whose comment is typical of what others said is,

Some of these young learners can move on in the world of work and function at their ability level.

Table 56: Teachers' Opinions on Location and Physical Setting at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Accessibility – Security issues
Teacher Opinions
Accessibility of the school
Adequate layout but developments needed
Criminal activity a problem of the location
Good mix of suburban life
Lack of transportation a problem
Modern facilities
Not much flooding
Plant upgrade needed
Security problems
Spaces for recreation and socialization needed
Wheel chair accessible

Location and Physical Setting

Teachers were asked their views about the location and physical setting of Ann Hill School and what they said are indicated in the Table 56.

The most commonly occurring idea in this section on teachers' responses was that the Ann Hill School is highly accessible, by that teachers mean that the school was easy to get to via local transportation. One comment that captures what teachers meant is,

I have never experienced this as an issue – a bus comes to the neighbouring school and if the students are given permission they can use it. The main road is quite near and the use of public transportation is quite accessible. There is not much interference from the public

Another noted,

It is central, easy access for students coming from across the island

In spite of this there are some important concerns about the security of the school given its location, this is captured in the comments noted below,

No security day or night not even the basic that one could find at other schools e.g. no watchman, or relief watchman, no security guard during the day

A similar comment is made by this teacher, who notes that,

The Pine area is known for criminal activity. I have experienced the discomfort of regular break-ins, the sound of gunshots and person running on to the compound in pursuit of each other or just walking aimlessly through the school while it is in progress

And,

One major challenge is the fact that the school is on the perimeter of the Pine or Pinelands, which is a housing area with a reputation for drugs, crime and violence. The school has experienced several break-ins or burglaries as a result of its location and proximity to the Pine

Classroom Layout

Teachers also shared their comments about the layout of classrooms at Ann Hill and noted that the school was responding to an increase in its roll and this presented problems which affected the way teaching and learning is organised.

One teacher noted for example that,

Given the number of students being diagnosed with special needs continues to increase yearly, creating a school with three classrooms is impractical. As the roll increases which it is expected to, classrooms will become crowded and the plant will suffer

Another said that,

The layout of the school is not adequate in a number of areas: The hall is too small and could be extended. The ceramic room is quite inadequate –way too small. There is no workshop area to develop leather craft into a viable business project – This is done in the ceramic room/classroom. There are not enough classrooms for students. In addition the classrooms are small

And, The layout of the classroom and school is not catering to the needs of the students. The school was built in order to accommodate a small number of students but yet the school caters to a large number of students. The classroom has to be used to cater for 2 classes instead of one making it clustered a crowded

Staff Relationships

Teacher comment on staff relationships can be found in Table 57.

Based on comments made by teachers in response to this section of the questionnaire, the most frequently occurring idea was that staff enjoyed good working relationships that were characterised as professional, cordial and to the benefit of the pupils. An excerpt which captures these sentiments is noted below,

Relationships among staff members is generally cordial

With regard to working in students' best interest, one teacher noted that,

Excellent – and I have been in it for years and somehow even though we have our own beliefs – we still work together for the development of the students – This is something I have noticed for many years – it is commendable

Table 57: Staff Relationships at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Cordial
Teacher Opinions
Camaraderie
Conducive relationship that benefits students
Good working relationships
Cordial and professional
Some personal differences

Teacher and Student Relationships

The nature of teacher student relationships was also investigated in the open ended questionnaire, the comments are extracted from what participants said about the nature of these relationships

(see Table 58).

Teachers' relationships with their students at Ann Hill can be characterised as student centred; in this context, it encompasses having a good rapport with students, catering to the learning styles, allowing students to express themselves and being congenial in the classroom. These sentiments are captured in following comments,

Excellent. I allow my students to express themselves and how they feel in the best positive way they can. I try to cater to their learning levels, rates and abilities

Table 58: Teacher and Student Relationships at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Student Centred
Teacher Opinions
Maternal
Allow students to express themselves
Conducive
Congenial
Good rapport with students
Cater to learning styles

One teacher’s relationship can be described as maternal, and it speaks to this teacher’s willingness to be accessible to her students whether at home or school and to engage in physical contact like hugging with her students. She states that,

I am an experienced teacher who have been teaching for 30+ years – I have a very good relationship with the students, where they are free to call me at home if there is a problem, they are free to peruse my classroom while using discretion. I am called at times aunty, mummy – I am greeted with hugs. This has prevailed with all of the students I have met in my teaching life – the principal recently told someone in my presence that is my strength plus other things – students come to my room after school to do craft items or just to sit with me until I am ready to leave

Teachers and Parents

Teachers were asked to comment about the relationship between them and parents of children at Ann Hill School (Table 59). Very similar to Irving Wilson, parent teacher relationships are highly dependent on the individual teacher and the parent.

Table 59: Teachers’ Opinions on Classroom Environment at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Friendly and Supportive
Teacher Opinions
Active involvement of PTA
Friendly
Keep parents informed
Supportive parent teacher relationship

One teacher expressed the view that the nature of parent-teacher relationships at the school could be characterised as good, this is noted in the comment below,

In my opinion, the relationship between staff and parents is good. Generally at PTA meetings, parent and staff interact in an amicable manner

This view is shared by other teachers as well who suggest that,

Teachers and parents interact well with each others. Teachers are available to parents via the phone at all times and most teachers assist students when they perceive them as being need with clothing, shoes and extra meals. While parents (most of them) assist the school in whatever way they can

And,

The ones we can see, or who come to the school good, or are members of the PTA, actively involved

Peer Relationships

Teachers were asked to comment on the nature of peer relationships at the school and the comments In Table 60 indicate what teachers reported on this section of the questionnaire.

Table 60: Peer Relationships at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Mixed reaction
Teacher Opinions
Everyone is on a level playing field
Students do not interact well

Only two comments were distilled from the data on this section and here teachers offer mixed reactions to the question on peer relationships.

Their responses can be classified as negative and positive. On the more positive end one teacher noted that,

Ann Hill is not that type of school so everyone is on a level playing field

In contrast to the above view the other comment is overwhelmingly negative,

Students do not interact well. Especially students with learning and behavioural challenges, as many don't have any physical signs of having a disability they often shy away or can be abusive verbally or physically to their peers with noticeable disabilities in some cases

This comment is a cause for concern as it indicates that students can be abusive and violent towards each other. This study did not collect evidence about the frequency or intensity of abusive or violent acts between students and this can shed some much needed light about the scope of this problem at the school.

Support from School Management

See Table 61 for comments on support from school management.

Table 61: Teachers' Opinions on Support from School Management at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Support
Teacher Opinions
Supportive Principal

The most frequently cited response to the question on how supportive school management is about assisting teachers in their efforts to access training and resources is that the principal is supportive of staff at Ann Hill School. A typical comment which illustrates this sentiment is provided below,

Resources are basic and provided based on a limited budget. Training is supported by the principal. There are currently five teachers on various training programmes at Erdiston. As well as one teacher pursuing a Masters degree. Teaching aids are provided based on the limited budget

School Culture

See Table 62 for comments on support from school management.

Teachers described the school's culture as supportive of student integration and participation. Support not only speak to staff's interest in the school, but it also extends to the nature of the

Table 62: Teachers' Opinions on School Culture at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
– Supportive of students
Teacher Opinions
In school training in transition programmes
No challenges to student integration and participation
Student attitudes and behaviour act as barriers
Students given choice of activities
Supportive school culture
Students involved in activities

relationships between teachers and their students, and providing students with an environment that is comparable to a regular education setting. Teachers' comments suggest that,

'The culture of the school is commendable. There is a level of high interest inside and outside of the school, displayed by the teachers. The school survives on LOVE – of the students and the love of teaching.

They also suggest that the school provide students with the opportunity to choose from a number of social activities. This is captured by the following comment,

We are a school not unit or annex. Student centred with choices. The students are of secondary school age therefore we create an environment similar to the secondary school – same activities – the students are given options, others are compulsory. When they are in the 2 final yes the have choice of skills subjects

One comment however suggested that students' attitudes and behaviour could hinder their own

Table 63: Teachers' Opinions on Classroom Environment at Ann Hill School

Identified Themes
Student Centred
Teacher Opinions
Accommodations and modifications
Differentiated
Creative and interactive
Open and Expressive
Stimulating Classroom Environment

chances to be integrated and participate in the school setting,

The personal attitude and general behaviour of students can hinder the opportunities for integration and participation in the schools activities

Classroom Environment

See Table 63 for comments on support from school management.

Responses to this section of the questionnaire revealed that teachers sought to provide a student centred classroom environment for students at Ann Hill School. However great variability exist in the way teachers sought to ensure that classroom settings were conducive to student participation, methods included: differentiating instruction, providing modification and accommodations, providing interactive and classrooms and classroom where students can express themselves. A key idea expressed by some teachers is that the classroom environment ought to be one where students do not feel threatened, this is captured by the comment below:

Child-centred, student-friendly classroom environment. Students can express themselves creatively and in a manner that allows them to learn in a non-threatening environment. Trying to cater to the individual needs of students in not always easy but it can ensure some measure of student accomplishment.

Student Accommodations

Teachers at the school were asked what kinds of accommodations they felt students in the school needed to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Teachers' comments included suggestions for: more space, better security at the school, the need for teaching assistants, the need for certification, the need for a school nurse or doctor on the compound, and the need for

other paraprofessionals. Some of the teacher's comments are noted below.

I will like to see more rooms provided to accommodate the number of students sent to the school

And,

Also a nurse or doctor on the compound for students who are sick everyday at this school.

Another teacher noted,

More paraprofessional and professional support for students with ADHD, Autism, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Students at Risk and other behavioural and social-emotional problems

On the issue of security,

The presence of security during the day and night would be helpful

CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONS

ALL SAINTS PRIMARY SCHOOL SPECIAL UNIT

HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES

The purpose of the focus group was to get a greater insight into the issues and concerns that parents of special needs students are confronted with, both in the teaching-learning environment and the home environment. The focus group comprise parents of students who attended the Special Education Unit of the All Saints School. At the All Saints Primary School, the Special Education needs department is a unit within the main stream.

Issues of Concern to Participants

Like the other focus groups most parents commended the school for a job well done. However, there were some issues that were raised concerning various aspects of the school. The major issues that arose from this focus group were:

1. The amount of resources that were allocated to the school
2. The level of training of staff
3. The content of the school curriculum
4. Continuous education of parents and outreach.

Adequacy of Resources

The parents indicated a strong need for more resources within the unit. One parent stated that that in such a technological age computers are necessary. Most parents made the point

that their children are able to use this technology but are disadvantaged because it is not in the school. "I find that they can use the computer better than they can understand work put it on the computer and they know what to do." Another parent stated that through the use of computer technology he was able to get his son to recite the alphabet correctly and also alluded to the fact that now his son goes online and use the "Hooked on Phonics" educational programme. Apart from requesting more computers, parents requested more charts and suitable reading materials.

The group also made a plea for more personnel within the unit. One of the parents said that she was employed at the school because her daughter has a problem where she does not know when she wants to go to the bathroom and as a result her daughter has accidents. Therefore it is necessary for her to be present at the school so that she could take care of her in the event that such should occur. That aside, she also made the point that other students have 'accidents' and that there is no one in the unit to deal with this since there is usually one teacher to a class and as a result the student's parents have to remove him or her from the school. Although the focus was on problems with the particular school setting, concerns were raised when these children who have these types of issues enter into the secondary school as there is less structure and a higher likelihood of these students being teased.

Furthermore, they recommended that there should be other trained personnel in the unit for example speech therapists etc. One parent

said that his son had to wait three years to see the speech therapist and that it is costly if he pursues a speech therapist independently.

The Level of Training of Staff

Parents called for teachers to be trained in several areas. One was further training in how to deal with the varied challenges in the unit. They stated that a lot of the teachers state that they cannot deal with certain children but it is that they have not taken the time to learn about the type of disabilities that some students have. Another parent expanded on this and said that teachers throughout the school should be trained “there should be some kind of training in special needs because right now in the schools special needs student are all over the school not only in the special needs unit, so everybody needs to be trained in special needs because the school is not by itself, it is attached.

The Content of the School Curriculum

At the focus group, one parent suggested that more lessons are given especially in subject areas that students like. She made the point that her daughter likes maths and would like to see lessons given in that area. Moreover, other parents suggested that more homework is given. One parents’ reasoning was that it is difficult to find things to give his son to do and that if he had homework on topics that were covered during the day it would be easier to assist him. Another parent, whilst agreeing that more homework is needed said, “I would like to see my son to be given more homework, he plays too much, if there was more homework to keep him more occupied my son would be better off because we can’t be with him all the time.”

Another parent said that he would like to see other things being taught for example more living skills.

This was echoed by other parents as well who exclaimed that there should be other activities that make up the curriculum other than the traditional reading and writing.

Parental Involvement

All of the parents indicated that they were all actively involved in their children’s school life by attending PTA meetings which are usually held two times per year. In fact, they further indicated that they wanted to be more involved. Some suggested that they should be seminars and more meetings to educate parents on how to deal with special needs education children outside of the school setting. One parent who indicated that she tries to work with her son reported that “there are a lot of things that parents can do with their children you can read to them, you can talk to them and let them know how mommy and daddy feels.” Another parent emphasised that it is sometimes difficult because he does not always possess the necessary patience to deal with his son especially when it comes to helping him with his homework. He stated, “I would ask my son a question and he would give the answer and then I would say Mario what’s that you say and he would not be able to give the correct answer because he would doubt himself.”

PEDAGOGY

About the Students

The classes seen were generally mixed (all containing at least one boy and one girl). Class size was about 7 -9 students and often two classes shared the same classroom space. Ages ranged from 6 to 13 years old. The students have a wide range of challenges including autism, cerebral palsy, and a diversity of intellectual abilities. Some of the students were being prepared for the BSSEE (Eleven-plus exam),

In terms of specific situations for which two teachers have to be prepared, it was stated that:

"Many students are unable to call, decipher and understand the meaning of words. One boy is reading below the rest of the class, two other boys are very easily distracted and another pair of boys usually do not complete tasks on time" [TT with a class of 8 students including 1 girl]

"In this class of 5 boys and 3 girls, one of the girls escapes the classroom regularly. Two of the boys are often reluctant to do any work and must be coerced and monitored constantly."

