

Mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children in primary schools

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Abbreviations

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CRIDE	Consortium for Research into Deaf Education
CSW	Communication Support Worker
DfE	Department for Education
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DoH	Department of Health
HI	hearing impaired
INSET	in-service training
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
NCTL	National College for Teaching and Leadership
NHS	National Health Service
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
Outreach	Outreach Advisory Teacher of the Deaf Service
PGCE	Postgraduate Certificate in Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
TA	Teaching Assistant
TOD	Teacher of the Deaf
with resource-base(s)	with specialist resource-based provision(s) for deaf pupils
without resource-base(s)	without specialist resource-based provision(s) for deaf pupils

Abstract

Little research exists exploring mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children. A small-scale study examines teacher perceptions in Canada and whilst comparisons with England might be drawn, there is still an evident need to explore teachers' perceptions in this country. As such, this research aims to explore the views and opinions of mainstream teachers working in primary schools within an English context.

A two-phase, mixed-methodology approach was utilised, which resulted in both quantitative and qualitative data. The initial phase of data-collection involved an online questionnaire with 21 respondents. After analysing this data and identifying common themes, a second phase of data-collection was conducted, involving four semi-structured interviews. These were transcribed, to facilitate analysis and the triangulation of data.

The findings of this research highlighted the positive, inclusive attitudes held by the mainstream, primary teachers involved in this study and from their responses, seven themes were identified: 'Teacher of the Deaf (TOD) support', 'teachers' changing perceptions', 'issues of inclusion', 'training', 'teacher confidence and skills', 'challenges of working with deaf pupils' and 'areas for development'. This study found that the personal and professional skills of the TOD were key to fostering successful relationships with mainstream colleagues.

With an improved understanding of mainstream teachers' perspectives, it is intended that personal practice and that of colleague TODs can be improved. This study offers TODs a valuable insight into mainstream teacher perceptions and through a shared understanding their viewpoints, it is aimed that improvements can be made to the guidance, support and advice that TODs offer their mainstream colleagues. Ultimately, such knowledge could positively impact on the educational and social outcomes for the deaf pupils on TODs' caseloads.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Teachers of the Deaf (TODs) are invited into primary school classrooms to support deaf pupils and to offer guidance to their mainstream colleagues. One small-scale study has explored teacher perceptions in Canada, but no comparable research exists in England.

Without first understanding the pressures and challenges that teachers face, considering their concerns, their willingness to establish inclusive environments or assessing teachers' confidence levels, it could be argued that it is challenging for TODs to ensure that they offer effective and appropriate support.

This study intends to explore teachers' views of working with deaf pupils. It will explore their challenges, teachers' assessment of the support they receive and also establish any areas for development, with the aim of ensuring that TODs provide the most-effective support possible.

1.2. Outline of chapters

Chapter Two reviews the legal framework that guides deaf primary-age children's education in English schools and also examines the available literature on teacher perceptions of working with Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils. Chapter Three addresses the mixed-methodology approach of this research with Chapter Four examining its results. Chapter 5 discusses the findings of this research critically, whilst offering potential guidance for future TOD practice and Chapter Six draws conclusions.

2. Literature review

2.1. *Justification for the current study*

“Deafness is not a learning disability” (NDCS, 2010:2) and therefore, it could be assumed that deaf pupils can achieve alongside their peers in mainstream schools, provided the appropriate support is in place. 78% of deaf children are educated in schools (CRIDE, 2017), with mainstream teachers central to their success. With CRIDE (2017) establishing that 22% of pupils have additional Special Educational Needs (SEN), this naturally offers further challenges.

Limited research investigates teachers’ perceptions on the inclusion of deaf pupils in mainstream schools. The available research concerns Canada (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013) and whilst parallels might be drawn, there is no current UK-based research.

It is vital that teachers’ perceptions of working with deaf pupils are sought to enable Teachers of the Deaf (TODs) to tailor and target the support they provide. The researcher’s own background is in primary education, which is why this educational phase was selected for the study.

2.2. *Deaf education in England*

2.2.1. *Deaf children in England and their educational provision*

1 to 2 babies in every 1000 are identified as having a permanent hearing loss in the Newborn Hearing Screen (NHS, 2018). Although Fortnum et al. (2001) found that additional children are identified with hearing losses later in childhood, deafness is still a low-incidence disability.

In January 2016, over 8.5 million pupils were in education in England (DfE, 2017). Of these, around 50,000 had deafness as their SEN and CRIDE (2017) has highlighted an upward trend in numbers across the UK since 2011.

78% of school-age pupils attend mainstream schools without resource-bases for deaf pupils (CRIDE, 2017) and while there is access to TOD support, deaf

pupils are predominantly taught by mainstream teachers. CRIDE (2017) highlights that only 6% of school-age deaf children are taught in mainstream schools with resource-bases, with TODs on-site.

2.2.2. Deaf children and young people's achievement

2.2.2.1. Academic achievement

It could be assumed that deaf pupils should achieve alongside their peers, provided they are appropriately supported (NDCS, 2010). However, differing views exist in the available literature. Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) find that mainstream classrooms result in higher academic performance in English and Maths than in segregated classrooms, which would promote the inclusion of deaf pupils into mainstream classes. Yet, this study was limited to 63 teachers, potentially questioning the validity of the findings and whether they can be generalised to a wider population. The authors also acknowledge that factors, such as degree of hearing loss and additional needs affected their research results.

Mayer et al. (2016) support Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham's (2013) assertions, finding that deaf pupils could record high levels of attainment in expressive and receptive vocabulary skills. However, their relatively small study concerns 33 cognitively-able pupils, using cochlear implants, which does not consider pupils with hearing aids, different hearing losses or additional needs. It could be that these higher-ability pupils are educated in mainstream schools without resource-bases, while higher-needs pupils are placed in more specialised settings.

In contrast, Howse (2014:no page) maintains that deaf pupils are "being failed by the education system". City, University London research (2017) further concludes that more than half of 79 severely to profoundly oral-deaf children have reading difficulties as severe as those experienced by hearing dyslexic pupils. This is a small study, focusing on specific degrees of hearing loss, so again cannot be generalised to a wider population. However, similar reading difficulties have also been found in pupils in the USA (Traxler, 2000) and the

Netherlands (Wauters et al., 2006). Whilst focusing primarily on general SEN, Benjamin (2002) and Lloyd (2008) also claim that inclusion in mainstream settings may adversely affect achievement.

2.2.2.2. National Testing and deaf pupils' achievement

With opposing views on deaf pupils' achievement, it is necessary to examine national data to further understand deaf pupils' achievement. The 2016 Standard Assessment Tests' data supports Hrastinski and Wilbur's (2016) assertions that deaf pupils lag behind their peers without SEN in schools. In 2017, only 39% of deaf children achieved the expected standard across Reading, Writing and Mathematics, compared to 70% of pupils without SEN (NDCS, 2018a). This is a significant difference of 31%. In 2016, the difference was 29% (NDCS, 2018a), which could suggest the gap is widening.

This data is not directly comparable to previous years, due to changes in the National Curriculum and testing formats, but highlights a significant gap in achievement for deaf pupils. This is echoed in Key Stage 1 and Foundation Stage data (NDCS, 2016) and also GCSE data (NDCS, 2018b).

The NDCS (2016) also highlights that it may not be entirely representative of schools' data, since schools have to identify pupils as deaf and it is possible that there is an under-representation. Indeed, CRIDE (2017) believes that the School Census under-records the number of deaf pupils by 42%, which would ultimately impact on the attainment data recorded for deaf pupils as a population. However, there is an established lag in achievement between deaf pupils and their peers without SEN.

2.2.2.3. Additional needs

CRIDE (2017) found that 22% of deaf children had additional needs; a rise of 3%, when compared with CRIDE's 2011 data, although differing methods of measurement could account for this change. This differs significantly from Fortnum and Davis (1997), who found that 38.7% of deaf children had additional needs. Whilst the NDCS (2012) can explain the disparity between

the CRIDE (2017) and Fortnum and Davis (1997) data, with the SEN criteria much wider in the latter's work, Guardino (2015:416) asserts that the number of pupils who are "deaf with disabilities" is growing and the Gallaudet Research Institute (2013) believes that 40% to 50% of deaf pupils have additional needs. It must therefore be concluded that a significant proportion of deaf children have additional SEN and even accepting a conservative estimate regarding additional needs, it should be understood that this would impact on deaf children's achievements in national testing.

2.3. Supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs: The legal position

2.3.1. Supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs: Warnock (1978), Salamanca (1994) and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001)

Few deaf pupils were in mainstream education in the 1960s (Gregory, 2010). However, over the years, there has been a drive towards mainstream inclusion for SEN pupils with "The Warnock Report" significant in this movement (Lauchlan and Greig, 2015; DES, 1978).

The 1994 UNESCO World Conference in Salamanca, further highlighted world-wide governments' commitments to inclusion and the 1997 UK government published "Excellence for all Children: Meeting Special Educational Needs" (DfEE, 1997), which set out its pledge regarding SEN pupils' inclusion (DfES, 2001a). The "Special Educational Needs and Disability Act" (2001) also strengthened SEN pupils' rights to mainstream education and the DfES (2001b) published its "Special Educational Needs: Code of Practice".

2.3.2. The Children and Families Act (2014)

The "Children and Families Act" (2014) enhanced the educational provision for SEN pupils further. Teachers, who are responsible on a day-to-day basis with providing SEN provision, must "ensure that the child engages in the activities of

the school together with children who do not have special educational needs” (Children and Families Act 2014:30).

With 78% of deaf pupils educated in mainstream schools, mainstream teachers must ensure that deaf pupils receive high-quality educational opportunities that are differentiated to meet their specific needs.

2.3.3. *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0 to 25 Years (2015)*

The “Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years” (DfE and DoH, 2015) guides schools and further reasserts the government’s commitment to inclusive education. The demands of the “Equality Act” (2010), the Government Equalities Office, and Equality and Human Rights Commission are also reiterated (DfE and DoH, 2015).

Section 6 of this “Code of Practice” (DfE and DoH, 2015) highlights schools’ legal responsibilities to regularly assess, plan, do and review the support they offer SEN pupils, to ensure they achieve excellent outcomes. Thus, mainstream teachers are legally accountable for their teaching of the deaf pupils in their class.

2.4. *Mainstream staff’s views of teaching deaf pupils*

2.4.1. *Successful inclusion predictors*

Limited research exists examining the predictors of successful inclusion or indeed, teachers’ perceptions of teaching deaf children, which makes it challenging for definitive conclusions to be drawn. However, Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) and Salter et al. (2017) agree that teacher attitudes are central to inclusive education and teachers’ expectations can affect pupil outcomes. In their study, Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) found that teachers held positive views and were knowledgeable about meeting their deaf pupils’ needs. It should be noted that this small study was conducted in one

region (Ottawa, Canada) and that the positive views held may be due to an inclusive ethos fostered in this area, which is not representative of all teachers.

Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) found that environmental factors could affect teachers' positive attitudes. They assert that levels of support, such as extra planning time, could contribute to teachers' outlooks. Such factors could only be accommodated if school budgets allow, which in the current "age of austerity" (Emmott 2016:no page) would appear difficult to achieve.

Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2017) assert that successful inclusion is supported by early diagnosis and also improvements in hearing aid technology with Archbold and Mayer (2012) stating that early cochlear implantation results in improved levels of language and educational attainment. Geers and Nicholas (2013) concur with the importance of early cochlear implantation, stating that it can enable pupils to achieve age-appropriate spoken language skills. As such, successful inclusion can be supported by pupils' unique circumstances, over which mainstream schools have no control.

2.4.2. Predictors of unsuccessful inclusion

Vermeulen et al. (2012) believe that teachers with previous negative experiences of working with deaf children might attribute the same characteristics to future pupils. Vermeulen et al. (2012) also believe that teachers can develop negative attitudes to perceived disruptive pupils, which might, for example, be due to deaf pupils combatting background noise. Thus, negative emotions could be created because teachers have not fully understood their pupils' needs (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013; Vermeulen et al., 2012).

Some teachers may also not believe in mainstream, inclusive practices for SEN pupils; might feel that they are not responsible for them and interact less with them; or pass responsibility onto Teaching Assistants (Vermeulen et al., 2013). Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) assert that such negative attitudes lead to poorer academic performance, although there is little research to support this.

2.4.3. Teacher of the Deaf support

Many teachers have limited experience of working with deaf pupils (NatSIP, 2012). Therefore, ToDs have an important role in enabling mainstream teachers to successfully include deaf children in their classrooms (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013). Indeed, the DfE (2018:26) specifies that TODs should provide “professional direction to colleagues... to improve their practice in working with deaf learners through, for example, advice, training or coaching”.

This Teacher and TOD collaboration is essential in promoting excellent outcomes for deaf pupils (NCTL, 2015; Salter et al., 2017; Paju et al., 2016; Mulholland and O’Connor, 2016). In practice, Salter et al. (2017) found that ToDs did share knowledge with teachers, who were open new ideas, skills and ways of working (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013).

2.4.4. Support staff

Paju et al. (2016) found that Teaching Assistants (TAs) were more positive and confident than teachers when working with SEN pupils; which may be due to training or because they may work predominantly with one pupil.

TAs working closely with deaf pupils reported that teachers were not always aware of pupils’ difficulties, although these could be masked by TA support (Salter et al., 2017). But, as TAs work closely with these pupils, collaboration between teacher, ToD and TA would be useful, to share knowledge. However, Salter et al. (2017) found this collaboration to be rare.

Salter et al. (2017) believe that TAs could impact negatively on pupils’ academic performance, such as through over-supporting and learned helplessness (Lauchlan and Greig, 2015). Some TAs might also be responsible for delivering curriculum-content rather than teachers (Lauchlan and Grieg, 2015; Salter et al., 2017). Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) did not find evidence to support this claim, although given that their research involved questioning teachers about their practices, it is unlikely many would have admitted to delegating responsibility to less qualified staff. It is clear that the legal

expectations discussed previously would not support TA-curriculum delivery, although there is little research from which to draw concrete conclusions.

2.4.5. Teacher-training

A number of authors argue that teacher-training does not prepare teachers to include SEN pupils (Paju et al., 2016; Mulholland and O'Connor, 2016; Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013). Certainly, when training as a primary teacher 14 years ago, this researcher had no sessions on deafness. However, given the continued drive towards inclusion and the "Special Educational Needs Code of Practice" (DfE and DoH, 2015), it is possible that recently-qualified teachers have learnt more about SEN than previously. Considering the low-incidence of deafness (NatSIP, 2012), it could also be assumed that teacher-training is more likely to focus on higher-incidence SEN.

In-service training (INSET) is essential to imparting skills to teachers (Paju et al., 2016) and also engender positive attitudes towards inclusion (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013). These authors also suggest that teachers resistant to inclusion have little or no training. Ergo, training is vital, as positive attitudes can possibly predict successful pupil outcomes. Indeed, the wider school community needs training, such as those in strategic positions, as Salter et al. (2017) highlight.

2.4.6. Teacher confidence, skills and knowledge

Ofsted (2010) maintains that good outcomes for SEN pupils are driven by high-quality teaching experiences and teachers' skills impact greatly on deaf pupils' outcomes, with Marschark et al. (2011) concluding that 50% of the variability in academic under-achievement could be due to teachers' methods not meeting pupils' needs. Thus, it is argued that for successful deaf pupil inclusion in classes, the teacher must be knowledgeable and confident in meeting their needs (DfE, 2014).

Whilst teachers might hold positive views about inclusion, they may lack the confidence and ability to meet pupils' needs (Vermeulen et al., 2013). Lack of

confidence could result in a lack of motivation or result in negative emotions, which could impact negatively on teaching (Vermeulen et al., 2013).

“Special educational provision is underpinned by high quality teaching and is compromised by anything less” (DfE and DoH, 2015:25).

Thomazet (2009), Tomlison et al. (2003) and Vermeulen et al. (2012) all concur with the above statement. Yet differentiating for deaf pupils can be challenging (Vermeulen et al., 2012; Marschark et al., 2002). A teacher’s self-belief in their ability to successfully differentiate could impact positively on planning and lesson delivery (Vermeulen et al., 2012) and previous experience of working successfully with deaf pupils could support teacher confidence in personalising the curriculum.

2.4.7. Communication

Teachers can find communication problematic, according to Vermeulen et al. (2012) and Salter et al. (2017). Luckner (2013) and Salter et al. (2017) highlight pupils’ differing communication modes and whilst spoken English would be most accessible to teachers, pupils could use sign language, which would pose challenges for teachers. Indeed, 29% of severely or profoundly deaf children use sign language in some form (CRIDE, 2017), requiring specialist communication support, such as a Communication Support Worker (CSW) (Salter et al., 2017). Such communication-mediation is essential to impart knowledge, but poses barriers and could hinder relationship development between teacher and pupil.

Teachers have to recognise that additional support may be required to enable effective communication. Most deaf children need visual aids to support their understanding, such as eye contact, lip reading and pictures (Vermeulen et al., 2012). These necessitate planning and place a burden on pupils to switch between teachers and visual aids (Marschark et al., 2002).

2.4.8. Audiology

TODs understand the necessity of audiological equipment. Yet, Salter et al. (2017) report that some teachers lack this understanding, such as refusing to wear radio-aids (McCracken et al., 2012) or believing that equipment enables deaf pupils to function as hearing pupils (Salter et al., 2017). The classroom environment can also offer problems, with background noise and reverberation among the challenges faced (McCracken et al., 2012). Thus, audiological issues can result in miscommunication and misunderstandings.

2.4.9. Social and emotional concerns

It is not only in academic achievement that schools need to consider but also the social and emotional welfare of their pupils. Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) claim that inclusion can be beneficial for SEN pupils as it can increase communication and developmental skills, support positive self-concepts and offer models of language and social behaviour. They also believe that inclusion can benefit the wider school community, giving children an understanding of disabilities, differences and greater social acceptance.

Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham argue that:

“children with hearing loss experience no negative social or emotional consequences as a result of being educated in included environments” (2013:66).

However, “no negative social or emotional consequences” does not necessarily imply that typical school friendships are developed by deaf pupils. Indeed, these pupils could become socially isolated, with sporadic patterns of friendship more common than one longer-term friendship (Antia et al., 2011; Nunes et al., 2001). It is also useful to remember that the primary playground can be noisy, which can exacerbate communication challenges. Therefore, schools must support their hearing pupils to overcome communication difficulties and foster positive attitudes towards their deaf peers (Nunes et al., 2001).

Deaf pupils may also suffer lower self-esteem and increased loneliness than those in segregated settings (Lloyd 2008). Indeed, providing a deaf peer-group may not be possible, where there is only one deaf pupil in the school, although Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) did not find lower self-esteem or loneliness to be problematic.

Lauchlan and Greig (2015) suggest that social and academic inclusion may actually be opposing forces with SEN pupils possibly having less specialist support in mainstream environments, but having greater access to friendships with peers without SEN, than in special schools.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

A TOD's purpose is to best serve deaf pupils (DfE, 2018). A significant proportion of a deaf pupil's education is spent learning from mainstream teachers and as these teachers are central to a deaf pupil's education, it is vital that TODs understand mainstream teachers' perceptions. Yet, little research has been conducted to explore this area.

With improved understanding of teachers' points of view, it should be possible to improve personal practice and tailor the support offered to mainstream colleagues (Thomas, 2013). The findings of this research could support TODs within the researcher's resource-base and potentially across the Local Authority and further afield.

3.2. Design

In making methodological choices, it was recognised that differing options existed and however subjective this researcher endeavoured to be, partially formed theories may have existed, which impacted on decisions (Scott, 2017).

It was deemed appropriate that a small-scale action research project would be suitable; employing a mixed-methodology approach. Phase 1 would involve an online questionnaire, with Phase 2 involving face-to-face interviews with a sample of participants.

Two phases of data-collection could afford greater confidence, accuracy and triangulation of the findings, offering a more complete picture than using one approach alone (Denscombe, 2014). However, a mixed-methods approach could offer challenges in terms of extra time and data analysis (Denscombe, 2014).

University ethical approval was gained (see Appendix A) and prospective Phase 1 respondents were emailed the questionnaire with research and ethical details (see Appendix B). Ethical documentation was again shared at the interview

stage with written, informed consent gained (see Appendix C) gained (Cohen et al., 2011; Bell, 2010).

3.2.1. Phase 1: Questionnaire

Questionnaire formulation involved a variety of issues. Non-response was known to be problematic, especially as the views held by those who choose *not* to respond, can differ from those that do (Bell, 2010). Consequently, the findings may not represent the whole population. Thus, maximising the response-rate was essential.

Whilst Cohen et al. (2011) contest that online surveys can result in low response-rates, they point to Gwartney's 2007 work, stating that online questionnaires are most useful where the researcher has knowledge of the respondent population. This researcher was well-placed to understand their target audience, given the primary PGCE-qualification held, alongside experience of primary-school teaching.

The researcher felt confident that respondents would be able to successfully answer the questions independently, given their educational background. Without a researcher present, it is still possible that some responses were not accurate or truthful (Denscombe, 2014).

Online questionnaires have a number of advantages, including reduced time-constraints, reaching respondents over wide distances and the comparative ease of data analysis (Wright, 2006). Whilst Wright (2006) also details disadvantages, these were not deemed to have significant impact on this small-scale research.

The questionnaire (see Appendix D) was presented online, using 'SurveyMonkey' (SurveyMonkey Inc., 2018), with the aim of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data. Cohen et al. (2011) state that open-questions allowed explanation, which is useful when the possible answers are unknown. These questions can be time-consuming for both respondent and researcher,

requiring effort to answer and analyse, but provide richer, more complex data than closed-questions (Denscombe, 2014). Closed-questions, highly-structured in their nature, would supply data that would be useful for quantitative analysis (Cohen et al., 2011).

The number of questions and time commitments were considered, to maximise the return-potential of completed questionnaires (Denscombe, 2014). Open and closed questions were designed with different required responses, including the Likert Scale, Matrix/ Rating and comment boxes, to engage respondents and minimise respondent fatigue (Cohen et al., 2011; Denscombe, 2014).