Goals and Objectives

From the classes observed, it appeared that teachers had the task of trying to optimize the chances of success in the BSSEE for the older students but at the same time could barely do more than help the more challenged students to have a reasonable day at school. In one mathematics-based lesson, the teacher, in a post-lesson interview, indicated that "The lesson was intended to develop previous knowledge and skills through the practice of techniques and problem solving." In preparing for the lesson, no real problems were expected and the lesson seemed to have gone almost entirely as well as she had expected. She indicated that she repeatedly tried to help students focus on the lesson's learning targets so that progress could be made but felt that she desperately needed to have a teacher's assistant: "Too many of my students need close attention all the time."

In another class, also doing a mathematics topic, the students had to be put in four groups. The level of attainment expected of the groups differed according to ability and progress. For example, one group carried out subtraction with regrouping up to

the hundreds column while another did not advance beyond subtraction without regrouping to the tens column. Examination of students' written work revealed that there were many correct answers (evidenced by many red ticks, but hardly any 'crosses'. When asked if there were many cases where she had to mark things wrong, the teacher replied,

"If we have a situation where a child has too many wrong things, it is not healthy...to continue that particular concept at the time and my preference would be not to mark it, because obviously it is too advanced for the child and our aim is not, even in the book, to demoralize the child's ability. So, we scrap that. We come down to a little lower level if need be but we do not continue there. So, if they do not understand, it is for us as teachers then to go back to the table and see where we can adjust." so that the child meets with success.

The Classroom Environment

During the observation period, classes were conducted in two classrooms and also 'al fresco'.

Sometimes, for a classroom visit, one of the teachers took a group outside to reduce interference and disruption.

The space allotted is insufficient: there is not enough space for students to work comfortably, for teachers to get around among students easily nor for adequate storage of teaching materials and equipment. Nevertheless, the rooms were kept as neatly as could be expected and the wall space was used for displays of teaching charts and students' work to the maximum.

Teaching and Learning Activities

As might be expected, the teaching activities among the students being prepared for the BSSEE differed in emphasis from those used with the

students who were more physically and mentally challenged. Question and answer, demonstrations, written practice by way of class exercises, and discussion were the order of the day for the more advanced pupils. For the severely challenged students, there was greater intensive one-to-one interaction using (educational) games and practical activities to keep students motivated and involved in the lesson. Here is how one teacher describes the kinds of strategies she uses with her class of varied abilities:

"This lesson is the practical part of (dealing with the topic). The theory and discussion of (the topic) is done, first day, second day... What usually happens in our classrooms is that we do not approach dealing with the subject the same time.... On Monday, my first session, I am going to discuss it on the board with you. I am going to show you how it is set out and we are going to do it orally on the board. I am going to call you up and let you work on the board and you can get accustomed to how it is done. That's Day 1; Day 2, we will look at it again briefly but not writing an exercise on it yet neither, because when we are finished, you must be able to do the exercise and know that at the end of the day, you have done it successfully. I do not do work with them on a particular subject (topic) the same time...." The teacher further explained, "If maths or English, the concepts are more in terms of the practical working of the work itself, so we would have gone through the first few days doing oral, doing visual, bringing them to participate, ... even asking them to go into groups to collaborate with each other: "let's look for nouns together, let's see how many nouns we can find..." As students collaborate they learn teamwork, learn to get on with each other, and also learn to deal with conflict. The practical part of the topic takes the first part of the week and the written part comes later.

Simultaneously using the same classroom is another class. Here, in an extract from a post-instruction interview is on that teacher describes the work she does with her students:

Post-instruction Interview

(verbatim)

Researcher 1: Ok Mrs. Ellis so just describe the session that you're doing here with the kids in class.

Teacher: Usually I do that game, I like games cause it's a good way to do the same thing over and over again in an interesting way and I get to work with various levels. So the one there like say, I'm not sure if its language or math. But say for example if I'm doing a language session Kara and this looks like (inaudible) or something they would be identifying letters so they would throw the dice I would help them count the places and when they land on the picture they have to identify a letter for me. As the case may be if they are only doing A to D I just have A to D there and they show me some of those. In the case of Damian, Damian could play at the same time but he would be showing me some words that I was now teaching him or reviewing some letter that he learned before. But if it was the older children they would be doing words or sometimes I get them to read a sentence from the lucky dip, same principle its just a variety of things. I like them because they're flexible.

Researcher 1: I don't know if you could remember. Do you remember the objective you had for this particular session?

Teacher: Let's see what is it that they're doing now. Fiona, this is math, Fiona was matching colours this is why I was using the blocks for her, Kara was probably identifying numbers and Damian

was probably doing number too. Or identifying colours, one or the other cause he's not good with colours.

Researcher 1: Tell me a bit about the kids and their challenges that they have. So there's Kara, Damian and I think this is Fiona.

Teacher: Well you see Fiona Down Syndrome, Kara's Cerebral Palsy and both of them have challenges with memory so for the last five years I've been doing like 1 to 10 with Kara so it's like back and forth and back and forth. Or you try to mix it up, throw in some colours, throw in some shapes. Sometimes I get bored to so I change it up. So their problem is remembering that's why you have to do so much over and over and over again. Lots of repetition. So for me that's, his is attention too cause he gets bored very easily and then he just sit down and stare like how he's doing now right, and stare. Kara does that too but to a lesser extent. She was worse years ago but she's better now, but hers is remembering, being consistent. Damian can do a lot more but he is very let's just say Oppositional. Opposition that's his name, if he doesn't feel like doing he just doesn't want to do it so you have to make him do a lot of things but he's good at numbers he know a lot of numbers and if anything his challenge is sequencing them correctly and like say he can add, I'm teaching him some subtraction but I don't think they get the meaning of these things. So he doesn't grasp that this is something you need for everyday life. So in a sense...that's one of the challenges, so in a sense it's like you're teaching something in isolation so the true meaning of it is missing. So that's one of the problems, I hope that as he gets older and he interacts with more things he would get the idea, but I am not sure. We try to teach them the skill and apply it to life, but the application is often the hard part, you know, so I'm working on him but the challenge with him is

to get him to comply because he has spent the last three years in the main school and usually when a teacher is confronted with a problem, a child like him who doesn't want to do anything or requires all your attention, because I only have eight children but he requires all of my attention if I'm doing something with him so often he would be left to do something on his won, left to wander so he has to get out of the habit now that he's in the unit of wandering and doing what he wants, feels like doing and doing what I want him to do. That is the challenge with him now.

Researcher 1: I see at the end of the day you have the reward chart. What exactly are they being rewarded for?

Teacher: So they can get two a day, one is for finishing your work in the day and the other one is for your general behaviour.

Researcher 1: So behaviour plus learning support.

Teacher: So you get one or the other you know. Or both if you earn them. So we have a little shop, we call it a shop, really it's a bag with toys. So they get according to the points they earn by the end of the week they can purchase something with their points, so that is what we are trying, we started that this term so its been going pretty good. So we would monitor and see how it's working and then we would see what changes we would make. Cause the whole school is trying to do the positive behaviour management thing, what used to be called the child friendly system, so we're trying to work toward a reward system, each class, everybody's not doing it but we are trying it. So that's, and Ms. Jefferson, what groups are essentially this is they have leaves on their tree so they can get two leaves a day, Ms. Jefferson has her (inaudible), I have these. So it's the same principle.

Assessment

The assessments are mainly formative and feedback is, more often than not, immediate. The aim is essentially to keep students on the right track, to help them see and overcome mistakes, learn appropriate ways of doing things and, for the more senior students, develop thinking skills and not jump to conclusions. Other considerations Discussion with teachers brought out several other points related to teaching and learning, but will not be dealt with here at great length. These points included:

- Initial and long-term assessments of students taken in from other schools
- Participation in “extra curricular” activities – the interest shown in music and dancing and the Unit’s participation in NIFCA without any specific regard to disabilities. Successes (through the winning of medals) served to indicate that (i) involvement in cultural activities which have a high component of movement and rhythm aided students in coping with their physical barriers, (ii) an inability did not prevent students from performing well in a given area – students simply needed the opportunity to show what they could achieve and (iii) greater exposure needed to be given to Special Needs students so that the general public might be aware of their talents and capabilities.
- The All Saints Primary School took a great interest in sporting activities and school teams did not neglect the inclusion of students from the Unit who showed that they had the necessary talent to complete.

It might also be mentioned that teachers (and not necessarily some of those at this school) need to be aware of unintentionally discouraging students, by what they say and by

how they dress when they think the students are not hearing or seeing. Two occasions come to mind: (i) students were being instructed how to improve their relay running skills. They were expected to be in their athletic gear, yet the teachers who were giving advice were in normal skirts and blouses and thus were not capable of showing the students properly what they ought to do, and (ii) one teacher complained, somewhat loudly that the sun was too hot and ...“I ain’t going out there in that hot sun” yet the students being taught were expected to be “out there” in the same hot sun. While any set of students could well feel aggrieved by the above, it must be doubly bitter for those who have impairments and who might feel themselves as “second-class citizens” and not worth the teachers’ efforts.

THE SETTING/ ENVIRONMENT

Teachers at All Saints Primary School also filled in an open ended questionnaire which examined the nature of the school setting or teaching environment. The discussion that follows highlights what teachers said about the school, its location and the relationships between teachers, parents, students and management.

Teacher Philosophy

See Table 64 for a summary of comments on teachers’ philosophies.

One of the most frequently cited comment is ‘children can learn’. In addition to this sentiment, teachers also expressed the view that students at the school are a diverse group of learners whose skills, capacities and learning styles needed to be accommodated. They also suggest that students need to be provided with opportunities which would foster their learning and skill development. These opinions are captured in the comments below,

Depending on their challenges, I believe that they can all learn but may not be able to express themselves like others who are less challenged

And,

Children are not empty vessels. They have a vast amount of knowledge that they bring to the classroom. Children learn through social interactions with other knowledgeable peers. Repetition plays an important role in their transfer of learning. Content for

instruction should be self-sustainable, interesting, significant, valid, useful, learnable and feasible.

A related idea to this is the recognition of learner diversity,

All will not be at the same level. All will not be academically focused

And opportunities to learn,

All students/children, regardless of ability have the right to equal educational opportunities in order to reach their full potential

Table 64: Teachers' Philosophy at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Students can learn – Opportunity to learn – Learner Diversity
Teacher Philosophy
Children are important
Children can learn
Different capacities
Everyone learns in different ways
Opportunity to be educated
Talents
Expectations of children with disabilities
Importance of character development
Love for children
Right to education
Students can be successful
Teach the child
Teacher can make a difference

Student Contribution

Teachers were also asked to comment about the kinds of contribution children will make to society, their comments are noted in Table 65.

An examination of teacher's beliefs suggests that they are optimistic about the contribution that students at All Saints can make to Barbadian

Table 65: Teachers' Opinions on Student Contributions at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Valuable contribution
Teacher Opinions
Become involved in community life and make a contribution
Creative skills can help children make a contribution
Entering the trades can help kids make a contribution
Innovation needed
Right guidance will help kids make a contribution

society. However, their comments reveal differences in the areas and process that will assist students in making those contributions in the future. Teachers noted that,

Many special ed students are talented in the area of arts they would make good artists and craftsmen, some may end up doing tasks other may not desire e.g. Maids, janitors, sanitation workers, but these are still vital jobs in our society

And,

These children also have a bright future, they will be forced to be innovative in order to survive and I believe that they will

Student Trajectory

Teachers were asked what they think students will be doing in the future and their responses to this section of the questionnaire are noted in Table 66.

Table 66: Teachers' Opinions on Student Trajectory at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
Vocational & Further Education
Teacher Opinions
Dependent on relatives
Getting into business
Going into the trades
Going to secondary school
Going to special school
Importance of other skills
Importance of services for students who are employable
The importance of support

The most frequently cited comment by teachers is that they believed students will access vocational and further education options in the future.

Some teachers saw students attending secondary school as noted below,

I see them going to secondary school and fortunately our system ensures that they have to go to secondary school and children going to secondary school once they have the right attitude and discipline they would do well and they could find some area that they are good at and excel in it and that is the foundation that we have here and if they carry it forward I think that they would do well.

And,

most will go to St. Lucy, Alma Parris or St. James Primary or even Ellerslie

While other future trajectories included working in the trades or skilled industries, as noted in the comments below,

Most will probably be artisans and tradesman

And,

Some pupils can go on to have normal jobs but these will more than likely be in practical areas e.g. Mechanics, artists cooks etc

Location and Physical Setting

See Table 67 for teachers' opinions on location and physical setting of the All Saints Special Unit.

The most frequently cited reference in teachers' comments was that the school was in beautiful surroundings, accessible and ideally located. A typical response from teachers about the location of the school is noted below,

The atmosphere of a picturesque country view at Pleasant Hall, upon

the hill, looking out to the sea. The cool breeze that dances around the classroom. A large playing field accessible to the special needs students. All of this is a good choice for the students to develop their skills

And,

All Saints is situated at an ideal location with a beautiful view and gentle breezes. There is none better!

Some comments however revealed a mixture of feelings about transportation to the school, these are noted next,

Sometimes public transportation does not show up for long periods.

Table 67: Teachers' Opinions on Location and Physical Setting at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
Accessible school
Teacher Opinions
Accessibility of physical environment
Accessibility of school
Rainy days are a challenge
Architectural changes needed
Limited space for students with physical impairments
Beautiful surroundings
Good transportation
Ideal location
No major challenges of location
Bad transportation

Access to the schools main entrance on mornings is hindered/dramatically reduced by parents/guardians transporting their children/wards

And

Yes I think they have a good bus route. ZRs run quite frequently and there are school buses that bring the children to and from the school. A lot of the catchment areas for the school, so the children if they choose too can walk to school and with the advent of free bus fare most of them prefer to wait on the bus.

None for students, but most teachers working the special unit come from outside the catchment area e.g. Christ Church, St. Michael and St. George thus it is sometimes time consuming and tedious to get to school in St. Peter

Some teachers noted that there was a need for some architectural changes to the school to accommodate students with physical impairments.

A typical comment is noted below,

Most of the classrooms on the ground floor are accessible for the wheelchair bound and other special students, however there is no way for some to access upstairs rooms without being lifted. Additionally the handicapped bathroom is too small for practical use.

Classroom Layout

A related aspect of the layout of the school and physical environment is the classroom layout and teacher's sentiments mirrors the concerns noted in the above section on the need for architectural changes to the school plant.

The most frequently referenced idea is that space is limited in the special education units and that there is a need for more equipment for teaching students life skills. These ideas are captured in the comments below,

With more space and the necessary equipment and tools we will be able to

develop living skills that will prepare the students for life and independence as an adolescent adult e.g. we can do with a kitchenette, kettle, blender, cutlery etc to improve teach certain skills

And,

The two rooms allocated for the special needs students cannot adequately cater for the must needed exercises in practical living skills (e.g. teaching the students how to wash two pieces of clothing), manipulative exercises such as a dress up corner etc. They is hardly any room for floor play (where the physically challenged would benefit greatly) Two classes are place in the same room so the main downfall to the students academic progression is the continued distraction when the lessons are being taught by the two teachers to their classes (01/AS)

Another comment suggests,

No the classes have too many other students and furniture therefore there is not much room to manoeuvre especially for wheelchair students. Solution – one class per classroom or larger classes.

Table 68: Staff Relationships at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Good staff relationships
Teacher Opinions
Good working relationship
Good rapport
Warm and professional
Caring relationship
Close knit
Teacher lateness and absenteeism

Staff Relationships

See Table 68 for teachers' opinions on staff relationships at the All Saints Special Unit.

Teachers' individual accounts suggest that the relationship between teachers in the unit can be described as professional. Although there were no frequently occurring comments in this section, each response suggested that teacher relations were good as noted in the comments below,

It is warm and professional

And

In one word a "unit." We work very well together. We look out and care for another

However, it was noted that teacher absenteeism and lateness was an issue which had an impact on the allocation of non-teaching period of other members of staff, this is noted in the comment below,

Due to often lateness and absenteeism of one teacher some teachers do not get their NTP's (non teaching periods) we are hoping for an improvement in this area which causes much stress in others

Table 69: Teacher and Student Relationships at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Cordial
Teacher Opinions
Paternal role
Fun but structured
Good teacher student relationship

Teacher and Student Relationships

Teachers were asked to comment about the relationship between themselves and their students and their responses are noted in Table 69.

The most frequently cited comment here was that teachers enjoyed good relationships with their students. A typical comment is noted below,

It is good. My students respect me and usually follow my advice. They are also very open to me and would confide in me.

And,

Generally speaking my students do not stay home! So I have to conclude that they want to be in my class.

A good relationship was also evidenced in the feelings of paternalism exhibited by one teacher, this is captured in the comment below,

I think they understand me, they understand what I stand for and what I demand of them and I use a very strong word demand, because I always want them to do good quality positive work, so I place demands on them and they know that if they don't reach those standards I will be upset because I know that they can reach them. I also relate to them quite well as a father figure. Sometimes a lot of them mistakenly call me "Daddy" and I am like wow. So I think I have a good relationship with them.

Teachers and Parents

Teachers were asked to comment about the relationship between themselves and parents and their responses are noted in Table 70.

For teachers who responded to this

section of the questionnaire, three of them noted that the relationship between themselves and parents could be described as good. Some of the comments noted were,

Cordial; most parents are open and very willing to go the extra mile for their children; they make time to come and discuss their child's progress and any problems they may have. They support our activities as well

And,

Quite good. When parents cannot meet assigned time for conferences they usually call and make another date or discuss on the telephone if necessary or allowed. They support the unit when asked.

Another noted that,

There is a fairly good relationship most parents recognize that their children have challenges and try to work with teachers to help their children. However there are few who have challenges in their homes and often these impact on students and thus are reflected in the classroom

Table 70: Teacher and Parent Relationships at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Generally supportive
Teacher Opinions
Supportive staff parent relationship
No relationship between staff and parents
Parent support

The comments above are in contrast to this one comment which suggest that there is no direct relationship between staff and parents,

Again many of the staff do not directly relate the parents of students with special needs

Peer Relationships

Teachers were asked to comment about the relationship between students and their responses are noted in Table 71.

Teachers’ comments revealed that there are some tensions between students in the unit and other students in the school. It is unclear how well resolved some of these issues are between students after interventions from teachers and the school’s principal. Teachers note the following,

Some challenges used to occur there used to be some conflict, with remarks from students in the main school, but with much emphasis from the principal Mr. Keith Headley and other teachers during assembly this has now ended. The children are now more understanding and friendly. And, The students within the unit relate fairly well in general. However a few of them act very aggressively and are often quarrelling. Another teacher noted that, Regarding the

Table 71: Peer Relationships at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Mixed reactions
Teacher Opinions
Good relationship between students
Not a good relationship between students

main school, these students seem to be accustomed to the pupils of the special unit they sometimes assist the smaller ones and play with the unit children. Nevertheless, a few pupils scorn or avoid the children of the unit

Support from School Management

Teachers were asked to comment about support from school management and their responses are noted in Table 72.

Teachers report that they are generally supported by management in the school if they need to obtain resources, access training or the need for teaching aids. Teachers noted for example that,

The principal gives opportunities for member of the management team and their teachers to attend the

Table 72: Teachers’ Opinions on Support from School Management at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
Supportive
Teacher Opinions
Accessibility of funds
Accessible resources
Financial autonomy of unit
Need for resources
Need for special needs training
Parent volunteer
Principal supportive of teachers
Staff development supported
Supportive senior teacher
Teacher training opportunities

relevant workshops and seminars from which they can benefit. When opportunities for training arise members of staff are selected to attend.

And

Resources: There is usually a good understanding from management as regards obtaining resources.

One teacher noted the need for assistance from other members of the special education team, this is captured in the comment below,

We general do not get resources – assistance from psychologist, physical therapist etc.

Table 73: Teachers’ Opinions on School Culture at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
– Mixed views on school culture
Teacher Opinions
Supervision ensure students’ participation
Supportive school culture
Some supportive regular education teachers
Not a supportive school culture
Social integration of students
Stereotyping of students
Better integration of teachers in unit and general education
Academic exclusion
Teacher perception of students in special unit

School Culture

Teachers were asked to comment about school culture and their responses are noted in Table 73.

The most commonly referenced idea was that the school socially integrated students with special needs through school activities. A typical response from those teachers was that,

There is integration at the school in several areas such as in sports. I.e. football, cricket, art/craft.

However teachers expressed concerns about the nature of the relationship between students in the special needs and the wider level of integration and participation in the school setting. They note concerns about stigmatization of students in the school, general education teachers’ attitudes towards students in the unit and academic exclusion. These are captured in the comments below,

Stigmatization: some teachers label the students and write them off. Some teachers are negative towards the students. The students are sometimes given labels and are too easily written off

And,

Many teachers state that they have weak students in their classes already. Therefore they are hesitant to add another challenged student to their workload. Furthermore as mentioned some teachers do not understand special needs. Nor are some willing to work with these pupils

Another teacher noted,

Also to some extent some students may be excluded from activities because of their lack of academic ability to do certain things. For example? Am like, for example, you will hardly find child and probably for good reason, you may hardly find

a child from the special needs unit represent the school in a type of academic competition. For example, a quiz or a spelling contest or something like that so ... and that may be sometimes justified but it has never been explored because the child has never been given the opportunity to.

Classroom Environment

Teachers were asked to comment about their classroom environment and their responses are noted in Table 74.

Teachers described their classroom environments in a number of ways but the most commonly referenced idea was that classrooms were designed to be fun and activity based. Teachers note that,

I try to do variety. Many of my class sessions are done outdoors (weather permitting) to help the students feel more relax and confident to share their views. Practical living skills are done in the staff room so that we can use the household equipment that is there And, I try to create an open fun setting in the classroom. Students can usually approach me on any topic, they can ask questions and I usually try to crack a joke

Table 74: Teachers' Opinions on Classroom Environment at All Saints Special Unit

Identified Themes
Student Centered
Teacher Opinions
Activity
Fun
Express self

Another comment was,

A classroom conducive to learning: comfortably arranged furniture, adequate in number, teaching aids, apparatus needed for the selected lessons planned. Interesting relaxed jovial/light-hearted atmosphere, active lessons apart from weekend and current events discussions

Student Accommodation

Teachers at the school were asked what kinds of accommodations they felt students in the school needed to facilitate the teaching and learning process. Teachers' comments included suggestions for: better parent teacher partnerships, human resources needed for the school, larger classrooms to accommodate students (space needed), special bus needed, telephone in the classroom needed. What teachers said are noted below,

Parent teacher partnerships,

We have an active PTA but the main parents you want to interact with, seem to be so stressed themselves, we cannot get the input we would like from them. Parents to go on recommendations of teachers not to allow their children to write the 11+ exam if they are told their children can't cope with it

The need for space,

More classroom space!

Human Resources,

Teacher assistance, trained or untrained

REPORT
EXPECTED
PRINCIPAL
GROUP
WORK
STAFF
ASKED
HILL
UNIT
usually
area
MONITORING
THINGS
OPPORTUNITIES
INTERVIEW
DOING
KNOW
quality
INFORMATION
DISCUSSION
IMPACT
MENTAL
QUALIFICATIONS
ACTIVITIES
ASSIST
children
INTERACT
evaluation
secondary
academic
stress
contribution
INVOLVEMENT
CURRENT
LEVEL
BETTER
NOTED
STUDENTS
PLANNING
SERVICES
GIVEN
RESPONSES
CHILD
NEEDS
SCHOOL
SETTING
FAMILY
MEETINGS
APPROACHES
process
SECTION
POSITIVE
good
make
THEMES
CLASSROOM
PARTICULAR
ACHIEVED
EXAMPLE
SUPPORT
MINISTRY
MAINTAINING
access
SAINTS
PROBLEMS
learning
inclusive
INDICATED
behaviour
writing
transition
RESEARCHER
certification
location

ADMINISTRATIVE
CHALLENGES
MOE
SPECIAL
CLASS
PROGRESS
general
measure
EDUCATION
related
ROLE
HIGH
DISABILITIES
ADAPTATION
FREQUENTLY
AVAILABLE
PROGRAM
PRACTICES
STRATEGIES
Priority
AGREE
IMPROVEMENT
LESSON

INDIVIDUAL
TABLE
STYLES
based
PHYSICAL
instruction
philosophy
STARTED
ADJUSTABLE
training
Practice
PLACE
community

LIFE
time
nature
collaboration
institutions
ISSUES
management
observation
USE
CAPTURED
DISAGREE
DIFFERENT
BELIEFS
PARTICIPATION
PROFESSIONAL
PRACTICES
INTEGRATION

CASE STUDIES OF INSTITUTIONS

ST. STEPHENS PRIMARY INCLUSIVE UNIT

HOME SCHOOL LINKAGES

Issues of Concern to Participants

Similar to the other focus groups, the parents commended the teachers for their efforts. However, several issues were raised and were broadly identified as:

1. School climate and structure
2. Parental involvement
3. Adequacy of resources.

School Climate and Structure

Although, some parents were of the view that “it (the St. Stephen’s Special Needs Unit) is perfect, it has helped a lot, and there is nothing that could be improved on”, some parents pointed out that there is a stigma attached to children with special needs within the unit – they are called names and other children make fun of them. Therefore, motivation and self-confidence are a challenge for these children. These children lack motivation and need rewards. Some parents questioned why the unit only catered to the children for half the day rather than the whole day and suggested that The Unit should carry the children for the entire day, stating that when the child is in The Unit for half day and they go back into the general education setting they are not meshing with other students and not learning the same things. Some parents pointed out that their child needs more individual attention and is concerned that when the child is transferred into the main

stream setting the teachers do not understand their needs and therefore they do not get the necessary attention. Additionally, due to the structure of the special needs unit, parents felt that the combination of homework from the Special Unit and the general class can be overwhelming sometimes, especially since it is difficult for these students to focus for long periods of time.

Parental Involvement

As it relates to parental involvement, parents indicated that they peruse their children’s books to see what they are doing. Some of the parents acknowledged that they need to interact more with the teachers. “Parents need to have a basic knowledge of what is going on in school and to do this they have to work along with the teachers.” One of the parents stated that she would like to be invited to sessions to see what methods the teachers use and such like. Contrastingly, another parent said that she has been to several parent-teacher sessions and that the teachers were very helpful, they printed out worksheets, etc.

Adequacy of Resources

Parents believed that there should be more specialised personnel within the unit. They believed that students should be assigned an occupational therapist, speech and language therapist, dieticians or nutritionists, etc. They acknowledge the scarcity of available resources. Moreover, one parent identified someone in the US special education system who receives one-to-one assistance all day and he would like that for his child. Additionally, parents called for personal care assistants to help the children who are unable to do certain activities such as using the bathroom. One parent

said that his son had some accidents in the past and as a result is now afraid to use the bathroom on his own.

PEDAGOGY

Characteristics of students in class

Teachers were asked about to describe the characteristics of students in the Inclusive Unit, and what one teacher noted is listed in Table 75.

According to one of the teachers who worked in the unit,

Teacher: Most of them are still battling with like letter sounds, recognizing the sounds of the letters, spelling, writing is also a problem but because of time constraints we can't do a formal

Table 75: Reported Student Characteristics in St. Stephens Special Unit

Reported Student Characteristics in St. Stephens Special Unit
Reported Student Characteristics in St. Stephens Special
Unit
Reported Student Characteristics in St. Stephens Special Unit
Reported Student Characteristics in St. Stephens Special Unit
Don't form numbers correctly
Need repetition
Hyperactive
Better social skills needed
Poor vocabulary

writing lesson. But my observation for a number of them, they don't form numbers correctly, they start backwards, two of them write letters backwards as well, being able to speak in complete sentences a few of them will be "Dat ting" so it would be like poor vocabulary. This group's social skills are not too bad a problem it's just this one child who's really hyperactive. One child he writes very slowly, he speaks very slowly, everything is very slow, but what we noticed is that when we had a parent conference he came in a totally different child after the parent conference. He went from never opening his mouth to being too talkative, so that was an observation we made and we're not sure what happened. But after the parent conference there's, I'm not sure if it's coincidental but we saw a change, boldness, a confidence that wasn't there before. But generally he was very slow, and part of his problem is that he comes to school late constantly, and well we haven't seen the high levels of absenteeism that we saw in Term 1. And then generally most of them seem to have, there is a neglect of home support and that is a battle that we fight constantly, and then sometimes you can tell that parents themselves are not necessarily stronger than these students. So progress will always be slow because the home support isn't there. That's a battle we face.