As Bell (2010) highlights, a questionnaire should be trialled to ensure effectiveness. Time limitations prohibited testing in this research, which could have impacted on its eventual effectiveness.

Teachers were emailed the questionnaire web-link along with ethical documentation, and reminders were sent within two weeks for non-respondents. As some prospective respondents worked within the same school as the researcher, it was possible to prompt them and the TOD working in the Outreach Service did the same. Having professional working relationships with these teachers could, of course, affect the responses given.

3.2.2. Phase 2: Semi-Structured Interview

Having identified common themes from Phase 1 data, a semi-structured interview schedule was devised with prospective interviewees contacted, based on the responses thought worthy of further exploration. As Butler-Bowden (2013) highlights, these may have been driven by the researcher's subjective perceptions of the data.

Interviews were organised to be convenient for the interviewee. Ethical documentation was shared with informed consent gained (Cohen et al., 2011; Bell, 2010). Ideally, this would be gained prior the interview-date (Bell, 2010).

However, due to time constraints, this documentation was provided prior to interviews commencing, with interviewees given time to ask questions or withdraw from the process.

Interviewees had not worked directly with the researcher, which could have influenced their responses, although working in the same school might still have affected teachers. Having professional relationships with an Outreach TOD could also have influenced responses.

Within the researcher's own workplace, face-to-face interviews offered the easiest access and were organised around the interviewees' work commitments. Face-to-face interviews were also organised with teachers from schools without resource-bases, to enable the researcher to build rapport and better understand interviewee body-language (Denscombe, 2014).

The interviews started with conversation-starters, to put the interviewee at ease (Denscombe, 2014). There was flexibility in the order of questioning and follow-up probes were made, to draw out additional information (Bell, 2010; Denscombe, 2014). Such in-depth data could not be derived from questionnaire-responses alone (Denscombe, 2014).

Interviews can be challenging. The 'Hawthorne effect' could occur with interviewees' responses being affected, because a special interest was being in taken in them (Thomas, 2013). The 'experimenter-expectancy effect' could also occur, with interviewees giving the responses they thought were expected (Thomas, 2013). This was borne in mind throughout the process.

Interviews are time-consuming, as was the audio-recording transcription (Gorrard, 2006). It was therefore necessary to limit the interview-number to four (Bell 2010; Denscombe, 2014). Interviews were shared equally between teachers in both settings, to enable as fair a comparison as possible.

In the transcription process, it was not possible to demonstrate intonation and body-language, and as the interviewees did not always utter complete sentences, the raw data was, in some respects, “cleaned up” (Gorrard, 2006:279), which may alter the interviewees’ intended meaning. Transcriptions were shared with the participants, to establish that their intentions were recorded as accurately as possible.

3.3. *Participants*

As a primary-trained teacher, working in a primary school’s resource-base, with access to the Primary Outreach TOD, it was deemed appropriate to focus on this age-range. Teachers in schools with resource-bases and in schools without resource-bases were invited to take part in this research, provided they had worked with deaf children within the previous three years.

3.4. *Data gathering*

An “opportunity sample” (Bell, 2010:150) of teachers was approached and were contactable through professional relationships. As this research is small-scale, this was deemed acceptable, although these relationships could have affected teacher responses and it is understood that the findings cannot be generalisable.

3.5. *Procedure*

50 questionnaires were issued, with an even number of invitations sent in each settings. Of the 21 responses, 9 were from teachers working in schools with resource-bases based in London and in regional authorities. The rest were from schools without resource-bases.

4 interviews then explored teacher perceptions in greater depth. Both individuals approached in the researcher’s school accepted the interview-invitation, with 4 individuals approached from schools without resource-bases. Two accepted the invitation. These individuals were approached based on their questionnaire responses.

3.6. Reflexivity

The researcher is a TOD, with 7 years' experience of working with primary-age deaf children and is based in a resource-base. Prior to this, the researcher worked for 6 years as a class teacher in the same school, with experience of working alongside TODs. Having knowledge of the mainstream teacher role, it was of interest to explore current teachers' perceptions, to improve personal practice and that of colleagues, in providing the highest-quality educational opportunities and achieving the greatest outcomes for deaf pupils.

4. Results

This research focuses on mainstream primary teacher perceptions in England. An online questionnaire was utilised and whilst Cohen et al. (2011) contest that these can result in low-response rates, they share Gwartney's 2007 view, which highlights that online questionnaires are most useful where the researcher understands the characteristics of the respondent population. The researcher has a good understanding of primary teachers, given the primary-teacher qualification held. It may also offer one explanation for the positive response-rate that was gained.

21 questionnaire responses were gained, followed by four interviews. A description of these teachers' experienced can be found in Table 4.1. and Table 4.2.

Table: 4.1. Description of teacher participants: Phase 1 Questionnaire

Teachers in schools with a resource-base			Teachers in schools without a resource-base		
Teacher Code	Years Teaching	Prior experience of working with deaf children	Teacher Code	Years Teaching	Prior experience of working with deaf children
A	11+ years	Yes	J*	1-5 years	No
B*	11+ years	Yes	K	1-5 years	No
C	1-5 years	Yes (as CSW)	L	11+ years	Yes
D	NQT	Yes (on ITT placement)	M	11+ years	Yes
E	11+ years	Yes	N	6-10 years	No
F	11+ years	No	O	NQT	No
G*	6-10 years	Yes	P	6-10 years	Yes
H	1-5 years	No	Q	11+ years	No
I	11+ years	Yes	R	1-5 years	No
			S*	NQT	Yes (on ITT placement)
			T	NQT	No
			U	11+ years	Yes

* Teachers involved in Phase 2 interviews

Table 4.2. Description of teacher participants: Phase 2 Interviews

Type of school	Teacher Code	Years Teaching	Experience of working with deaf children
School <u>with</u> resource-base provision	B	11 years	They have taught deaf children in their class most of their 11 teaching years 2016-17: 6 deaf children in the class
School <u>with</u> resource-base provision	G	8 years	They have taught deaf children in 6 out of 8 years 2016-17: 2 deaf children in the class 2017-18: 1 deaf child in the class
School <u>without</u> resource-base provision	J	5 years	They had no experience of teaching a deaf child prior to this academic year 2017-18: 1 deaf child in the class
School <u>without</u> resource-base provision	S	Newly Qualified Teacher	They had experience of teaching a deaf child on a teaching placement 2017-18: 1 deaf child in the class

These teachers obviously constitute a small sample of mainstream teachers working with deaf children. Although small in scale, following a “thematic inquiry approach” (Butler-Kisber, 2010:20), seven themes were identified, which may offer insights into teachers’ perceptions and enable TODs to better understand and support these colleagues:

- Support from the Teacher of the Deaf
- Changing perceptions of working with deaf children
- Issues of inclusion
- Training
- Teacher confidence, skills and knowledge
- Challenges of working with deaf children
- Areas for development

Data analysis is reliant of the individual researcher’s skills (Steinfeld and Fulk, 1990) and an interpretivist approach is subjective, with the possibility that the

researcher's background and experiences could influence the results presented (Scott, 2017). It was therefore aimed to construct theories following the "grounded theory" approach, with analysis "grounded in the data" (Scott, 2017:248), in as objective a manner as possible (Scott, 2107; Butler-Kisber, 2010), although prior knowledge and experiences may still have influenced the data analysis.

As part of Phase 2 data-collection, narratives would be offered by participants, which would enable the researcher to better understand their experiences and "produce a contextualised and contiguous interpretation and storied account of the particular situations" (Butler-Kisber; 2010:20), in which teachers found themselves. It must be noted that in presenting the data and endeavouring to draw comparisons, teachers' quotations needed condensing, which might have affect the intended meaning (Gorrard, 2006).

It is to be noted that in describing the educational setting of individual teachers in these results, participants working in schools with resource-bases will be described as '*with resource-base(s)*' and participants working in schools without resource-bases, will be regarded as '*without resource-bases*'.

4.1. Teaching experience

42.86% of all questionnaire respondents had 11-plus years of teaching experience. This would appear to suggest that more experienced teachers were selected by those in strategic positions to work with deaf children. However, it was deemed important to establish if this was reflected in both educational settings.

4.1.1. Phase 1: Teacher experience of working in primary schools

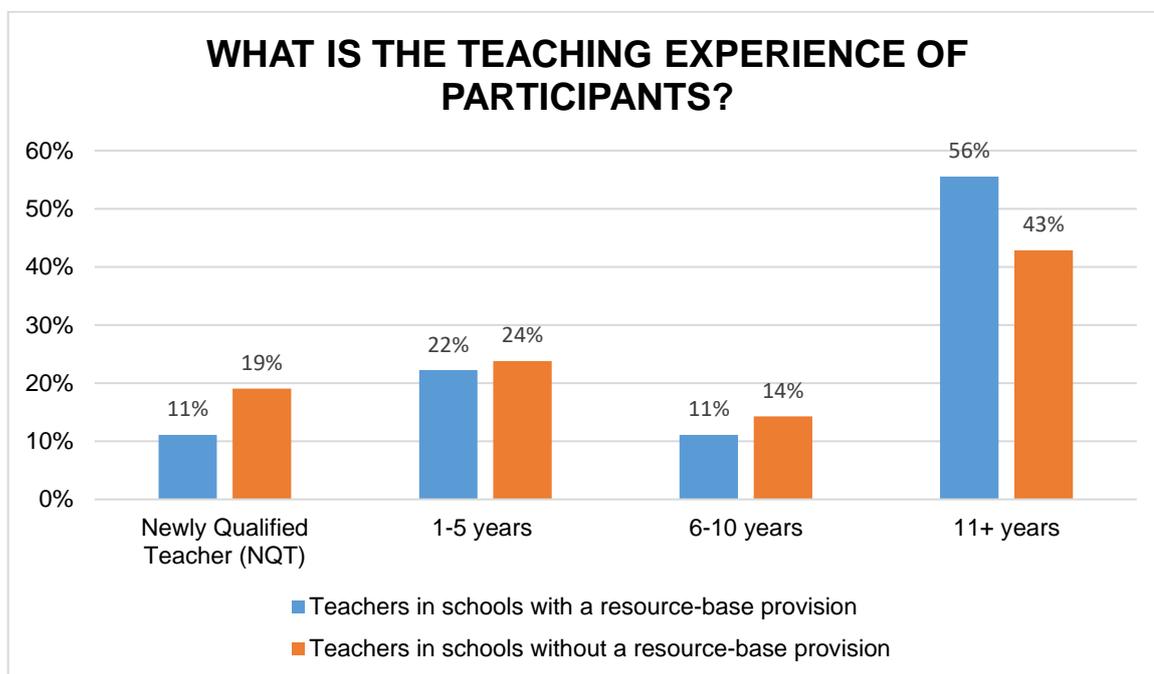


Figure 4.1. Phase 1: Teacher experience of working in primary schools

Teaching experience for each setting was collated separately, with responses for each setting totalling 100%. This data is presented side-by-side for ease of comparison.

Teachers with resource-bases were more likely to have 11-plus years' teaching experience. However, given the small numbers of teachers involved in the study, this may not be statistically significant, with relatively experienced teachers allocated deaf pupils in both settings.