When asked about how the students are placed in the unit it was noted that,

Teacher: All of these ones came through the school, they started here. They would have probably gone to the nursery school because you know our school starts at Infants A it's only in recent years that they've added Reception but most years we might have one Reception or two so we might get like 25 children but the other 75 they're either coming from the nursery school or other nursery schools. But this group they all came through the school while the morning there are two, I think there

are two now who came from different schools, well three I think three, they came from different schools where they would have been assessed and the Ministry would have sent them specifically for the Unit, but all these came through the school.

Lesson Goals

Researcher 1: So what kinds of objectives are set for this lesson? What is it that you want the students to get out of this lesson here?

Teacher : Apart from the oral language, ability to formulate thoughts and make sentences about particular concepts relating to the elections, look at a picture know the details and be able to say or write a sentence about it for some of them it would have been group work, working together pairing practising the language as they would have used it like the spelling of site words, so now you are actually going to be writing putting into practice those words which you would have encountered we would have been reinforcing things done in previous lessons like punctuation, sentences beginning with capital letters, and ends with a full stop. So you have been pulling a lot of the different things that they would have done in other lessons together to actually create the sentence. For some of them they have that ability to create sentences, compound complex sentences. For others it would just be a simple sentence.

Teacher Method

Observations of classroom instruction revealed that teachers in the inclusive unit utilised a combination of approaches to teaching for example whole class instruction and grouping for instruction. In addition it was evident that periods of instruction in the two critical areas of Mathematics and Language Arts are shared between the two teachers in the Unit. The presentation and synchronisation of activities during lessons were

seamless and it was evident that the technology present in the classroom for example: laminator, printer, computers facilitated the teachers' preparation for classes. Teachers also used stickers and other tangible rewards as part of a reinforcement schedule to keep students in the Unit motivated during classroom instruction.

Grouping for Instruction

Teachers were asked about how students were grouped for instruction in the Unit, and it was noted that,

Teacher: there are about 3 different groupings in the classroom. They are grouped by age groups so at the wooden table with the bench those are the class twos, these are the class threes over on this end and those are the class fours over by the door.

Researcher 1: This is interesting because these are three different age groups and you would think that they would be doing something different given the various ages. So are the activities so that any age group could take part in it.

Teacher: open lesson like this would pitch so everybody could participate. For example, after the oral discussion you would notice that they were paired. So they were paired accordingly, you wouldn't put two weak children together. So when they had the sentences, they were paired for strength in their own groups, so one person in that group would have the ability to construct sentences in that group even if the spelling was not correct, even if you saw invented spelling, the point is that they are engaged. There are two children who would not be able to write sentences but they may be able to draw or you would trace, do dots of a particular word in a sentence and they can trace after but everybody can engage in the oral discussion. There

are times where we introduce lessons as a whole and then when you break into parts the fours would do something at their level, the threes at their level and the twos at their level, but full class activities like this everybody can participate.

A related theme to that of teacher method is teacher strategy and for lesson observed teachers utilised a combination of visual aids and games to assist them in achieving their lesson goals.

Researcher: So, building from the counting chart you then did a bingo game. So what determined the entire strategy for the lesson? Going from chart to bingo game?

Teacher: The game, there are two of them that need to be, I have to be aware of the fact that he can't keep quiet he needs to be doing. And also I'm conscious of the fact that between nine to twelve they will have done a lot of paper work. To come to the Unit to come and do paper work. So I always try to include a game or an activity to break the monotony of what would have gone on in the classroom and while you're having fun, you're also learning. And for those children who are high energy that I need to channel that energy into the game, and the blocks and so on as opposed to having to say a million times to sit down and leave this and leave that. So it helps him because by the time we come to do the paperwork, pen and pencil seat work he's a lot settled. So I always have to bear his challenge in mind. But not only because of him because I like to do an activity because I think that the Unit shouldn't be pushing the pen and paper because they've had that upstairs all day. I'm not saying that they don't do activities but at least when you come here you want to be learning but at the same time having an enjoyment. What seems to inform this teacher's pedagogical decisions are her beliefs that learning ought to be fun, the

characteristics of students in her class, and a consideration of student's preferences for working in particular ways. There is also the clear distinction being made between the purpose of the unit and the regular education setting with the latter being associated with more monotonous activities and paper work, and the unit which that is regarded as a place of enjoyment and where learning takes place.

Theme: Challenges Students Face

Teachers were asked about the characteristics of students in the Unit and a summary of the challenges that students experience is noted in Table 76.

However one teacher indicated that most of the students in the Unit are not assessed and therefore it is difficult to say what their particular challenges were. She notes that,

Researcher 1: Do these kids have general problems with spelling? The group you worked with today?

Teacher: Most of them do, unfortunately a lot of the children in the unit are not assessed so we can't say what the problem is but you can tell that they're operating below the level of their peers.

Other challenges associated with spelling are highlighted below,

Table 76: Reported Student Challenges in St. Stephens Special Unit

Sequencing problems
Spelling
Writing
Expressing self

Researcher 1: So what are the particular challenges they have? Is it the sequencing, is it identifying the numbers, is it identifying the numbers and the letters for the numbers? What's the particular challenge?

Teacher: For the spelling?

Researcher 1: Yeah.

Teacher: For some of them its sequencing, like one child she spelled eleven and she had l-e-e-l-v-e-n so there was confusion there. That same child she spells eighteen with two ts. The child that sat here, it's as though she doesn't know, she could recognize the first letter but after that she can't spell the number names and then the others they just make like errors in some of the number names. But I'd say like eleven, twelve, thirteen, when we first started we saw a lot of threeteen as opposed to thirteen, and fiveteen as opposed to fifteen. So those are the challenging ones, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fifteen. And just this one child spells well, the other two haven't reached eighteen yet, but of the group that reached eighteen she spells eighteen with two ts.

It is also interesting to note how teachers perceive how students in the unit cope with the challenges of being academically included in the regular classroom, according to one teacher she says that,

Teacher: because most of the children in here are like that, if you don't always pull them back to task they will sit and do nothing, perhaps that might stem from upstairs because you find that sometimes when they are upstairs they are clueless as to what is going on so they sit and do nothing. So that you will find that in here that you always have to be , you might be working with this group but you always have to be saying calling a child are you doing what you are suppose to be doing, stop talking or they would sit and do nothing given all

of them they would sit and do nothing

What is poignant about this comment is the indication that when children return to the mainstream classroom they are merely spectators rather than active participants in the learning process and this listless behaviour can transfer to the Unit if the teacher is not vigilant.

Teacher Preparation

There are 4 groups of students from various year groups served in the inclusive unit at this school. It is the opinion of one teacher noted that there is a 'disconnection' between regular education class and special unit. More accurately it would seem as though there is some collaboration with some of the specialist teachers who might also serve students also receiving remediation in the inclusive unit, but very limited interaction with teachers in the mainstream setting. This is a point of concern which can present some serious challenges in terms of charting the progress of students with special education needs in this unit.

Researcher 2: So how does this lesson build or coincide with what they're doing in the regular education class. Are they doing anything with numbers currently? To your knowledge.

Teacher: To my knowledge I would say that there's a disconnect between what the Unit does and what the classroom does. Because in the classroom they're probably doing Class 1 work, where as in the Unit having done the pre-test we started where we saw the weaknesses. So I wouldn't say that they don't do this in their classroom but it wouldn't be the main focus because they'll be doing other things. So in the Unit it's meeting the child where the child is at, and starting there and moving on. So it isn't necessarily Class 1 curriculum that they're doing.

Researcher 2: So they're not

doing Class 1 curriculum here. My question is are they doing Class 1 curriculum up there?

Teacher: I believe that having done the pre-test that the Class 1's they wouldn't be doing this same level of work as the 11 because they are in 14 we have four? in this school. So they wouldn't be doing what the 11 are doing. I believe they will be doing something between where they're at and where they should be for Class 1.

What the teacher is describing above is the process of streaming children by ability so that class 14 is actually the weakest students in this year group.

Another example of the difficulties presented with managing the inclusive effort is presented in the below excerpt, the researcher asked how well students from the Unit were able to transfer what they were learning and doing to the mainstream classroom. According to the teacher,

Sometimes we have conversation with the teacher up stairs to see how they are doing or if she encountered something she will say well this is what I observed, how are you doing this how are you doing that. Sometimes they [children] would come and say may we do that upstairs and we get all right. So you know that transfer is taking place between what you are seeing downstairs and what is occurring upstairs. But generally it isn't always possible, but the aim is that while they are here that language and maths are taking place downstairs and when they go upstairs in the afternoon that they have most of the general subjects. So that they don't miss those. So the comprehension and composition and so on, sometimes they are not always apart of those upstairs lesson because they would have already had them....

According to this teacher, it would seem as if students who receive instruction in the Unit were able to

only transfer what they know and learnt on a limited basis. However, it is unclear whether or not this teacher's observation can be generalised to the four groups of students that are taught in the Unit from classes one through to class four. An informal discussion with one of the regular education teachers who teaches a group of these students revealed that there is limited collaboration between her and teachers in the inclusive setting. Moreover, she noted that she found it difficult to plan for these students given the diversity represented in and between the students.

One reason why collaboration might not occur as it should with teachers in the mainstream setting is due to time management issues.

According to one teacher,

Researcher 2: what kind of communication would you have with teachers in the mainstream?

...We have an open door policy where we always encourage them to come down and see. We try, we haven't yet been successful this term because they off times and our off times don't always match but I know for some of them there is one teacher who I know would say this is what I am doing upstairs so that we are aware of what is going on so that we could support that where possible, where there are deficiencies we could try to help with that person so that when they come back upstairs then hopefully we would have tried to fill the gaps where they were missing before but in terms of meeting with them regularly it is not always possible.

By contrast it would seem that there is better collaboration between teachers in the Unit and specialist teachers for example, the reading teacher. This is captured in the excerpt below,

These same children also go to the reading teacher. So what we do is that we plan with her as well. We'll see what students we have in

common because there are some students who go to her who are not in the unit. So we will see, I know that when we met and planned I know that we looked at what word families would be done over the next four to six weeks. So there's liaising with the reading teacher so that all around they're getting reinforcement for whatever concept we're studying... if we say to her they're struggling with number names then in whatever process they're reading she'll try to incorporate that as well. So although she doesn't do math she will check in to see what are they struggling with and see if she writes a story if she can incorporate like the number names or the ordinal names and stuff like that.

What is evident from this excerpt is that when teachers in the unit work well with the specialist teacher there is greater opportunity for students' skills and knowledge to be reinforced and better opportunities to plan and support instruction of students with special needs.

A lack of collaboration also seems to extend to assessment of children from the unit during examination time, it was noted that,

Researcher 1: Can you tell me a little bit about this across the board test?

Teacher: The across the board test would be the end of term test where it would be set in the department and they will have to complete it upstairs.

Researcher 1: What contribution do you make towards that assessment? The overall assessment.

Teacher: None

Resources

According to teachers there was a need for human resources

to support inclusion at the school. It was noted that,

Need for Support Personnel

Researcher 1: Well let me ask a different kind of question this is described as an inclusive school right, now if inclusion really has to work well what would you say has to happen in order for it to work well

There have to be greater, communication is not the right word I am looking for, discussion better word between what the unit is doing and what the class teacher is doing again the class teacher has twenty four children and this case 5 of her children, I am not certain what her total class size is but let's say it is twenty four, five of her children are coming to the unit. Those five children are expected to go back to the classroom and work along with her 19 she needs support in that classroom. The same way we need support for small numbers, I believe she needs support in the classroom when they go back up because she may be doing a science lesson and the children may not recognise the words if you have personnel there that while the rest of the class may be engaged she can divide them up. This part of the class the notes might be simplified, I might be printed and stuck in their book the words might be printed so that they are done in syllables so you have a support person there who can work with these children who are returning to the classroom who can't run the race that the others are running so support, you can say inclusion but you have to have the support mechanisms there so that they could feel included so it stretches you.

THE SETTING/

ENVIRONMENT

Only one teacher questionnaire was received from this school and therefore the comments in this section of the report does not reflect a consensus about the nature of the teaching and learning setting at this institution.

Teacher Philosophy

Teachers were asked about their teaching philosophies and responses are noted in Table 77.

The response from this teacher suggests that her philosophy can be described as **socially conscious**. It is noted that,

The social model of disability: this means it is my belief that the society has not evolved enough to properly facilitate students with varying abilities

Table 77: Teachers' Philosophy at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Socially conscious
Teacher Philosophy
The social model of disability

Student Contribution

A related aspect of the question on teaching philosophy is student contribution and a discussion of what was said is noted in Table 78.

According to this teacher's comments, the future outlook for students can be described as a '**struggle**'. It mirrors the sentiments held in the section on teaching philosophy above, which suggests that society is not as accommodating as it ought to be to students with special needs. The response to this question is noted below,

Unless interventions are made into the family, the secondary school and the world of work begins to favour more of these students giftings, they will fight to find a place in mainstream society

Table 78: Teachers' Opinions on Student Contribution at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Struggle
Teacher Opinion
Fight to find a place in mainstream society

Student Trajectory

Teachers were asked about student trajectories and responses are noted in Table 79.

According to this teacher, the future trajectory for many of these students is not optimistic. In fact, the negative outcomes referenced by this teacher is captured in the comment below,

They are going to be lost in mainstream newer secondary schools, then placed on the block, then ultimately into the penal system.

Location and Physical Setting

Teachers were asked about location and physical setting and responses are noted in Table 80.