It is also important to recognise that as there were fewer respondents from teachers working in schools with resource-bases, each respondent had a greater percentage-weighting than teachers working in schools without resource-bases.

4.1.2. Phase 1: Teacher experience of working with deaf children

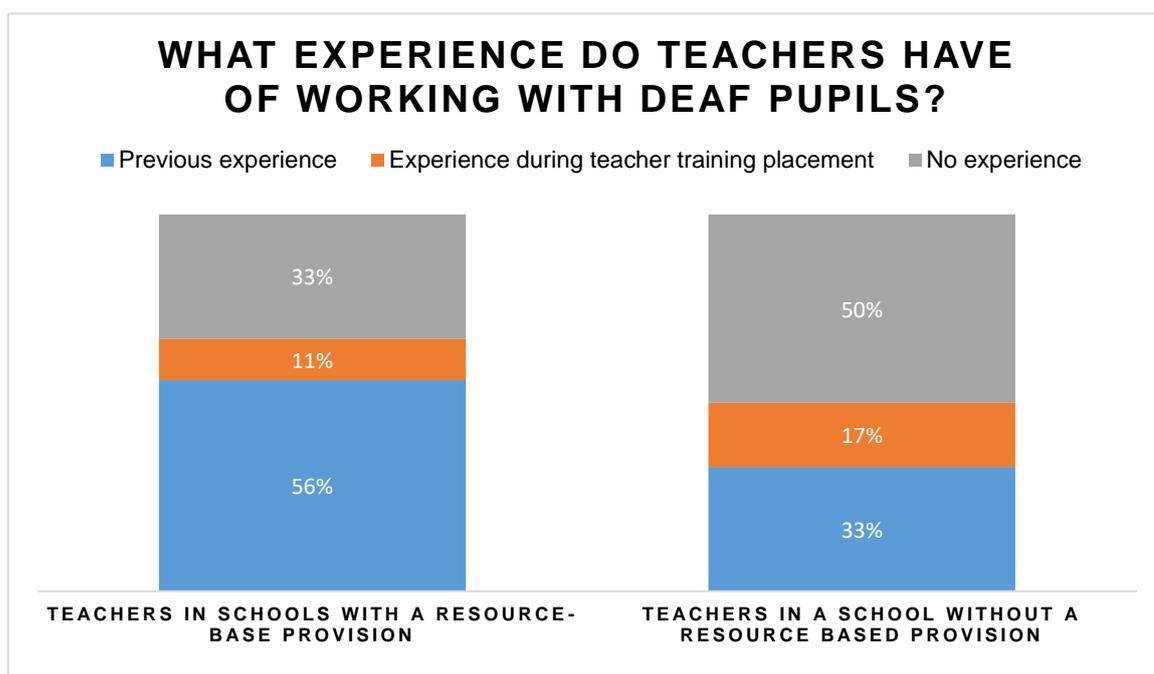


Figure 4.2. Phase 1: Teacher experience of working with deaf children

Again, this data was collated separately; totalled 100% and is presented side-by-side for ease of comparison.

6% of deaf pupils are educated by teachers with resource-bases (CRIDE, 2017) and the data demonstrates that more than half of respondents in resource-bases had previous experience. Figure 4.2. may also offer some support to NatSIP's (2012) assertion that many mainstream teachers have limited or no knowledge of working with deaf pupils. Again, due to the small sample-size, these findings cannot be generalised to the wider population.

4.1.3. Phase 2: Teacher experience

Teachers were selected due to their questionnaire responses, rather than due to their experience (see Appendix F). However, it is useful to note that teachers with resource-bases had more years' teaching experience and had taught deaf pupils previously. Only one of the teachers without a resource-base had previous experience, which was limited to a teaching placement.

4.2. Teacher of the Deaf Support

Many teachers have limited or no experience of working with deaf children (NatSIP, 2012). Therefore, the TOD support they are given is vital to ensuring teacher confidence and skills. During Phase 1, respondents gave their perceptions about the most important thing TODs could do to support them and their deaf pupils.

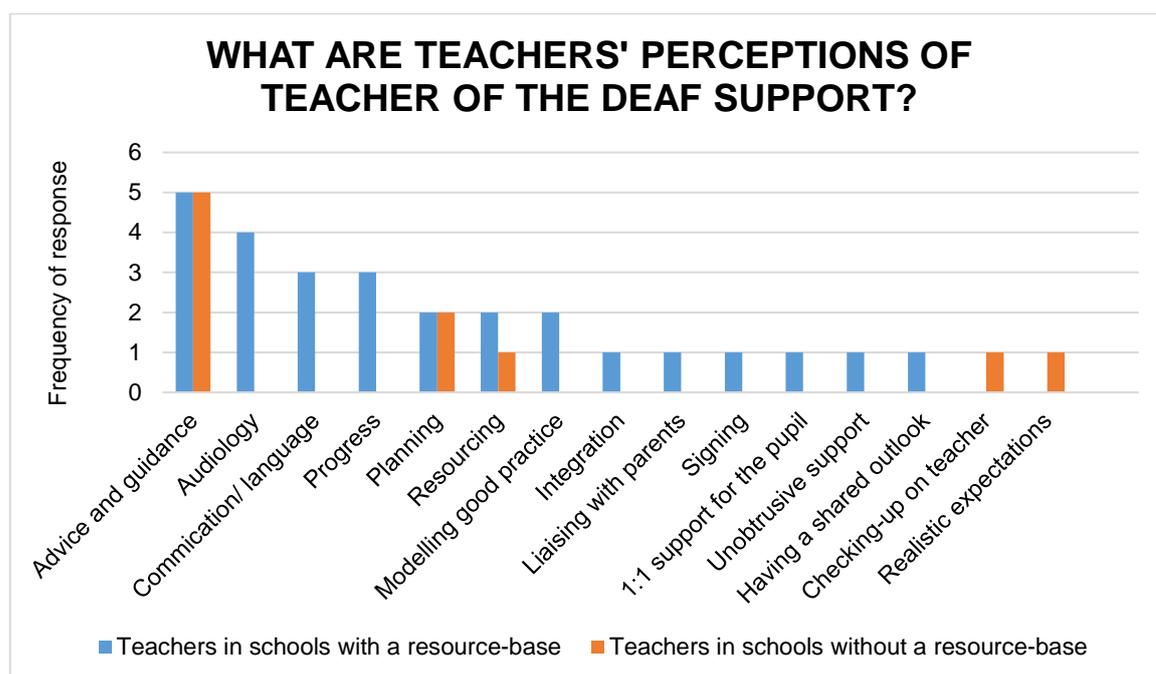


Figure 4.3. Teacher perceptions of the ways in which the TOD supports them

This open-ended question resulted in 15 different 'categories'. Each setting's data was individually collated but is shared side-by-side.

Whilst 5 responses were offered regarding "advice and guidance" from each setting, it should be noted that the 9 resource-based teachers offered a total of 27 responses. 11 responses were offered by the 12 teachers without resource-bases. This could reflect the differing support experienced by teachers in these environments, or the differing levels of teaching experience or knowledge.

4.2.1. TOD support for teachers in schools with a resource-base

Teachers with resource-bases offered a wide range of views regarding TOD support:

“Making sure that what I teach in class is moving the children forward... telling me if any of the practices do not benefit a deaf child.” (Teacher F.)

“Be with me during my PPA so we can communicate... to ensure they can access the lesson.” (Teacher C.)

“Visual aids, ideas for differentiation, basic signs, support with equipment, modelling good practice of teaching deaf children.” (Teacher E.)

“To find the moment when it is needed to have conversations or explain to deaf children... there are moments when (it) is disturbing for the class to hear another teacher explaining...” (Teacher H.)

Teacher B. highlighted that teacher and TOD communication, teamwork and curriculum knowledge were vital in achieving the best outcomes for pupils, as noted by NCTL (2015), Salter et al. (2017), Paju et al. (2016) and Mulholland and O’Connor (2016), with Ofsted (2012) highlighting the importance of TOD expertise in providing and coordinating support.

“The class teacher’s still responsible for that child. You’ve got to communicate all the time... about the planning, about the children’s needs, how they best learn... It all comes down to communication and respecting the different roles but actually how the roles balance together. For the benefit of the children... it’s got to be teamwork.” (Teacher B.)

4.2.2. TOD support for teachers in schools without a resource-base

Teachers without resource-base offered a more limited range of responses, when compared with their resource-based colleagues:

“Be on hand to offer support and guidance as and when it is needed. The support that I have received this year has been great!” (Teacher J.)

“Give clear steps for improving practice after observation and then to check that these are in place after a few weeks.” (Teacher P.)

These teachers highlighted the TOD’s personal skills and their availability to offer advice:

“She was really patient... she was willing to answer all my questions...” (Teacher S.)

“... if I do have any questions or anything that’s come up... they’ve been there, should I need some advice.” (Teacher J.)

These experiences support Salter et al.’s assertions (2017) with regards to the importance of sharing knowledge and skills and mainstream teachers being willing to learning new ideas (Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham, 2013).

However, the issue of time impacting on effective liaison with the Outreach TOD, was noted. This could be due to differing factors, such as the demands on mainstream teacher time or size of TOD caseloads, with CRIDE (2017) noting that the average caseload was 276 pupils. It is understood that the “Eligibility Criteria Framework” (NatSIP, 2017) has guided the Outreach TOD in time allocation for pupils, so some teachers might access TOD support less than others, which could impact on responses.

“I’ve directly spoken to her three times... it’s a bit limited to what I would like... I feel like she’s obviously very rushed for time... it’s not her fault at all.” (Teacher S.)

“... so I’ve had one who’s come twice... two other meetings in addition to that and one who’s been coming every two to three weeks perhaps.”
(Teacher J.)

However, Teacher J. highlighted that when issues have arisen, they have been able to contact the Outreach TOD:

“...the particular child in my class has had a couple of difficulties with her radio aid... so we contacted the Teacher of the Deaf and she came within that day or the next day to help and advise us.” (Teacher J.)

4.3. Changing perceptions of working with deaf children

When asked if their perceptions of working with deaf pupils had changed, since having a deaf child in their class, 71.43% of all questionnaire respondents confirmed they had. Again, it was deemed important to examine the responses in each setting.

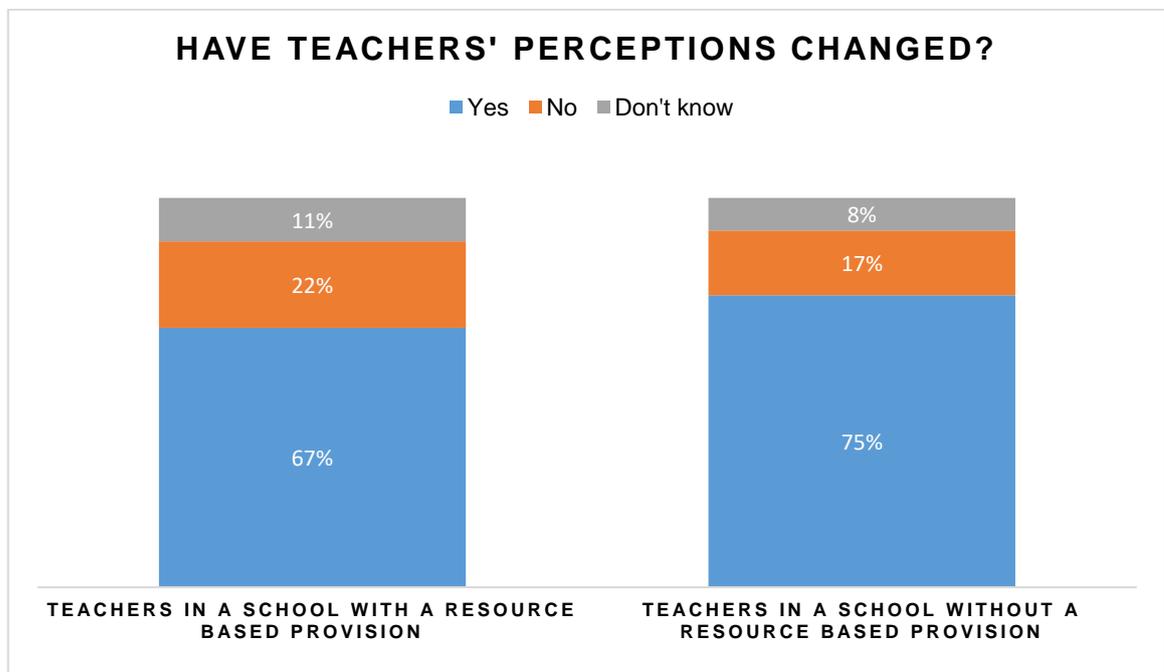


Figure 4.4. Teacher responses concerning changing perceptions

The majority of teachers' perspectives had changed in both settings, with changes being greatest for teachers working in schools without resource-bases. Given the small scale of this study, this may not be more-widely generalisable.

Scott (2017:245) highlights that the observations made by respondents are "always conditioned by prior understandings" they have about the world. As such, it is possible that teachers in resource-bases had gained experience of deaf pupils before actually working with them, such as during "playground duty" or through INSETs. This might account for the lower affirmative response.

4.3.1. Teachers' changing perceptions in schools with resource-bases

In their questionnaires, teachers commented:

"I believed it would be very difficult teaching HI children. However, with the aid of additional items and adults... I feel that the teaching of my classroom with HI children in it has been made a lot easier." (Teacher D.)

"I would have been worried that they would not be able to follow instructions and so would not progress... I have come to learn that with the right support this is not the case." (Teacher F.)

Interviews also explored this theme:

"I was a bit nervous about it... I assumed that because they were deaf they wouldn't be able to hear at all... so I just thought, "How will they know what they need to do? Will I understand them if they sign at me but don't talk?" I suppose I was very naïve and didn't know much about deaf people really." (Teacher G.)

Changing perceptions went beyond teaching deaf children, but also reflected an understanding of the shared responsibility of the class teacher and TOD:

“When I think back... My knowledge was very limited; she (TOD) was very protective of her deaf children and I couldn’t sign anything... I kind of left her to it and didn’t really take responsibility for those children... I think mainly because I was new in my career and I had enough of my plate with the other children, learning to... deal with things.... And it felt like, “Oh, they’re being looked after by the Teacher of the Deaf. I’ll worry about that later.” Which might have ended up 2 years later in terms of my professional development... So it was a bit more or a slower learning curve, to learn how to teach... and to teach with a Teacher of the Deaf and how to communicate and liaise with her...” (Teacher B.)

4.3.2. Teacher changing perceptions in schools without resource-bases

Teachers commented in their questionnaires:

“I never thought much about having a deaf child in my class or what it would be like before I started my NQT year but now... I have a positive view about it.” (Teacher O.)

“I expected to have to learn BSL... but this is not true. All HI children are different and come with their own learning needs... many of which can be accommodated in mainstream classrooms.” (Teacher L.)

“I use the same techniques I originally thought I would.” (Teacher U.)

Teacher J. also discussed their views during the interview:

“It was quite daunting because I wasn’t quite sure how I would have to adapt my teaching to fit in with it. But it’s actually been... a lot easier than I thought it would be.”

4.4. Issues of inclusion

95.24% of questionnaire respondents affirmed their commitment to integration, when questioned about the benefits of having deaf children in their classes. 19.05% of responses specifically used the words “*integration*” or “*inclusion*” with a further 23.81% referring to “*differences*” or “*others’ needs*” positively.

“I believe in an integrated education system, wherever possible. Society as a whole benefits from integration.” (Teacher A. with resource-base)

“It makes the children more aware of disabilities and differences, as well as acceptance and inclusion...” (Teacher R. without resource-base)

Teacher I.’s biggest professional concern was their deaf pupil’s inclusion:

“How can I make this year successful for my deaf child? How can I provide the same quality teaching when I am not experienced enough with BSL to communicate without an aid?” (with resource-base)

The interviews confirmed teachers’ positive attitudes, offering support to the assertions made by Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) about inclusion benefitting the wider school. Naturally, due to the small sample-size, this cannot be generalisable to a wider teacher population.

“(It) reflects society and the diverse individuals who make it up. It’s helped me to focus my teaching and practise techniques that are appropriate and help all pupils.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

“The whole school does include the deaf children... We do Sign2Sing... getting all the children involved in that is something we’re really proud of...” (Teacher B. with resource-base)

Little research exists into successful inclusion predictors for deaf children, but Salter et al. (2017) and Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) identified that

teacher attitudes and confidence were vital. Vas et al. (2015) found some evidence that female teachers tend to have more positive attitudes towards inclusion than their male counterparts, although this was not true of all studies. Whilst gender was not questioned in Phase 1 of the research, 73.9% of full-time teachers are female (DfE, 2017). The link between gender and positive attitudes towards the inclusion of deaf children would be an interesting area for researchers to explore further.

4.5. Training

The Phase 1 question regarding training to teach deaf pupils was open-ended, allowing respondents to elaborate on their experiences. Many respondents explored more than one area, such as not experiencing Initial Teacher Training (ITT), but having received training from TODs.

There were differences between the responses given from teachers in the two educational settings, possibly reflecting the different roles TODs play in each.

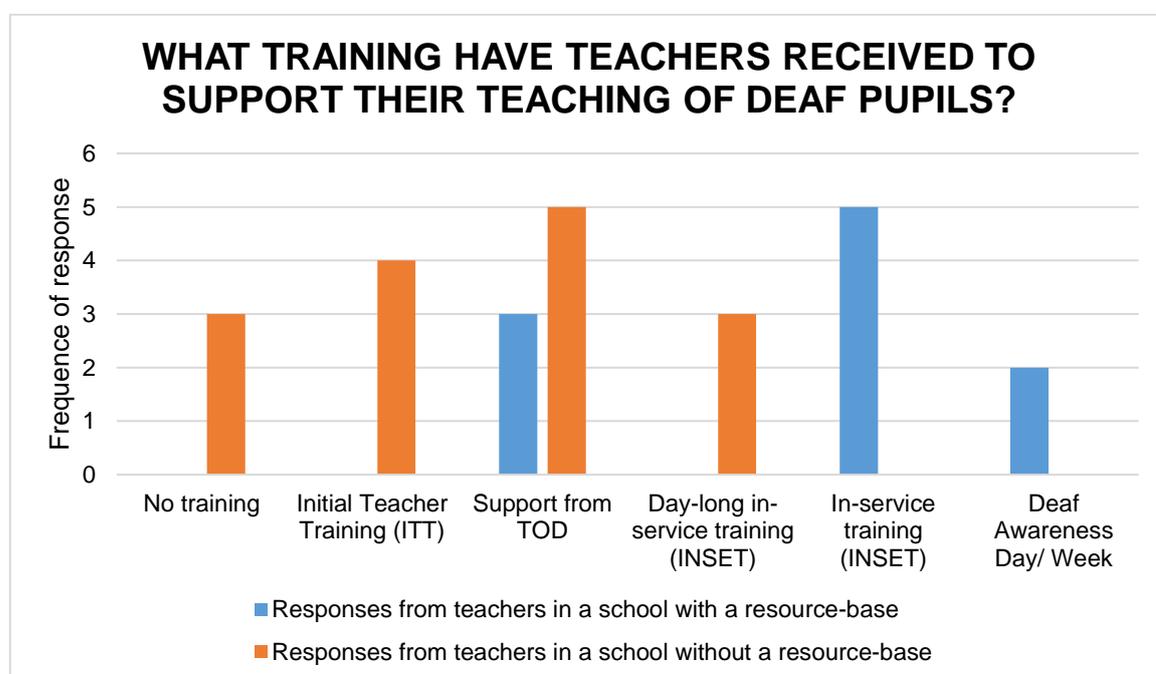


Figure 4.5. Training received to work with deaf children

4.5.1. Initial Teacher Training (ITT)

Despite specifically mentioning ITT in the question, “What training have you received about deafness and teaching deaf children? e.g. initial teacher-training; inset sessions”, none of the respondents from schools with resource-bases mentioned ITT, suggesting that either INSETs they received were of great import, or it did not occur. Of the responses gained from teachers without resource-bases, three stated that they had received no training. A further three responses were similar to Teacher O.:

“Not much to be honest. I had a seminar at university when completing my teacher-training which spoke about deaf children and using sign language/ Makaton.” (without resource-base)

The Phase 1 data suggested that teachers lacked ITT deaf-related training, which was confirmed in the 4 interviews:

“There may have been an afternoon session on Special Needs or something like that but it wasn’t significant enough to make an impact at all.” (Teacher B. with resource-base)

Paju et al. (2016), Mulholland and O’Connor (2016) and Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) argued that ITT does not prepare teachers adequately to develop inclusive practices. From the teachers’ responses, it would appear that deafness did not appear significantly in ITT programmes. However, from the interviews, opinions were expressed that learning about deafness would be more worthwhile *after* completing ITT.

“As much as they would train you at university... I think I got more experience from actually learning on-the-job, than actually any lecture could prepare me for.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

“... there should be more training earlier on in people’s careers... Maybe part of NQT learning, when you actually understand a class better

because I think when you're in PGCE time, you have no concept about how you're going to deal with anything..." (Teacher B. with resource-base)

4.5.2. Training while working as a teacher

72% of the 25 comments made in Phase 1 concerned training offered by TODs:

"My training... has been specific to the child that I teach." (Teacher J. without resource-base)

"INSET sessions every term... I am able to ask at any time questions to the TOD ... and other members of the deaf provision, who are very knowledgeable and able to support me at any time." (Teacher F. with resource-base)

Phase 2 confirmed teachers' positive experiences. Indeed, for those teachers with resource-base, a wide range of training experiences were shared:

"There's an annual... inset programme... It includes awareness of deaf children, deaf issues, how to communicate with deaf children, how best to teach deaf children, so hints and tips..." (Teacher B.)

For teachers in schools without resource-bases, the teachers referred to resources that they had been given or being offered advice predominantly:

"She's (Outreach TOD) given me resources to use... they're really useful." (Teacher S.)

"So they've (Outreach TODs) been supportive... if I do have any questions or ... if I just want to double-check... I've been able to do that... they've been there, should I need some advice." (Teacher J.)