According to this teacher the location of the school was desirable but

architectural changes and issues with flooding needed to be addressed. This is noted in the comments below,

The population is diverse enough to appreciate the accommodations. Also transportation is readily available. The city, places of interest in the community, and environmental examples of many concepts are readily available

And,

There needs to be a ramp at the door of the special unit as well as the disability friendly bathroom facilities.

One concern expressed was issue of flooding, it was noted that,

The school is built on a water course. The challenge comes when there is a weather system because the school, it's car park and playing field all flood. However it is a designated hurricane shelter

Table 79: Teachers' Opinions on Student Contribution at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Negative Outcomes
Teacher Opinion
Penal system
Lost in secondary school

Table 80: Teachers' Opinions on Location and Physical Setting at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Accessibility
Teacher Opinion
Accessibility of school
Architectural changes needed
Flooding

Teacher and Student Relationships

Teachers were asked about teacher and student relationships and responses are noted in Table 81.

This question was answered very briefly as noted below,

Very good on my part

Teachers and Parents

Teachers were asked about teacher and parent relationships and responses are noted in Table 82.

According to the comments made the relationship between parents and this

teacher seems to suggest that there is a level of openness, even although the reluctance noted by this teacher on parent's part might indicate otherwise.

Well we try to have an open relationship between parents and special needs teachers. However for various reasons some adults do not feel comfortable in educational settings, even if they are no longer students

Peer Relationships

In response to the question on how peers treat each other, it was noted that

'For my part I believe they treat the children the same way the adults on the premises do'.

Table 81: Teacher and Student Relationships at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Good Relationship
Teacher Opinion
Good on my part

Table 82: Teacher and Parent Relationship at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Mixed Reaction
Teacher Opinion
Open relationship
Parents uncomfortable in setting

Support from School Management

Teachers were asked about support from school management and responses are noted in Table 83.

In response to the question on how well initiatives are supported by the principal with respect to access to training, resources and aids, it was noted that the principal is quite supportive of these efforts, the comments below illustrates this point,

All of these initiatives are fully supported by the principal and senior staff of the school. The unit is fully funded by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource development. Therefore supplies/teaching aids are never a problem

School Culture

Teachers were asked to comment on nature of the school culture and the level of integration and participation experienced by

students with special needs at their respective schools. Findings on this section are noted in Table 84.

According to this teacher the school's culture was not supportive of inclusion and more than that, students experienced exclusion within the teaching and learning setting. She notes that,

The schools culture is not supportive of students with special needs in my opinion. Otherwise the management would have insisted on training for the mainstream teachers when the unit came on board 8 years ago

On the issue of students' participation, it was noted that students are socially integrated into the school setting; this is captured in the comment below,

None really. Students are students. Teachers cannot prevent students with special needs from being integrated, though they may limit participation in the academic pursuits of the students in their classes

Table 83: Teachers' Opinion on Support from School Management at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Support
Teacher Opinion
Supportive principal

Table 84: Teachers' Opinion on School Culture at St. Stephen's Special Unit

Identified Themes
Not supportive of inclusion
Teacher Opinion
Academic exclusion
Not supportive
Social integration

MAKING SENSE OF THE DATA:

A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

The policy framework needed to guide the delivery of special needs education as reported on earlier in this study exists only in draft form and therefore there is no coherent direction for the current dispensation.

When one examines the data from this current evaluation in a holistic manner based on surveys, interviews and observations with critical persons in the Ministry of Education, school administrators, teachers and parents it is evident that the ability of the education system (at the macro level) and at the school (at the micro level) to provide quality education to children with special needs is compromised on many levels. The issue is complex because much of what needs to transpire in order to ensure that students receive the necessary services, access to correct placement and quality instruction is dependent on a network of interdependent relationships and information sharing between parents and the Ministry of the Education, the Ministry of Education and clinical professionals who perform services like multifactorial assessments, schools and the Ministry of Education, staff at the school and school and students with special education needs.

To illustrate, The Ministry of Education's Eligibility Placement Committee which has primary responsibility for placement of students reported that there are a number of factors that influence placement, these include: an insufficient number of trained personnel to assist student assessment, an insufficient number of spaces available in special education settings to support the current demand and parents' submission of incomplete medical assessment data; (a critical piece of information that

is needed to inform the placement of students in educational settings).

One effect that has been noted in the section on policy and quality assurance is that schools have had to use alternative approaches to evaluating students and commencing instruction.

"...teachers have adopted ad hoc and non-standardized approaches to assessment that are not multifactorial in nature"

The effect of a lack of a clearly articulated policy in special education is also evident at the micro level of the school. A key issue to highlight here is the role of a child's Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and the IEP team to guide the delivery, implementation and monitoring of his/her education. Instructional decisions in special education should be based on the use of Individualized Education Plans (IEP). As reported in the section on quantitative results only teachers at one school indicated that they used IEPs to guide student's instruction while at the other three institutions teachers reported that they did not use IEPs. This is problematic as all instruction and curriculum decisions should emanate from this document. Instead teachers have adopted ad hoc and non-standardized approaches to assessment that are not multifactorial in nature to guide instructional decisions. More over there is a notable lack of inclusion of parents and specialist in the decision making process as far as instruction is concerned and this suggests that

there is no structure in place to support the IEP team and its functions in the institutions under review.

"Observations across institutions revealed that teachers were using a variety of strategies including: games, handouts, charts, and other visual aids..."

With respect to making decisions about what to teach i.e. the curriculum teachers report that these decisions are made based on the regular education curriculum and the attainment targets recommended by the Ministry of Education. Several factors have been identified which contribute to the current practices adopted by teachers when making their instructional and curriculum decisions. It is interesting to note that three of the four case schools report that they have been exposed to IEP workshops convened by the Ministry of Education, yet still teachers in the study report that do not use IEPs to guide instructional decisions. Teachers might link the lack of use of IEPs to students' lack of clinical assessment, yet there was one school where such an assessment was present yet, the teacher indicated that the assessment did little to assist with making instructional decisions. Indeed, we found that this was a theme that was repeated across the four case sites that there was a noticeable lack of clinical assessments for students in special education settings under review. This in turn, had consequences for the ways teachers then sought to determine what curriculum to use and how ambitious learning goals were set.

Our observations of teaching and learning settings which offered a basic academic curriculum in language Arts and Mathematics supports the

view that learning goals comprise mainly lower ordered objectives that are geared towards reproducing orientations to learning, rather than reasoning and application of information. There is a caveat however, it must be noted that the more skilled based learning objectives in the technical vocation subjects inclusive of agricultural science at institutions like Ann Hill supported a more tangible learning outcome through the creation of an end product i.e. a basket, belt, beads and so on. In this context teacher's instructional goals can be placed in the higher order category since it called for a creative effort to produce an object which could then be commercially retailed. It could be inferred from the number of orders which the school received for its goods that the quality of the product was sufficiently high to accredit what and how teachers taught in these areas.

Teacher pedagogy in particular teachers' methods and strategies were also observed in the study. Observations across institutions revealed that teachers were using a variety of strategies including: games, handouts, charts, and other visual aids to assist them with instruction. It is interesting to note however that strategies were not informed by student's learning styles. This area was particularly difficult to assess in the study and it was noted that teachers were unable to provide the kinds of information which would have allowed the researchers to report on that aspect of the study. In spite of this classroom observation of teachers' pedagogy suggested that learning modalities and preferences were catered to more so that a student's learning style.

In particular there was a heavily emphasis on hands on activity in all four settings which creates a positive affective classroom climate for instruction. Unfortunately and as stated in another place in this document, it is difficult to measure how much learning was actually taking place across

students at each of the institutions. Student achievement data was diffuse especially within schools with no means to quantify and measure this construct. In the case of All Saints and St. Stephens where students went on to take the Barbados Secondary School Entrance Examination some past data on students who were previously in the Unit were provided on their performance in Common Entrance. If these student data are to be used as a benchmark then a rather pessimistic view would obtain for the current cohort of students in both of these units.

Findings from individual institutions will be discussed next. Teachers at the Irving Wilson School reported in the quantitative section of the report that the school has access to assistive technologies to support instruction, however this was not evident during lessons that we observed. This institution is peculiar in its arrangement although it caters to students who can be broadly classified as having sensory and communication impairments. We found whole class instruction was used by the majority of teachers who instruct students who are blind, visually impaired and Deaf. These sessions were often teacher led with students simply responding to questions posed by teachers. There were some instances where students responded to teacher questions in unexpected ways and this was attributed to both the characteristics of the student as well as the teacher's technique.

In the Autism Unit, students were taught using primarily individualized approaches with some differentiation of tasks and content being used as a means to modify the curriculum. While this is appropriate it is uncertain how these students' growth will be measured without the use of an IEP which is a central component of the TEACCH programme. In addition to this, it was also clear from observations that much of the teacher's work with students in this unit is at the experimental stage. The lack of

daily routine schedules, the limited use of reward structures suggests that more needs to be done to meet these student's educational needs.

"...the majority of teachers in the All Saints Unit were novice teachers and lacked specialist training in the field of special education."

The St. Stephen's inclusive education unit presents some challenges, for the most part this unit is well organised, equipped with the necessary technology and benefits from what appears on the surface to be a relatively good relationship between teachers in the unit. Observations of pedagogical approaches in the unit also support the use of interactive approaches to teaching which for the most part were appropriate for the kinds of lessons observed. What is a concern in this setting is the lack of coordination and collaboration between teachers in the Unit and the regular education setting. It has been noted elsewhere in this report that lack of time has been cited as the main cause that militates against planning instruction for students with special needs. Another peculiar finding was the noticeable absence of the unit specialist in the general education setting during periods of instruction. It must be emphasised that the success of any inclusive effort hinges heavily on the nature of co-teaching partnerships and planning curriculum and instruction, these are the necessary ingredients which must be used to support student learning in the general education setting.

Findings from the quantitative research revealed that the majority of teachers in the All Saints Unit were novice teachers and lacked specialist training in the field of special education. In addition to this as noted

in the section on curriculum they were exposed to some professional development courses in IEP writing through the Ministry of Education despite not having a background in the area of disability studies. From observations of teacher's pedagogical approaches in the classroom it is evident that teachers have been resilient in their adaptation of their approaches, methods and techniques garnered elsewhere in education. In spite of this, one wonders how these teachers are able to plan effective instruction for students especially whose impairment are at the more profound end of the special education needs spectrum.

"...it can be noted that most teachers' philosophies expressed positive sentiments with respect to teaching students with special education needs."

What adds to the complexity of issues is the way children are grouped or placed across the four teachers in the All Saints Unit. At least two groups of students were identified as likely to re-enter the mainstream setting and undertake Common Entrance. For the remaining students, one of the groups comprised students with a mixture of impairments that included: Down syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, learning and behavioural challenges and communication disorders. The teacher who had responsibility for this diverse group of learners relied heavily on kinaesthetic approaches during lesson time. Teacher techniques included verbal directives, games and handouts to differentiate activities for students in the class. However a similar observation can be made here with respect to how much students in this group were benefitting cognitively from activities that were undertaken

and whether or not children in this group were indeed developing the kinds of skills, knowledge and potential that they were capable of.

When one examines the results for the section on the school setting it can be noted that most teachers' philosophies expressed positive sentiments with respect to teaching students with special education needs. In spite of this, it was interesting to note their perspectives on the kinds of contributions and trajectories that students will have in the future. It can be noted that teachers at All Saints and Ann Hill are quite optimistic about their student's future trajectories; this is in stark contrast to the picture that some teachers at the other two case sites painted. This is worrisome because their views identified factors with an internal and external locus of control to the student.

Data collected on the teaching and learning setting revealed that for the most part teachers across the four setting expressed some satisfaction with the schools location. However, teachers at Irving Wilson and Ann Hill noted that the schools were in need of more security especially during the evenings and weekends where these institutions remain vulnerable to vandalism and theft. Another point of convergence noted in teacher's comments was the need for classroom space at the four case sites to facilitate the various activities that students need to engage in during instruction. Other points of convergence across the four case sites were the need for resources in particular para professionals to assist teachers with managing instruction in the classroom setting.

Recommendations

Policy and Quality Assurance

- A clearer articulation of a special education needs policy is critical to guide the implementation, delivery and quality of special education in Barbados. As such it would provide a legal framework for the provision and entitlements to special education and services for children with special needs. It should also outline: the referral and assessment processes for parents, teachers and school administrators, the importance of the establishment of the IEP team to monitor the progress of students with special education needs, the creation of Individualised Education and Family Service Plans and establish clear quality assurance guidelines to monitor service delivery and teaching and learning settings.

Assessment

- Assessment procedures and therefore placement of the children needed more rigour both in terms of the types of assessments used and in the coordination of the persons doing the assessment so that assessments took place in a timely and adequate manner.
- Responding to the needs of students is especially critical for students with special needs. Adequate assessment that can be translated into instructional practice is needed in addition to the clinical assessments for students' records. These assessments must be translated into instructional practice that should be delineated in an Individualised Instruction Plan. Failing a collaborative approach to IEP development, the Special Education Officers should identify either agencies that offer assessments that are useful to teachers or provide training in the translation

of clinical assessment into classroom practice.

Curriculum

- There is need for a national special education curriculum or at the least, MOE suggestions about how to modify/adapt/differentiate the national (mainstream) curriculum. Teachers were using a variety of sources and therefore a variety of standards to inform their curriculum planning for special needs. There was need for a system-wide formulation of minimum curriculum standards for special needs students both in terms of content and in terms of pedagogy.
- It is important to note that the special needs curriculum should use as its starting point the national mainstream curriculum that already exists. The elaboration (differentiation) of the national curriculum, rather than the creation of a separate special education curriculum, would support the Ministry of Education's push towards "inclusion" and would be relevant to both the mainstream teacher with special needs students in her classroom as well as to the teacher with all special needs students. Another important note is that special education teachers should have input into the differentiation of the existing national curriculum standards both for buy-in and because they have intimate first-hand knowledge of their students.
- A Life Skills curriculum is a vital component of any special education curriculum. Yet lack of resources to support a Life Skills Curriculum meant that this type of curriculum was not evenly institutionalized across the schools- it was in place in one school. Further, there should be a Life Skills curriculum at all year levels, not just for the "secondary" students. Importantly, there should be a push to integrate Life Skills across the academic content areas.
- Common school-wide curriculum

planning time is essential for the creation of a coherent curriculum. Common planning time amongst special education teachers helped to ensure horizontal and vertical articulation of content across the school's curriculum. On the other hand, in schools with special units/programmes such as the St. Stephens School and the All Saints School, there needed to be better articulation between the planning for and monitoring of curriculum between the teacher in charge of special education and the Subject Coordinators in the mainstream school. Common curriculum planning and monitoring time with mainstream teachers should not be an option for special education teachers in Units and Inclusionary Programmes. In-school assessment practices need to be streamlined so that better records are kept of student progress, especially since students did not receive any form of certification outside of a school-leaving certificate. Further, certification measures need to be put in place for students at the Ann Hill and Irving Wilson Schools.