Teachers resistant to inclusion are those with little training, according to Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) and Paju et al. (2016) state that training is needed to encourage positive attitudes. These mainstream teachers' remarks regarding training suggests that inclusive practices have been encouraged. It is of course possible, that the teachers who did not respond to the questionnaire did not share this view (Bell, 2010). As such, it is difficult to generalise these experiences to the wider population. However, there is evidence that training is important in supporting positive attitudes.

4.5.3. Preparedness to work with deaf children

In terms of whether the training that teachers had received was sufficient, some responses indicated a possible need for further support:

"I would have liked further training" (Teacher R. without resource-base)

Sign language or Makaton was identified by Teacher S., as a possible area for ITT development:

"I think... things like Makaton. I think the basics would be really good."
(without resource-base)

This could be attributed to teachers wishing to offer their pupils the best possible opportunities or being highly self-reflective and open to the possibility that their teaching could improve (Marcos et al., 2011; Ghaye, 2011). Indeed, Teacher G., with a resource-base, had taken time to gain BSL Level 1, highlighting their commitment to communicating with their signing pupils. Given CRIDE's 2017 data regarding the 29% of severely or profoundly deaf pupils using some form of sign language to communicate, it would appear important that such skills were developed in teachers, to facilitate direct communication with their pupils, rather than needing all communication to be mediated by others, such as CSWs.

4.6. Teacher confidence and skills

4.6.1. Confidence

When questioned if they felt confident working with deaf children, 95.24% of respondents stated that they “agreed”. None “strongly agreed”, which might again demonstrate the reflective practices of the teachers who responded, in that they were open to further improving their own practice (Ghaye, 2011).

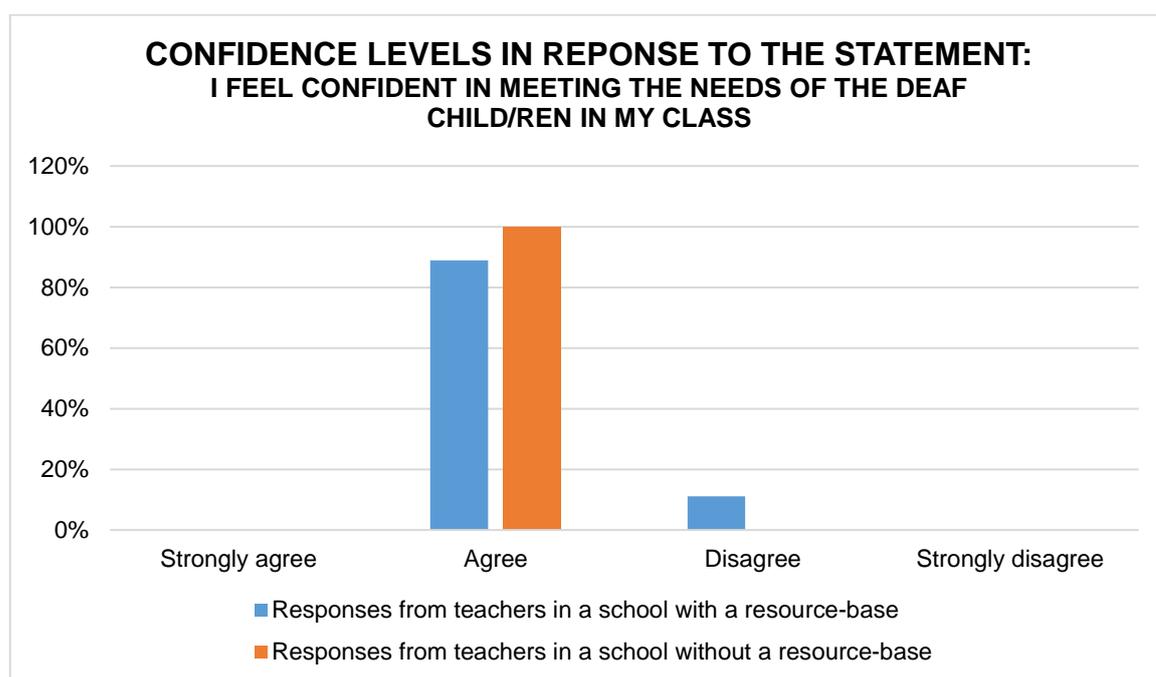


Figure 4.6. Levels of teach confidence in meeting deaf pupils' needs

“... I feel confident I can meet need but this is always after professional conversations with other agencies...” (Teacher I. with resource-base)

“I think so! I know where to place my child in the classroom to ensure he can hear me properly with his hearing aids and I always ensure that he has heard instructions and knows what to do in lessons. I am confident in changing the batteries in his hearing aids too...” (Teacher N. without resource-base)

Notably, it was a teacher with a resource-base who “disagreed”, rather than the expected teacher without a resource-base. This was explored further at

interview, and it was found that this teacher had become more confident, but was currently experiencing difficulties with support. Indeed, Teacher G. stated:

“I just thought a deaf child would be so scary... and they’re actually not... The first two years I probably would not have said that... and actually, it’s the help that you get from the HI teacher that really helps. I’ve worked with TOD A. She was just amazing at helping me to understand everything... And I just feel their input has helped me to become confident.”

“I was a bit... apprehensive... I’m very well supported at the school... and that makes me feel better.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

Vermeulen et al. (2013) believe a lack in confidence could negatively impact upon teaching. However, 95.24% of questionnaire respondents and all interviewees felt confident, echoing Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham’s (2013) findings. As suggested by the teachers, the appropriate support may help raise confidence levels, which aligns with Petty and Cacioppo’s (1986) assertion that it is possible to effect change in attitudes.

4.6.2. Teaching Skills

Teachers need to be knowledgeable and confident in meeting the pupils’ needs (DfE, 2011) and it can be challenging teaching deaf pupils. Teachers were honest about their experiences:

“Sometimes with the pitch, I get (it) a bit wrong.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

“I feel there have been benefits for my own professional development as this has made me more aware of my teaching and planning, enabled me to be more inclusive in my practice.” (Teacher L. without resource-base)

The teacher's own personality and willingness to be adaptable and flexible was identified as being necessary in successfully in working with deaf pupils.

“As a teacher... you should always be willing to learn... Being adaptable; flexible; maybe thinking outside the box; be able to see that child, but in a different way; if they're a different style of learner... Obviously, if they don't have the audio learning as such, are they a kinaesthetic learner? Are they a visual learner?... Just being quite creative with planning.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

4.7. Challenges of working with deaf children

Whilst teachers were positive about working with deaf children, they also identified challenges.

4.7.1. Communication

4.7.1.1. Teacher and child communication

Vermeulen et al. (2012), Salter et al. (2017) and Luckner (2013) all highlight the challenge of communication and teachers were asked to rank this potential challenge using the Likert Scale (Denscombe, 2014). Interestingly, Figure 4.7. demonstrates that teachers working with resource-bases identifying communication as more challenging than teachers without resource-bases.

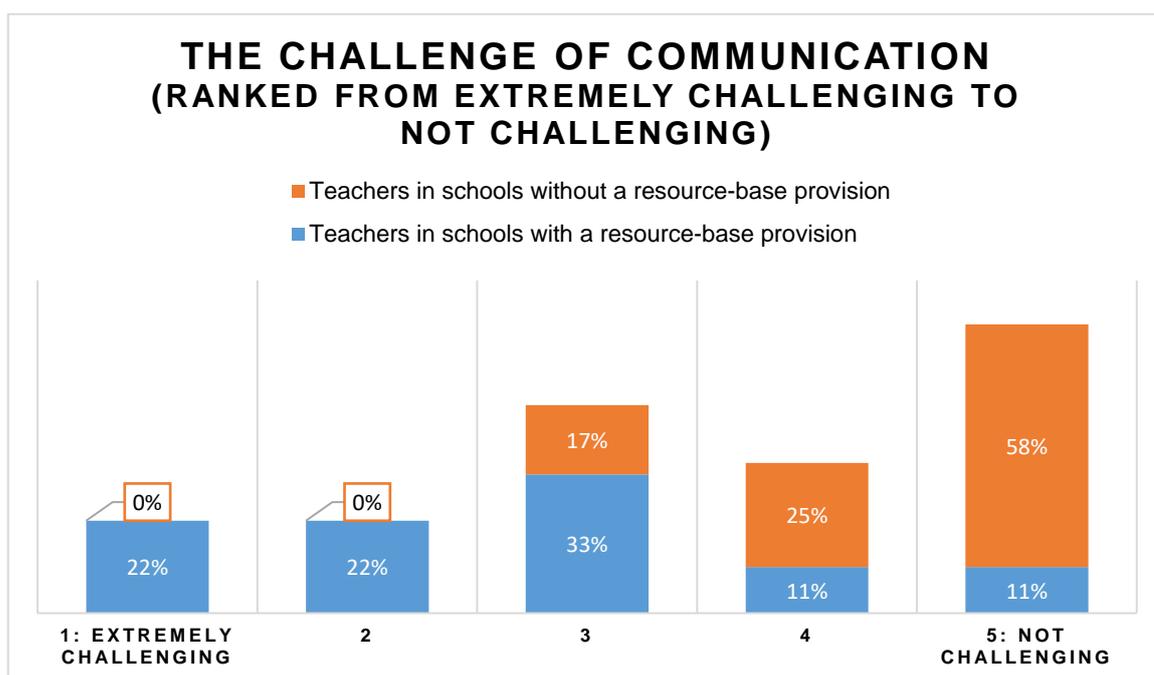


Figure 4.7. Teacher responses ranking the challenge of communicating with deaf pupils

When further questioned about their biggest professional challenge, 28.57% of respondents stated that communication was an issue for them, be it academic communication or building personal relationships:

“Not being able to communicate with one of my deaf children independently (without TOD/ TA support). I feel I am not getting to know that child as well as all the other deaf and hearing children in my class.”
(Teacher F. with resource-base)

“Ensuring my communication is effective.” (Teacher Q. without resource-base)

This communication concern was echoed by teachers, in the interviews:

“I would actually say communication is the biggest issue... because you want the... children to get involved. Say Art and PE for instance, they’re not supported... and if I’m trying to communicate some skill... you have

to be very visual, so it does impact. Communication is the hardest thing.”
(Teacher B.)

Teacher G. also found communication problematic, especially with signing children:

“I’m thinking about children finding it really difficult to communicate... they have their own form of signing... I remember when Child A used to come and try and ask me things and it was like cracking a code. I just really couldn’t get it... As long as they’ve got somebody there that can support that communication it’s ok.” (with resource-base)

Communication difficulties, especially those with regard to sign language, align with the assertions of Luckner (2013) and Salter et al. (2017) concerning communicating with pupils who use different modes of communication. Teachers with resource-bases found the issue more problematic than their colleagues without resource-bases, possibly due to the specialist TOD support available on-site and the likely higher level of need in these schools.

4.7.1.2. Peer-to-peer communication

Nunes et al. (2001) highlighted that schools need to support hearing pupils to communicate effectively with their deaf peers. Two teachers with resource-bases commented that peer-to-peer communication is being managed effectively in their schools.

“It (Inclusion) makes all children... to be better communicators, so that deaf children can access conversations.” (Teacher F.)

“Parents of non-deaf children in the school often tell me how wonderful they think it is that their child can sign and communicate in a new way.”
(Teacher I.)

Teacher S.'s class have shared information about the child's hearing aid and learnt some Makaton:

"We've learnt how to say 'Good morning' and 'Good afternoon' for the register." (without resource-base)

These comments were confirmed during the interviews with teachers with a resource-base. Teacher G. remarked:

"I think the children really are understanding of it (deafness). They've got such compassion... because they see it all the time. To children who come to School's Name, being deaf is probably quite normal. They don't know that it's different.... And it just teaches us... how to communicate in a better way."

However, 29% of severely and profoundly deaf children are known to use some form of signing to communicate (CRIDE, 2017) and many profoundly deaf signers experienced difficulty communicating with hearing people (Alton et al., 2001):

"A lot of the deaf children found it very hard to mix with the hearing children. Unless there's a particular child in the class, who loves signing and will sign with them." (Teacher B.; Year 6; with resource-base)

The researcher is currently working in a school with a resource-base and recognises that a number of children there use sign language; either as their primary mode of communication or to augment their spoken language. This sign language needs mediating by CSWs or staff with signing-skills, unless, as Teacher B. highlights, a particular hearing child learnt some signing. This offers TODs an insight into the need to further develop the signing skills of hearing children within this school.

4.7.2. Social and emotional concerns

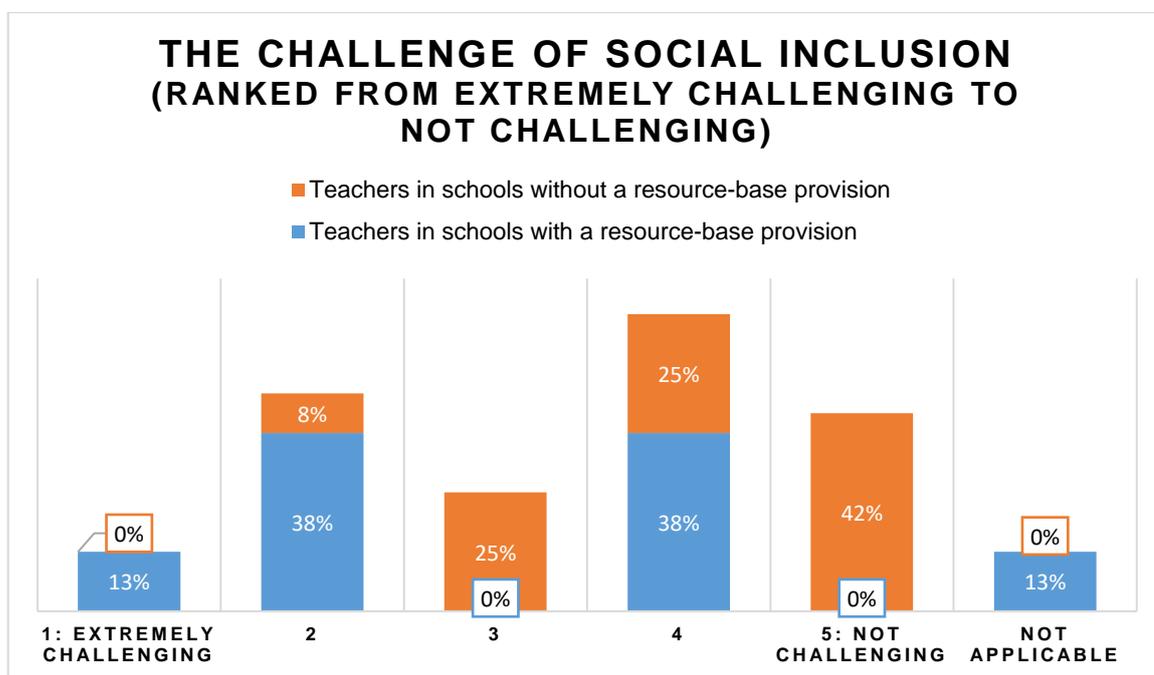


Figure 4.8. Teacher responses ranking the challenge of social inclusion for deaf pupils

Nunes et al. (2001) and Antia et al. (2011) highlight that deaf children can become isolated in mainstream schools. Respondents with resource-bases found the challenge of social inclusion more problematic than their colleagues in schools without resource-bases.

For Teacher A., social considerations were their biggest professional challenge:

“To ensure that the child is not feeling socially excluded. It can be difficult to find this out, as it is not always immediately obvious.” (without resource-base)

4.7.2.1. Social and emotional concerns: resource-bases

The two interviewees with a resource-base offered their views of social inclusion, which could reflect the ages of the children taught (Years 6 and 2) or the unique circumstances of the deaf children involved; with challenges possibly being exacerbated as the pupils grow older:

“There’s a bit of a gulf socially... by Year 6 some of the children are talking ... YouTube videos and pop stars... and the apps they’re playing on their phone... but a lot of the deaf children don’t have access to those things... or can’t access it... the gulf widens.” (Teacher B.)

“Child C doesn’t play with any hearing impaired children. All of his friends are hearing... a lot of the other hearing impaired children I’ve had... because they’re with other children that sign... they’re probably really tired by the time they’re in the playground... and they just want to communicate in a way that’s easier for them.” (Teacher G.)

4.7.2.2. Social and emotional concerns: without resource-bases

Both interviewees from schools without resource-bases also had differing views on social inclusion.

“Because he’s very sociable. He interacts with others really well...”
(Teacher S.)

“Maybe her perception of herself; a child with hearing loss... she’s very good at giving me the radio aid, but when it’s time to talk to a partner or in a group scenario... she can be a bit reluctant to give it to others ... so I think socially... that’s been a difficulty with this particular child...”
(Teacher J.)

Teacher J.’s concerns about the child’s self-perception, aligns with Lloyd (2008), who state that deaf pupils can suffer lower self-esteem than their hearing peers, when in a mainstream setting. Teacher S.’s deaf pupil may provide possible support for Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham’s (2013) counter-argument.

While Nunes et al. (2001) highlight that hearing children prefer to have a hearing friend, they do not explicitly state that deaf pupils might prefer a deaf

friend; someone understands and shares their background. This might be reasonable assumption however, if there is a large deaf peer-group in a school.

4.7.2.3. Social concerns: deaf peer-groups

Teacher S. pointed out that there were few deaf children in their school, which meant that their pupil did not have a deaf peers:

“...there is one other child in Year 2. And I think another child in Key Stage 2. So there’s not that many.”

Having personal experience teaching in the mainstream school with a resource-base, it is known that pupils have access to deaf peers, as Quality Standard 07 demands (NDCS with support from NatSIP, 2015). However, for teachers working in mainstream schools without this resource-base, it is more challenging to meet the DfE and NatSIP’s Quality Standard C1, which highlights the need that pupils “with sensory impairment are given opportunities to meet peers with sensory impairment on a regular basis” (2016:13). Outreach TODs must especially consider this issue and facilitate ways of pupils in schools without resource-bases to meet.

4.7.2.4. Social concerns: engaging parents

When Teacher B. was questioned about what more TODs could do to encourage social inclusion, the family’s responsibility was highlighted:

“I actually think it’s more to do with parenting... the two higher achieving children... who had deaf parents... The parents had high expectations... and wanted the children to mix within the hearing community... So some of it actually comes from home, how the children integrate from very, very early on. Or don’t integrate... I wonder whether parents need to think about how they want the future for their child.... And I would defend anyone’s right to be proud to be deaf and be part of the deaf community but at the same time, how do they want them to live and work and be friends?” (Teacher B. with resource-base)

This was not an issue that was touched upon by any other respondent, but poses an interesting question. Such an insight could impact on the work that Early Years Outreach TODs do with families and is therefore worthy of inclusion in this study.

4.7.3. Workload

Teacher S. stated previously that they needed to be quite creative with their planning, which has workload implications. Teacher B. concurred:

“... It impacts on workload. Although, at our particular school the support of the Teachers of the Deaf minimises the workload. If it was a mainstream school with no Teachers of the Deaf, it would be very, very difficult.” (with resource-base)

“Sometimes I have to plan a bit more for him because he needs that extra... it’s challenging, but not in a big way. I think it’s all manageable.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

There was an increased workload burden identified in both educational settings, according to Teachers B. and S., yet this does not appear to have affected their positive attitudes, as Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) suggest could occur, although this may be due to the individual teacher personalities and so cannot be generalised.

4.7.4. The impact on school data

Teachers with a resource-base shared concerns about deaf pupils impacting on the school’s data, possibly due to the larger numbers of deaf pupils educated in this setting:

“I think Phonics Results (are challenging) because they just can’t hear some of the sounds... they’re just at a disadvantage straight away... And I do think the results in Early Years and Year 1 especially are affected by

the HI children because it's communication and language.” (Teacher G.; Year 2 and English Lead)

“... having a large number of low ability deaf children does skew the data because in the league tables we're compared to all other schools in the country, who don't necessarily have 6 (low-ability deaf) children.” (Teacher B.; Year 6)

These concerns were not mentioned by teachers without resource-bases.

4.7.5. School placement

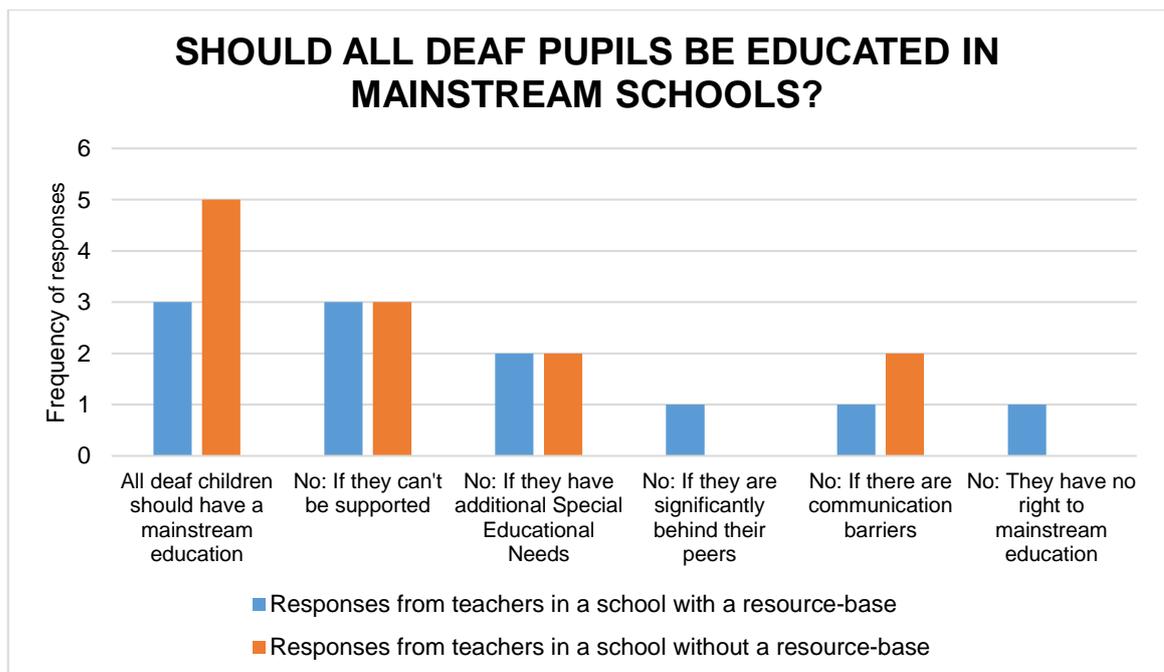


Figure 4.9. Teacher responses concerning the mainstream education of all deaf pupils

23 responses were offered to the open-ended question of whether all deaf children should attend mainstream schools. 34.78% of respondents believed all deaf children should be entitled to a mainstream education.