Monitoring Systems

- Monitoring of instructional practices in special education schools by Special Education officers needs to be systematically planned and implemented, especially in those schools where there was a high level of teachers with little to no qualifications in special education. No matter how good the in-school monitoring system is, the skills of the teachers will not improve if their supervisors have limited knowledge of instructional approaches that are effective for special needs students.

Upgrading Status of Schools

- Upgrading of the status of Ann Hill and Irving Wilson to "secondary school" status to ensure equity of opportunity to the students in

these schools. Better utilization of the school plant of Irving Wilson is needed given the underutilized space and small class sizes at this school

Teaching and Learning

To assist with ensuring that teachers receive the kinds of skills and knowledge to guide the delivery of education in special and inclusive settings there is a need for a continued focus on teacher professional development. Courses are needed in the following areas:

Professional Development Courses in Special Education for Teachers

- Managing the IEP process and writing measurable goals, objectives and benchmarks
- Differentiating Instruction
- Learning Styles
- Curriculum Adaptation and Modification
- Assessment practices
- Co-Teaching in general education settings

Clinical Assessment

- There is a need for a cadre of professionals to be trained to deliver multifactorial assessments to assist the student services section in the Ministry of Education and teachers at schools with identification and assessment of students' impairments.

Resources

- There is a need for training of para-professionals to serve teachers in both inclusive and special education settings.
- There is a need for larger classrooms at All Saints and Ann Hill to

serve students with special needs and accommodate life skill activities for students with special needs.

- Better security is needed at Ann Hill and the Irving Wilson School.

Transition and Planning

With consideration for the concerns expressed by all participants in the research, and adhering to Kohler's (1996) model, the following recommendations are made:

To increase student focused planning:

- Development of an IEP/ ITP process and form
- Student involvement in IEP/ITP plan development
- Parent involvement in IEP/ITP plan development
- Teacher and administrator training in transition and planning for students with special needs
- Parental training in transition and planning for students with special needs
- Develop/purchase/adapt a specific technical/vocational and living skills curriculum
- Development of a structured career exposure programme, aimed at developing students' awareness of technical/vocational options

To increase student development:

- Continued maintenance and promotion of students' skills (academic, social, self-determination, employment) through the use of assessment information
- Establish and maintain contact with primary schools/special units in order to build background information on each child

- The use of authentic materials and experiences to promote student development

- To increase agency involvement or linkages:

- Develop an interagency agreement or council

- Establish collaborative referral procedures

- Develop agency information guides

- Maintain and utilize resources provided by the Youth Mainstreaming Programme (Division of Youth- Ministry of Youth, Family and Sports)

- Utilize resources provided by the National Disabilities Unit

To increase parent/family involvement or increase parent/family knowledge:

- Provide parent training in transition and planning for students with special needs

- Develop parent information guides

- Continued maintenance of parent/mentor/assistant programmes within the school

To build or improve transition services structure:

- Sample schools should work closely with transition personnel and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development to review or establish transition-related policies

- Sample schools should work closely with transition personnel and the Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development, and international agencies to conduct professional development

- Sample schools should evaluate transition outcomes over a 'set' time period

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Demographic, Teacher Stress and Teacher Efficacy Instrument

Evaluation of the Quality of the Learning Environment and the Teaching Methodologies at Schools Providing Special Education

TEACHERS' INSTRUMENT

Instructions

Dear Teacher: You have been chosen to fill out a survey relating to the Quality of the Learning Environment and the Teaching Methodologies at Special Education Needs Schools. Read each item and select the best response by placing a tick (✓) in the corresponding box or write your responses in the space provided. Your privacy and the secrecy of your answers will be protected.

BE SURE TO ANSWER EVERY QUESTION.

1. **Sex:** Male ☐ Female ☐

2. **Age** 20 and under ☐ 21-25 ☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐
36-40 ☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50 ☐ 51 & up ☐

5 3. What are your years of teaching experience?

Under ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐
☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41 & up ☐

5 4. How long have you been a teacher at the school?

Under ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 21-25 ☐
☐ 26-30 ☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40 ☐ 41 & up ☐

TRAINING IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

5. What is your level of qualification?

Trained teacher

☐

Untrained Teacher

☐

Trained Graduate Teacher

☐

Untrained Graduate Teacher

☐

6. Do you have any formal training in special education?

Yes

☐

No

☐

7. If yes at which level

Certificate

☐

Diploma

☐

Degree

☐

8. If you have answered "Yes" to Question 7, please specify what areas you are trained in (for example Sensory Disability, etc.)

DISABILITY STATUS OF STUDENTS

9. Please indicate what kind/s of disabilities students possess at your class, tick all that apply.

Learning Disability

☐

Physical Impairment

☐

Physical Impairment

☐

Health Impairment

☐

Mixed/Multiple

☐

Other

TEACHERS AND THEIR STUDENTS

10. What form level do you teach?

11. What subject areas do you teach?

12. How many students are in your class?

13. How many of these students are special education needs students?

14. Are any of these students getting ready for the BSSEE or CSEC examinations?

Yes ☐ No ☐

15. If yes, how many and for which exams?

RESOURCES AND TECHNOLOGY

16. Are resources readily available to aid the teaching process?

Yes ☐ No ☐

a. If yes what resources are available?

17. Does your school have access to assistive technology?

Yes ☐ No ☐

18. If yes, list what kinds of assistive technologies are used at the school?

How often is this technology utilized?

Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

19. Who provides these technologies to your school?

IEP TEAM

20. Are IEPs used to guide the education programmes of children with disabilities?

Yes ☐ No ☐

21. If, yes, please list all of the members of the IEP team

22. How often do they meet?

Daily ☐ Weekly ☐ Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

PARA PROFESSIONALS

23. Are they paraprofessionals at your school?

Yes ☐ No ☐

24. If yes, what kinds of paraprofessionals are at your school?

25. How many paraprofessionals are there?

26. What kinds of functions are performed by the paraprofessionals?

TEACHERS' AND STRESS *(Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by shading the circles, see example)*

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☒	4 ☐	5 ☐
27. I can predict what will be expected of me in my work tomorrow.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
28. I am unclear on what the scope and responsibilities of my job are.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
29. I am uncertain what the criteria for evaluating my performance actually are.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
30. I receive enough information to carry out my job effectively.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

	1	2	3	4	5
31. When asked, I am able to tell someone exactly what the demands of my job are.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
32. I find that I have extra work beyond what the demands of my job are.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
33. The criteria of performance for my job are too high.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
34. I am given too much responsibility without adequate authority to carry it out.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	☐	☐	☒	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
35. I receive conflicting demands from two or more people or groups in the school setting.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
36. I have no buck a rule or policy in order to carry out and assignment.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
37. I have a hard time satisfying the conflicting demands of students, parents, administrators and teachers.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
38. I am given school-related duties without adequate resources and materials to carry them out	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
39. I have influence over what goes on in my department (secondary) or school (elementary)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
40. I'm informed of important things that are happening in my department (secondary) or school (elementary).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

	1	2	3	4	5
41. My administrative head asks my opinion on decisions that directly affect me.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

42. All in all, I would say that I am extremely satisfied with my job.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☒	4 ☐	5 ☐

43. My job is extremely important in comparison to other interests in my life.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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44. Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide all over again whether to take this job, I would definitely do so.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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45. In general, my job measures up extremely well with the sort of job I wanted before I took it.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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46. My administrative head brings me together with other faculty in joint meetings to make decisions and solve common problems.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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47. My administrative head gives me full information about the things which directly involve my work.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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48. I currently find my life very rewarding.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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49. I currently find my life quite boring.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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50. My life is currently very hopeful.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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51. Trying to complete reports and paperwork on time causes me a lot of stress.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
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Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☒	4 ☐	5 ☐
52. I find that dealing with discipline problems puts a lot of stress on me.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
53. There is a lot of stress just keeping up with the changing professional standards.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
54. Trying to keep my work from being too routine and boring puts a lot of stress on me.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
55. Having to participate in school activities outside of the normal working hours is very stressful to me.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
56. I find that trying to be attentive to the problems and needs of fellow faculty is very stressful.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
57. When I really need to talk to my administrative head, (s)he is willing to listen.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
58. My administrative head stands up to outsiders for the people (s)he supervises.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
59. When I have conflicts with parents or students my administrative head gives me the kind of support I need.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

TEACHERS' SELF EFFICACY *(Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements by shading the circles, see example)*

Items	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Disagree slightly more than agree	Agree slightly more than disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☒	6 ☐

60. When a student does better than usual, manytimes it is because I exerted a little extra effort.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

61. The hours in my class have little influence on students compared to the influence of their home environment.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

62. If parents comment to me that their childbehaves much better at school than he/she does at home, it would probably be because I have some specific techniques of managing his/her behav- iour which they may lack.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

63. The amount that a student can learn is primarily related to family background.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

64. If a teacher has adequate skills and motivation, she/ he can get through to the most difficult students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

65. If students aren't disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

66. I have enough training to deal with almost any learning problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

67. My teacher training program and/or experi- ence has given me the necessary skills to be an effective teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Items	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Disagree slightly more than agree	Agree slightly more than disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

68. Many teachers are stymied in their attempts to help students by lack of support from the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

69. Some students need to be placed in slower groups so they're not subjected to unrealistic expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

70. Individual differences among teachers account for the wide variations in student achievement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

71. When a student is having difficulty with an assignment, I am usually able to adjust it to his/her level.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

72. If one of my new students cannot remain on task for a particular assignment, there is little that I could do to increase his/her attention until he/she is ready.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

73. When a student gets a better grade than he/she usually gets, it is usually because I found better ways of teaching that student.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

74. When I really try, I can get through to most difficult students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

75. A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because a student's home environment has a large influence on his/her achievement.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

76. Teachers are not a very powerful influence on student achievement when all factors are considered.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Items	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Disagree slightly more than agree	Agree slightly more than disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Example	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐
77. If students are particularly disruptive one day, I ask myself what I have been doing differently.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
78. When the grades of my students improve it is usually because I found more effective teaching approaches.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
79. If my principal suggested that I change some of my class curriculum, I would feel confident that I have the necessary skills to implement the unfamiliar curriculum.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
80. If a student masters a new concept quickly, this might be because I knew the necessary steps in teaching that concept.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
81. Parent conferences can help a teacher judge how much to expect from a student by giving the teacher an idea of the parents' values toward education, discipline, etc.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
82. If parents would do more with their children, I could do more.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐
83. If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson.	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐	6 ☐

84. If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some techniques to redirect him quickly.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

85. School rules and policies hinder my doing the job I was hired to do.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Items		Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Disagree slightly more than agree	Agree slightly more than disagree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
Example		1	2	3	4	5	6
		☐	☐	☐	☐	☒	☐

86. The influences of a student's home experiences can be overcome by good teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

87. When a child progresses after being placed in a slower group, it is usually because the teacher has had a chance to give him/her extra attention.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

88. If one of my students couldn't do a class assignment, I would be able to accurately assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

89. Even a teacher with good teaching abilities may not reach many students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for taking the time to complete the instrument.

Evaluation of the Quality of the Learning Environment and the Teaching Methodologies at Schools Providing Special Education

PARENTS' INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Instructions

Dear Parent: You have been chosen to fill out a survey relating to the Quality of the Learning Environment and the Teaching Methodologies at Special Education Needs Schools. Read each item and select the best response by placing a tick (✓) in the corresponding box or write your responses in the space provided. Your privacy and the secrecy of your answers will be protected.

	Male	☐	Female	☐
--	------	--------------------------	--------	--------------------------

1. Age of Parent/Guardian	20 and under	☐	21-30	☐	31-40	☐
	41-50	☐	50 & up	☐		

2. Where do you live? _____

3. What is the age of your child/ward? _____

4. What is the sex of your child/ward? _____

5. Does your child/ward have any brothers or sisters? Yes ☐ No ☐

6. If yes, how many brothers and or sisters? _____

7. What challenges, if any, do you face being the parent/guardian of a special needs child?

8. What role do you believe the school plays, if any, in assisting with some of these challenges?

9. Do you assist your child regularly with homework or school related activities? Yes ☐ No ☐

10. How often do you attend PTA meetings and other school functions? _____

11. Do you assist your child/ward regularly with homework or school related activities? Yes ☐ No ☐

12. Do you review your child's academic progress? Yes ☐ No ☐

13. What challenges, if any, do you face with assisting your child with homework activities?

14. Are there any problems or issues you believe affect learning activities at the school? Yes ☐ No ☐

15. If yes, what are the issues or problems that you believe exist?

16. What alternatives do you recommend?

17. What is your view of the school learning activities?

18. What do you believe were the benefits, if any, of enrolling your child/ward at the school?

19. How do you view the teaching-learning environment at the school?

Thank you for making yourself available for interview.

Appendix B

Transition and Planning Instruments

ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The Administrator Interview was guided by the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) format, and was designed to audit the key transition issues outlined by Kohler (1996).

School's Strengths

- Does your school have a structured transition planning programme for students age 14 and older?
.....
- Does your school have a core of staff, parents and other community members who are committed to ensuring the smooth transition from
.....
- primary to secondary education, and from secondary education to the 'world of work'/further education and training?
.....
- Does your school have a staff that is open to professional development opportunities regarding transition planning?
.....
- Does your school provide staff with professional learning opportunities to maximize the effectiveness of the transition of students from school to the 'world of work'/further education and training?
.....
- Does your school acquire and make use of student records when students are placed by the Ministry of Education and Human Resource
.....
- Development at the institution?
.....
- Does your school provide students and their parents with essential and timely information about your school? Does your school have a prospectus or information leaflet for potential students?
.....

Potential Weaknesses

- Does your staff have a clear understanding of the purpose of transition planning programmes?
.....
- Are all phases of transition –accessing assessment/background information, parent conferences, development of IEP/ITP, skills preparation and consolidation – considered by your school? What programs exist? When were these evaluated and revised?
.....
- Does your school provide opportunities for parental involvement in transition activities?
.....
- Does your school research information about transition activities and curricula at other institutions that could be adopted or extended to suit the needs of your students?
.....

- What academic support is provided for students during the preparation process?
.....
- Does every teacher accept responsibility to support each student's social and personal needs as well as academic needs?
.....

Opportunities

- What are the distinctive characteristics of your school that make it unique and therefore appealing?
.....
- Does your school work with business houses in the local community to provide opportunities for authentic work exposure?
.....
- Are there curriculum-related consultations across associated schools?
.....

Potential Threats

- Does your school have appropriate resources in time, equipment and enthusiasm to extend and maintain effective transition initiatives?
.....
- Does your school have a climate that supports responsiveness, student service and openness to change?
.....
- Are there any attitudes or practices of local institutions which are likely to limit your school's ability to establish and extend transition initiatives?
.....

The adapted teacher 'Knowledge of Transition Practices' Tool

ITEM	Knowledge Rating Scale			
	Extensive Knowledge	Moderate Knowledge	Limited Knowledge	No Knowledge
Career Pathways options	4	3	2	1
Student-centred planning approaches	4	3	2	1
Strategies for facilitating active student involvement in their IEP/ITP development	4	3	2	1
Approaches for developing students' self- determination	4	3	2	1
Postsecondary educational services available for students with disabilities	4	3	2	1
Effective occupational skill training strategies	4	3	2	1
Methods for providing work-based education	4	3	2	1
School rules for student work experiences	4	3	2	1
Transition-related community service providers in my location	4	3	2	1
Referral procedures	4	3	2	1
Strategies for developing community-level transition teams	4	3	2	1
Parent involvement strategies	4	3	2	1
Parent roles in transition planning	4	3	2	1
Family-friendly policies	4	3	2	1
Strategies for conducting and using transition-related assessments	4	3	2	1
Strategies for evaluating transition outcomes	4	3	2	1

Comments/Further Information Provided

Themes	

Teacher Interview Guide							
Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Focused Planning	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	IEP Development	High	Medium	Low
				Options identified for each outcome area or goal			
				Post-secondary education or training goals and objectives specified in the IEP			
				Vocational goals and objectives specified			
				Community-related and residential goals and objectives specified (e.g., voting)			
				Recreation and leisure goals and objectives specified			
				Educational program corresponds to specific goals			
				Goals are measurable			
				Personal needs are addressed in planning (e.g., financial, medical, guardianship)			
				Specific goals and objectives result from consumer choices			
				Progress or attainment of goals is reviewed annually			
				Responsibility of participants or agencies specified			
				Evaluation of participant fulfillment of responsibilities			

Teacher Interview Guide							
Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Focused Planning	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	IEP Development	High	Medium	Low
				Options identified for each outcome area or goal			
				Post-secondary education or training goals and objectives specified in the IEP			
				Vocational goals and objectives specified			
				Community-related and residential goals and objectives specified (e.g., voting)			
				Recreation and leisure goals and objectives specified			
				Educational program corresponds to specific goals			
				Goals are measurable			
				Personal needs are addressed in planning (e.g., financial, medical, guardianship)			
				Specific goals and objectives result from consumer choices			
				Progress or attainment of goals is reviewed annually			
				Responsibility of participants or agencies specified			
				Evaluation of participant fulfillment of responsibilities			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Focused Planning	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Student Participation	High	Medium	Low
				Planning team includes student, family members, and school and participating agency personnel			
				Assessment information is used as basis for planning			
				Transition-focused planning begins no later than age 14			
				Meeting time adequate to conduct planning			
				Preparation time adequate to conduct planning			
				Planning meeting time and place conducive to student and family participation			
				Accommodations made for communication needs (e.g., interpreters)			
				Referral to adult service provider(s) occurs prior to student's exit from school			
				Planning team leader identified			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Focused Planning		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Planning Strategies		High	Medium	Low

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Life Skills Instruction		High	Medium	Low

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved		Employment Skills Instructions	High	Medium	Low
				Work-related behaviours and skills training			
				Job seeking skills training			
				Occupation-specific vocational skill training			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Career and Vocational Curricula	High	Medium	Low
				Provide career education curriculum			
				Provide tech prep curriculum			
				Provide cooperative education curriculum			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Support Services	High	Medium	Low
				Identification and development of environmental adaptations			
				Identification and development of accommodations			
				Identification and development of natural supports			
				Provision of related services (e.g., OT, PT, speech therapy, transportation)			
				Use of mentors			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Assessment		High	Medium	Low
				Vocational assessment (including curriculum-based and situational assessment)				
				Academic, cognitive, and adaptive behaviour assessments				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Student Development		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Structured Work Experience				
				Apprenticeships				
				Paid work experience				
				Work study program				
				Job placement services (prior to school exit)				

Current Status				Transition Practice – Interagency Collaboration		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Collaborative Service Delivery		High	Medium	Low
				Coordinated requests for information (e.g., to parents, employers)				
				Reduction of system barriers to collaboration				
				Collaborative funding and staffing of transition services				
				Collaborative development and use of assessment data				
				Coordinated and shared delivery of transition-related services				
				Systems information disseminated among cooperating agencies				
				Collaborative program planning and development, including employer involvement				
				Collaborative consultation between special, “regular,” and vocational educators				
				Collaboration between post-secondary education institutions and the school district				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Interagency Collaboration		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Collaborative Frame Work		High	Medium	Low
				Interagency coordinating body that includes consumers, parents, service providers, and employers				
				Formal interagency agreement				
				Roles of service providers clearly articulated				
				Established methods of communication among service providers				
				Student information shared among agencies via established procedures (with appropriate release of information and confidentiality)				
				Single-case management system				
				"Lead" agency identified				
				Designated transition contact person for all service providers				

Current Status				Transition Practice – Family Involvement		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Family Involvement		High	Medium	Low
				Participation in program policy development				
				Participation in service delivery				
				Involvement in student assessment				
				Participation in evaluation of student's program				
				Parents/families exercise decision making				
				Parent/family attendance at IEP meeting				
				Parents/family members as trainers				
				Parents/family members as mentors				
				Parents/family role in natural support network				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Family Involvement		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Family Empowerment		High	Medium	Low
				Pre-IEP planning activities for parents/families				
				Parents/families presented with choices				
				Transition information provided to parents/families prior to student's age 14				
				Structured method to identify family needs				
				Parent/family support network				
				Child care for transition-related planning meetings (e.g., IEP, ITP)				
				Respite care				
				Information to parents/families provided in their ordinary language				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Family Involvement		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Family Training		High	Medium	Low
				Training about promoting self-determination				
				Training about advocacy				
				Training about natural supports				
				Training focused on their own empowerment				
				Training on transition-related planning process (e.g., IEP, ITP)				
				Training about agencies and services				
				Training on legal issues				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Program Structure		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Program Philosophy		High	Medium	Low
				Curricula are community-referenced				
				Curricula are outcome-based				
				Education provided in least restrictive environment				
				Education provided in integrated settings				
				Student has access to all educational options (secondary and post-secondary)				
				Cultural and ethnic sensitivity in programs and planning				
				Flexible programming to meet student needs				
				Program planning is outcome-based				
				Longitudinal approach to transition (early childhood to adult)				

Current Status				Transition Practice – Program Structure		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Program Evaluation		High	Medium	Low
				Data-based management system				
				Evaluation utilization for program improvement				
				Ongoing program evaluation				
				Specific evaluation of student outcomes				
				Student/family role in program evaluation				
				Secondary-level education services needs assessment				
				Post-school services or program needs assessment				
				Annual evaluation of interdisciplinary policy and procedures				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Program Structure		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Strategic Planning		High	Medium	Low
				Community-level strategic planning focused on local issues and services				
				Regional-level strategic planning				
				State-level strategic planning				
				Community-level transition body focused on local issues and services				
				Regional-level transition body focused on regional/state issues				
				State-level transition body focused on regional/state issues				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Program Structure		Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining			High	Medium	Low
				Adult service systems restructured to include transition-related planning and services as integral components				
				Education system restructured to include transition-related planning and services as integral components				
				Administrative, school board, and community support for the program				
				Program values, principles, and mission are clearly articulated				
				Specific and consistent transition-related policies and procedures between and within agency and education participants				
				Transition planning program structure and process clearly articulated				

Current Status				Transition Practice - Program Structure	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining		High	Medium	Low
				Transition practices resource materials available to personnel, families, and employers			
				Assigned staff are qualified			
				Pre-service training on transition practices			
				Sufficient allocation of personnel			
				Transition-related technical assistance			
				Establishment of transition-related personnel competencies			
				Ongoing transdisciplinary staff development			

Current Status				Transition Practice - Program Structure	Priority for Improvement		
Not started	In progress	Achieved	Maintaining	Resource Allocation	High	Medium	Low
				Creative use of resources			
				Sufficient allocation of resources			
				Student/family role in resource allocation			
				Resources transferred from sheltered and/or segregated facilities to community-based and/or integrated settings			

Appendix C

Policy and Quality Assurance Instruments

Interview Protocol Special Education Policy & Quality Assurance- Policymakers (PQ&A PM v.1)

Interviewer: _____ Venue: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name: _____ Organisation: _____

Position: _____ Time in position (yrs): _____

Background in Special Needs education

Experience in special needs education:
(Jobs held with time spent, settings worked in, accomplishments)

General qualifications:

Qualifications in Special Needs education:

1.1. What is the current status of policy on SpEd in Barbados?

- Is the Policy on Special Needs Education in Barbados (2008) the current policy document?
- Please indicate where you have the greatest responsibility regarding the 9 broad policy areas identified by the MOE

1.2. Please describe the process for determining policy guidelines for Special Education in Barbados?

- Who are the members of the Advisory Committee on Special Education and what are their roles and responsibilities?
- Are principals, teachers, parents, students, the teachers' unions involved? Is the ACSE active?
- When was the committee convened and when did they last meet?
- How frequently has the committee met over the time between inception and today?
- How were the 9 broad policy areas for SpEd identified?
- How are final decisions made on what the policy guidelines should be? In your opinion, is the policy development process effective/efficient?
- If yes/no, How so?

1.3. What, if any, is the MOE's role in disseminating SpEd policy to Stakeholders?

- If role, how effectively is the MOE carrying out its role?
- If none, what should the role be?
- To the general public? What has been done in this area?
- Town meetings, etc.
- To all schools? what are they given and how is it done?
- To schools with only Regular Ed students?
- To parents?

1.3.1. What, if any, is the MOE's role in monitoring the effectiveness of dissemination of policy guidelines to the various stakeholders?

- *If role, how effectively is the MOE carrying out its role? If none, what should the role be?*

1.4. What, if any, is the MOE's role in/responsibility for monitoring policy enactment?

- *If role, how effectively is the MOE carrying out its role? If none, what should the role be?*
- *Is there a process for changing outdated or ineffective policy?*
- *Do principals, teachers, parents, community members have the opportunity to give*
- *feedback on policy? Is this feedback recorded in a systematic way?*

2. What guidelines (policies, standards, legislation and so on) were used to formulate SpEd policy in Barbados?

- *In what ways, if any, are the Barbados policy guidelines influenced by: SpEd policies that exist in the region; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the National Curriculum; empirical data on the needs of the SpEd population in Barbados?*

3. What, if any, are the educational services available to assist parents of students with special education needs?

- *Is the MOE involved in any way in the services you have described?*
- *Creation of service and policy governing service?*
- *Dissemination of information about services to parents?*
- *Ensuring ACCESS to services?*
- *Monitoring USE?*
- *Monitoring QUALITY of available services?*
- *If yes, what Standards of quality are used?*

4. What, if any, are the career development and transition services available to assist parents of students with special education needs?

- *Is the MOE involved in any way in the services you have described?*
- *Creation of service and policy governing service?*
- *Dissemination of information about services to parents?*
- *Ensuring ACCESS to services*
- *Monitoring USE?*
- *Monitoring QUALITY of available services? If yes, what Standards of quality are used?*

5.1. What are the minimum qualifications for teachers who work with special needs students?

- *Do the MOE policy guidelines specify these qualifications?*
- *How do the qualifications compare to those for regular ed teachers?*
- *Are there minimum requirements in SpEd for regular ed teachers?*
- *What role does the MOE play in monitoring the qualifications of teachers who work with SpEd students?*

5.2. What are the minimum qualifications for principals who work with special needs students?

- *Do the MOE policy guidelines specify these qualifications?*
- *How do the qualifications compare to those for regular ed principals?*
- *Are there minimum requirements in SpEd for regular ed principals?*

- What role does the MOE play in monitoring the qualifications of principals who head schools with SpEd students?

6. What professional development opportunities exist for teachers of special needs students?

- What PD opps does the MOE directly offer?
- What PD opps does the MOE facilitate?
- What role does the MOE play in:
 - (i) disseminating information about SpEd PD opps to teachers?
 - (ii) access to PD opps?
 - (iii) monitoring teacher take-up of PD opps?
 - (iv) evaluating the quality of PD opps? What standards are used for evaluating quality? i.e. Against what criteria is “quality” measured?

7. What are the levels of certification granted to SpEd students?

- What role does the MOE play in determining the levels of certification granted to SpEd students?
- What role does the MOE play in monitoring the levels of certification granted to SpEd students?

8. What is the extent of the MOE’s responsibility (as opposed to the School’s) for (i) providing and (ii) maintaining the quality of the following?

- 5: MOE has major responsibility
- 1: School has major responsibility

	Provide	Maintain quality
The physical plant, including access and security	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
The curriculum (school-level, class-level and individual programming)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
Resources for general Instruction	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
Resources for specialised instruction- adaptive technologies, school-to-life spaces, etc.	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

- How does the MOE monitor the quality of the above and what STANDARDS of quality (criteria) are used?

9. What is the MOE’s role in the following?

- Identifying students with special needs, in particular those in regular education
- Assessing the learning challenges of identified students
- Placing the student in an appropriate setting
- Monitoring the progress of the student
- Monitoring terminal student certification
- Monitoring transition into post-school life

10. What would you say are your THREE (3) greatest challenges in your current job?

END. Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview!

Interview Protocol SpEd Policy & Quality Assurance- Principals (PQ&A P&T v.1)

Interviewer: _____ Venue: _____ Date: _____

Participant's Name: _____ Organisation: _____

Position: _____ Time in position (yrs): _____

Background in Special Needs education

Experience in special needs education:
(Jobs held with time spent, settings worked in, accomplishments)

General qualifications:

Qualifications in Special Needs education:

Type of Qualification	Granting Institution	When received

1. Have you had any involvement in formulating policy on SpEd in Barbados?

- Do you think someone in your role should be involved in formulating SpEd policy?
- Why?
- Are you aware of/have you read the Policy on Special Needs Education in Barbados (2008)?

2.1. How do you come to know the SpEd policy guidelines for your school?

- Does the MOE have a role in this?
- If so how effective is their dissemination of info to your school?

2.2. Does the MOE monitor policy enactment in your school?

- If so, how effectively is the MOE carrying out its role?
- If not, what should the MOE's role be?
- Do you have the opportunity to give feedback on policy?
- Do you record feedback in a systematic way?

3. What, if any, are the educational services available to assist parents of students with special education needs?

- Is the MOE involved in any way in the services you have described?
- Creation of service and policy governing service?
- Dissemination of information about services to parents?
- Ensuring ACCESS to services?
- Monitoring USE?
- Monitoring QUALITY of available services?
- If yes, what Standards of quality are used?

4. **What, if any, are the career development and transition services available to assist parents of students with special education needs?**
 - *Is the MOE involved in any way in the services you have described?*
 - *Creation of service and policy governing service?*
 - *Dissemination of information about services to parents?*
 - *Ensuring ACCESS to services*
 - *Monitoring USE?*
 - *Monitoring QUALITY of available services?*
 - *If yes, what Standards of quality are used?*
5. **Are you aware of any minimum qualifications for principals/teachers who work with special needs students?**
 - *What role does the MOE play in monitoring the qualifications of principals/teachers?*
6. **What professional development opportunities for principals/teachers of special needs students have you attended? Please complete table attached.**
7. **What are the levels of certification granted to SpEd students? [Ann Hill and Irving Wilson only]**
 - *What role does the MOE play in determining the levels of certification granted to SpEd students?*
 - *What role does the MOE play in monitoring the levels of certification granted to SpEd students?*
 - *How many students in your school/your class received each level of certification over the past 3 years?*
8. **What is the extent of the MOE's responsibility (as opposed to the School's/teacher's) for (i) providing and (ii) maintaining the quality of the following?**
 - *5: MOE has major responsibility*
 - *1: School/teacher has major responsibility*

	Provide	Maintain quality
The physical plant, including access and security	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
The curriculum	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
school-level	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
class-level	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
individual programming)	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
Resources for general Instruction	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1
Resources for specialised instruction- adaptive technologies, school-to-life spaces, etc.	5 4 3 2 1	5 4 3 2 1

- *How does the MOE monitor the quality of the above and what STANDARDS of quality (criteria) are used?*
9. **What is your role in the following?**
 - *Assessing the learning challenges of students/the students in your class*
 - *Placing the student in an appropriate group/class*
 - *Designing an appropriate programme of studies for the student (IEP)*
 - *Monitoring the progress of the student*
 - *Monitoring terminal student certification [for AH and IW only]*
 - *Monitoring transition into post-school life [for AH and IW only]*

10. What would you say are your THREE (3) greatest challenges in your current job?

END Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview!

Professional Development Activities in Special Education (Please use other side, if needed)					
Area/Topic of training	Delivered by: E.g. Special Unit of the MOE	Approximate date	Duration E.g. 3 sessions of 1.5 hrs each	Extent to which PD was relevant 5: <i>Very relevant to my needs</i> 1: <i>Not at all relevant to my needs</i>	Comments
				5 4 3 2 1	
				5 4 3 2 1	
				5 4 3 2 1	
				5 4 3 2 1	
				5 4 3 2 1	

Focus Group Protocol SpEd Policy & Quality Assurance- Parents/Guardians (PQ&A P/G v.1)

Focus Group Facilitator(s): _____ Date: _____

Venue: _____ # parents/guardians: _____

# children in this school	Age/Class(es)/ grade level(s)	Nature of (each) child's special need	Time in this school
Etc.			

Note: The table above is on a separate sheet of paper

1. Here is a list of the educational services available to you as parents of students with special education needs:

Note: List generated from interviews with MOE, Principals and Teachers...can you indicate by a show of hands how many of you...

Educational Service	Know about it? (#)	Have used it? (#)	How heard about it?	Very satisfied or Satisfied? (#)
Service X				
Service Y				
Other (state)				

(Based on the responses of the participants) If not satisfied, can you suggest THREE (3) ways to improve the quality of service?

2. Here is a list of the career development and transition services available to you as parents of students with special education needs:

Note: List generated as above...can you indicate by a show of hands how many of you...

Career Development and Transition Service	Know about it? (#)	Have used it? (#)	How heard about it?	Very satisfied or Satisfied? (#)
Service X				
Service Y				
Other (state)				

(Based on the responses of the participants) If not satisfied, can you suggest THREE (3) ways to improve the quality of service?

3. In what ways do you participate in your child's/ren's education in this school?

- Help in day-to-day admin/non-educational tasks of the school
- Raise funds for the school
- Contribute or source resources for the school
- Attend parent-teacher conferences
- Work with teacher to plan educational programme for your child
- Monitor child's academic progress

4. What are your THREE (3) TOP concerns about the QUALITY of the education that your child receives?

(Note: Consensus-building through use of a modified Delphi Technique, if possible)

5. What can you do (or what have you done in the past) to ensure that your child receives a quality education?

Appendix D

Teaching and Learning Environment Instruments

Serp-Indepth Interview Guide for Teachers

Teacher's Philosophy

1. What beliefs guide your practice with respect to teaching and interacting with students with special needs

- 1.1. *What beliefs do you hold about these students' capacity to learn*
- 1.2. *Where do you see these students going after they leave the special education unit*
- 1.3. *What kind of contribution do you think they will make to society*

Location and Physical Setting

2. How well does the physical environment accommodate students with special education needs?

- 2.1. *In your opinion is the layout of the school and classroom adequate for catering to the needs of students?*
 - 2.1.1. *Is the location of the school ideal for students with special needs*
 - 2.1.1.1. *What is good about where the school is located*
 - 2.1.1.2. *What challenges does the location of the school present for students and teachers*
- 2.2. *What changes would you like to see made so that students are accommodated*

Relationships

3. How would you describe the nature of the relationship between staff in the special unit/classroom?

- 3.1. *How would you describe the nature of relationship between staff and parents of students with special needs*
- 3.2. *How would you describe the nature of the relationship between yourself and your students*
- 3.3. *How would you describe the nature of the relationship between students in the unit and special needs students and other children at the school*
- 3.4. *How well are initiatives supported by the principal and senior management at the school*
 - 3.4.1. *Need for resources*
 - 3.4.2. *Need for training*
 - 3.4.3. *Need for teaching aids*

School Culture

4. How would you describe the school's culture

- 4.1. *Supportive/not supportive of students with special needs*
- 4.2. *How are students integrated to the wider activities of the school?*
- 4.3. *What challenges do you see either with teachers or other students at the school that hinders students with special needs integration and participation in the school's activities*

Classroom Environment

5. What kind of classroom environment do you try to create for your students and how do you go about ensuring that it is accomplished?

Interview Guide for Post Observation Session

- 1. Can you tell me a little bit about the lesson today- what were your objectives for students today**
 - a) Probe: what did you want them to learn (skill or knowledge)
 - b) What determined your use of strategy for the lesson today
 - c) How did you adapt the lesson to suit the learning needs of the children in the class

- 2. How successful do you think you were at reaching all the children in your classroom?**
 - a) What responses did the children give which suggested that they understood the content of the lesson?
 - b) What responses suggested that they met the objectives that you set for the assessment section of lesson?
 - c) How easy is it for you to communicate ideas to the children in the classroom
 - d) What part of the lesson do you think presented the least challenge for students today
 - e) What part of the lesson do you think presented the greatest challenge for students today

- 3. In your opinion is there anything that you would have done differently today if you had the chance?**
 - a) Are there any other strategies that might have been used to convey ideas in the lesson today? If so what- what would have been their advantage?
 - b) What kind/s of resources would have made teaching easier had you had access to it/them today?

**SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT
SCHOOL VISITS: RESEARCHERS' CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT ver 2**

January 2011

PAGE 1

SECTION 1 Information about the school/class

School _____ Class _____

Date _____ Time _____

Topic _____ No. of Students _____

Age Range _____ Location of Class _____

CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS

AVAILABLE EQUIPMENT/ RESOURCES:

SECTION 2 The Lesson

(A) PLANNING / PREPARATION

clearly evident from all activities: HIGH	3
sometimes evident from activities: MODERATE	2
vague indication, if any: LOW	1

Use the above key to rate the areas below:

evidence of forethought / planning / preparation _____

readiness of teaching-learning resources _____

(B) IMPLEMENTATION

KEY:

0: not seen

1: inadequate, unsatisfactory, leaves much to be desired, needs help here

2: generally satisfactory, but not consistent; some highs, some lows

3: consistently satisfactory

4: consistently good, thoughtful, sometimes excellent

NA: not needed / not applicable

materials/ resources	Relevance (to topic /lesson focus)	
	Adequacy (sufficient quantity for student use)	
	Suitability: (quality in relation to student challenges and the focus of the lesson)	
Instructional strategies	Arrangement of students for instruction monitoring student participation	
	gaining student attention	
	responding to learning challenges	
class	dealing with disruptions/ disturbances: from students *	
management	dealing with disruptions/ disturbances: from 'outside'	

SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT
SCHOOL VISITS: RESEARCHERS' CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT ver 2

January 2011

PAGE 3

* Antecedent		
* Behaviour		
* Consequence		

KEY:

- 1: not used / no evidence of this**
- 2: hardly used**
- 3: moderate use - within reason**
- 4 very much used - tending to overuse or extreme use – might be considered unreasonable**

COMMUNICATION		
AUDITORY	use of voice	
	use of other audio input (from recorder, TV, computer)	
VISUAL	static: graphs, charts, pictures, photos, etc.	
	moving: video, TV, computer, animations, etc.	
VERBAL	requiring reading: books, chalkboard, notes, etc.	
	requiring student writing / drawing	
KINAESTHETIC	requiring student signing	
	requiring student interpretation of signing	
	use of Braille	
	use of manipulatives	
TOTAL COMMUNICATION	simultaneous voice and signing	

**SPECIAL EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT
SCHOOL VISITS: RESEARCHERS' CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT ver 2**

January 2011

PAGE 4

COMMENT:

(C) GENERAL

How did the teacher assess the progress of the class?

Generally, to what extent did the teacher provide a supportive relationship for pupils?

How well did the teacher handle this class?

What were the main highlights of this class?

END

Appendix E

Item Analysis on Teacher Stress Inventory

No	TEACHER STRESS INVENTORY	Mean	Std.
1.	I can predict what will be expected of me in my work tomorrow	2.91	1.474
2.	I am unclear on what the scope and responsibilities of my job are	2.00	1.000
3.	I am uncertain what the criteria for evaluating my performance actually are	2.60	1.118
4.	I receive enough information to carry out my job effectively.	2.20	.816
5.	When asked, I am able to tell someone exactly what the demands of my job are	3.84	1.028
6.	I find that I have extra work beyond what the demands of my job are	3.92	1.115
7.	The criteria of performance for my job are too high	3.33	.917
8.	I am given too much responsibility without adequate authority to carry it out	2.76	1.200
9.	I receive conflicting demands from two or more people or groups in the school setting	2.35	.832
10.	I have no buck or rule policy in order to carry out and assignment	2.47	.834
11.	I have a hard time satisfying the conflicting demands of students, parents administrators and teachers	2.37	.970
12.	I am given school-related duties without adequate resources and materials to carry them out	2.88	1.154
13.	I have influence over what goes on in my department (secondary) or school (elementary)	2.48	1.275
14.	I'm informed of important things that are happening in my department (secondary) or school (elementary)	2.39	1.118
15.	My administrative head asks my opinion on decisions that directly affect me	2.46	1.318
16.	All in all, I would say that I am entirely satisfied with my job	2.50	.834
17.	My job is extremely important in comparison with other interests in my life	2.42	1.018
18.	Knowing what I know now, if I had to decide all over again whether to take this job, I would definitely do so	2.50	1.216
19.	In general, my job measures up extremely well with the sort of job I wanted before I took it	2.75	.944
20.	My administrative head brings me together with other faculty in joint meetings to make decisions and solve	2.71	1.197
21.	My administrative head gives full information about the things which directly involve my work	2.75	1.113
22.	I currently find my life very rewarding	2.63	1.313
23.	I currently find my life quite boring	1.54	.833
24.	My life is currently very hopeful	2.57	1.472
25.	Trying to complete reports and paperwork on time causes me a lot of stress	3.17	1.337
26.	I find that dealing with discipline problems puts a lot of stress on me	3.28	1.137

27.	There is a lot of stress just keeping up with the changing professional standards	2.64	.952
28.	Trying to keep my work from being too routine and boring puts a lot of stress on me	2.16	.688
29.	Having to participate in school activities outside the normal working hours is very stressful to me	2.16	.850
30.	I find that trying to be attentive to the problems and needs of fellow faculty is very stressful	2.28	.936
31.	When I really need to talk to my administrative head, (s) he is willing to listen	2.36	1.497
32.	My administrative head stands up to outsiders for the people (s)he supervises	2.52	1.039
33.	When I have conflict with parents or students my administrative head gives me the kind of support I need	2.64	1.177

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