“If we can provide the correct care for them, then I believe they should be allowed in mainstream schools.” (Teacher O. without resource-base)

For those teachers suggesting that deaf children should not necessarily be educated in a mainstream environment, reasons were given:

“... if they were not progressing or thriving in a mainstream environment...” (Teacher T. without resource-base)

Phase 2 responses also considered hearing loss and the impact that it could have on communication and access to teaching and learning:

“I guess if they didn’t have any hearing at all, perhaps that would make it particularly difficult for them to access the mainstream environment, unless there was somebody who could perhaps sign with them...”
(Teacher J. without resource-base)

4.7.5.1. School placement and additional needs

Vas et al. (2015) and Vermeulen et al. (2013) highlighted that the severity of pupil’s SEN could affect teachers’ attitudes to inclusion and despite the positive comments regarding inclusion, Teacher B. did pose an interesting moral dilemma:

“Say one child’s needs in a class stop a whole 29 other children being able to access something, like a school trip for instance, then whose rights are more important?” (with resource-base)

A consequentialist view on the correct moral action, would result in a decision that brought about the maximum good, benefitting 29 children (Fuchs, 2006). This however, would stand in contrast to the demands of the “Equality Act” (2010) and the view of critical theorists, who would argue that equity is vital (Reeves et al., 2008).

Vermeulen et al. (2013) stated that some teachers may not believe in inclusion for SEN pupils. Whilst this was did not appear to be the case in this research, some teachers did highlight that deafness plus additional needs might mean

that mainstream environments might not be the best educational placement for pupils:

“The only instance I would agree with this comment is when the child’s HI needs are coupled with other significant learning needs...” (Teacher M. without resource-base)

“Only if they had other severe learning and communication needs – decision made on those needs rather than their hearing.” (Teacher P. without resource-base)

“If the child has other complex needs alongside their deafness (ASD/ ADHD/ global delay etc.) then mainstream may not always be the best choice for that child... In an ideal world more specialist deaf schools would be available.” (Teacher I. with resource-base)

4.7.5.2. Parental choice and school placement

CRIDE (2017) found that 22% of deaf children have an additional SEN with the Gallaudet Research Institute (2013) placing that figure significantly higher. Teacher G. believed that deaf children with additional needs were placed in their school because it had a resource-base for deaf pupils:

“I think because we’ve got a H.I. unit here, we get given children that are deaf, but they also have other needs... and they’re put with us because they’re hearing impaired, but actually their needs are greater... so much higher and more specific... (they should) probably go to a school that’s a special school with a hearing impaired Outreach teacher.” (Teacher G. with resource-base)

The decision-making process regarding the child’s placement was also considered. Parental choice is central in the current legal framework (DfE and DoH, 2015), but alternative views were held by teachers with a resource-base,

which might reflect the likelihood of pupils with higher needs being educated in schools with these resource-bases:

“... ideally it should be some sort of joint decision because obviously the parents have got a right but I think the school have got a right as well.”
(Teacher B.)

“I know it’s really difficult when the parents say they want them to come... But I think that as a school, you really should be able to say we cannot provide that support.” (Teacher G.)

4.8. Areas for development

4.8.1. Teacher of the Deaf support: in class

Teacher S., without a resource-base, stated that they had spoken directly with the Outreach TOD three times in seven months but would welcome more time:

“Just to know I’m doing the right thing. And that he’s benefitting from what I’m giving him.”

They also identified that they felt the classroom environment was not always conducive to a TOD visits:

“I don’t know if it would be possible for them to take them out or observe them with their LSA or in a group activity... It can be chaotic in the classroom.”

4.8.2. Teacher of the Deaf support: deaf children with additional needs

Teacher S. also posed the issue of working with deaf children with additional SEN:

“...they’re obviously not just a deaf child; there are other areas... so is there something that the deaf teacher (TOD) can tell me... Some kind of strategy to help with that?” (without resource-base)

Teacher S. expressed that it would be useful for TODs to have experience of deaf *and* additional needs, which has implications for TOD training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) to support TODs in effectively support the child.

4.8.3. Teacher of the Deaf support: personal and professional skills

Questionnaire respondents appeared to welcome TOD input, and interviewees offered suggestions to further enhance the TOD service:

“Coming in with... new ideas... Because I’m sure there’s always new research and things like that... or like if there was a good online resource... I think suggestions like that would be quite good. Just keeping them up-to-date... then to keep me up-to-date.” (Teacher S. without resource-base)

“Some of the Teachers of the Deaf and class teachers work much better together than others do... there are some Teachers of the Deaf that don’t understand the mainstream class and what the requirements are... or the pressures of a class situation... And sometimes that can be a bit fractious between people... Who’s more important? Which children are more important? Which children get more time?... There’s a wide variety of understanding from both sides. And some teams work very well together and others less so. Are almost isolated from each other.” (Teacher B. with resource-base)

Keeping abreast of current research and a TOD’s interpersonal skills were important to mainstream teachers. Thus, TODs need to develop collaborative relationships with teachers (NCTL, 2015; Salter et al., 2017; Paju et al., 2016;

Mulholland and O'Connor, 2016), in order to best facilitate the sharing of knowledge (Salter et al., 2017).

4.8.4. Difficulties with support

Issues were raised by Teacher G. about the access certain children had to TOD expertise, which may be specific to that teacher, but could also reflect the size of TODs' caseloads and the demands on their time (CRIDE, 2017):

"Well Child B at the moment has a Teacher of the Deaf, who only works part time... so he only gets half an hour/ an hour... once a week... but he needs more teacher input." (with resource-base)

"... sometimes I think the decisions that come from higher up are questionable. And I think that everybody's just going by what they're being told really, so it's difficult I think... perhaps the constraints of budgets..." (Teacher G. with resource-base)

Some teachers' concerns are beyond the scope of individual TODs, such as budgetary cuts (Emmott, 2016; Courtney, 2017) or line-manager direction. However, TODs must appreciate the frustrations that teachers might have regarding support, in order to manage expectations, possibly by sharing the reasoning behind it.

4.8.5. Training

As highlighted by Teacher M., there is an established need for further training:

"All teachers need additional training... it can be easy to forget how these vulnerable children will access lessons/ events, due to planning pressures and time constraints... and their ever-increasing workload." (without resource-base)

Coupled with the identification that it might be more useful to have training *after* ITT, interviewees identified further training opportunities; for teachers and also their classes:

“... what different teaching strategies I could use... for example, if they couldn’t access a certain lesson... how to work my way around that.”
(Teacher S. without resource-base)

“... maybe doing something with the class... Just so the other children were aware... how they could support the children.” (Teacher J. without resource-base)

4.8.6. Supporting teachers new to working with deaf pupils

33.33% of questionnaire respondents with resource-bases and 50% of respondents without resource-bases had no prior experience of working with deaf pupils. Teachers discussed their perceptions of being new to teaching deaf children and indeed, whether NQTs should be allocated classes with deaf pupils:

“I think when you’re an NQT, you’ve got so many things that you’re trying to learn... If this (deafness) was thrown in, I think it would be more of a challenge to me... Because I’m more secure in my teaching style now... I can concentrate on this more than if I was an NQT.” (Teacher J. without resource-base)

“... with the new people who have come in... I think they’d really panic if they had deaf children in their class... Maybe after a few years they might feel differently, but I do think to start, it’s quite scary.” (Teacher G. with resource-base)

“The teachers who have been teaching for a longer time appreciate... all the children in their class... and they appreciate the differences... But I think teachers who are earlier on in their careers or less confident in their

teaching can find it an extra, additional burden too far, because just teaching mainstream is hard and then you have lots of deaf children... that adds to the complication..." (Teacher B. school with resource-base)

This poses a question about Senior Leadership Team teacher decisions each academic year, which TODs might be able to influence, if they have established good relationships with schools.

Whilst Teacher B. suggested that more experienced teachers may be better placed to educate deaf pupils, Vas et al. (2015) found that teachers over the age of 55 held more negative attitudes to inclusion, which was also suggested by Teacher J.:

"If you've been in a career for a very long time and then suddenly you have to adapt and change, it can be daunting and difficult." (Teacher J. without resource-base)

Teacher B. believed that mainstream teachers needed to be open:

"The teachers have to be honest in the first place and say, "Look, I'm finding this difficult..." (with resource-base)

In order to support teachers new to working with deaf children in a resource-based school, Teacher G. suggested:

"... a good induction programme. I think that would really help. Maybe if there was a designated person that they could go and talk to and ask questions... so rather than waiting for the inset that's half-way through the year, they get it as soon as they start... and just make sure they're with a Teacher of the Deaf that will support them every step of the way."

5. Discussion

The current legal framework for teaching children with SEN is driven by inclusion. Therefore, deaf children in England are predominantly taught in mainstream schools, by mainstream teachers. While it may not be true of the wider population, it was encouraging to find that over 95% of participants in this study asserted their belief in inclusion, although not all prospective participants chose to take part in this study and their beliefs might have been different (Bell, 2010).

Seven themes were identified from the data gathered and reflected 'TOD support', 'teachers' changing perceptions', 'issues of inclusion', 'training', 'teacher confidence and skills', 'challenges', and also 'areas for future development'.

These themes might reflect the range of questions posed by the researcher in the data-collection stage and it may be possible that further common themes would have been identified, had alternative lines of inquiry been pursued.

5.1. *Suggestions for future practice*

Teachers involved in this study offered ways in which they could be better supported, which has impact for TODs and for their CPD.

5.1.1. *Suggestions for Teachers of the Deaf*

5.1.1.1. *Improved support*

Participants identified different ways to improve TOD practice. Teachers without resource-bases highlighted that they saw TODs occasionally and would welcome more time with them. However, given budgetary constraints (Emmott 2016; Courtney, 2017), this is unlikely to be seen as a realistic option to TOD services.

However, without recognising that teachers would like more support, it is impossible to manage their expectations. Instead, it is possible that TODs could 'touch base' more regularly through email, although this would have an

impact on TOD workload, especially when they have large caseloads (CRIDE, 2017). Possibly, Outreach TODs could develop a half-termly newsletter to share research and ideas or an online community created.

5.1.1.2. *Teacher of the Deaf knowledge of additional Special Educational Needs*

As highlighted by CRIDE (2017) and the Gallaudet Research Institute (2013), between 22% and 50% of deaf children have an additional SEN. Individual teachers recognised that this requires additional support, planning and differentiation, which resulted in added complications for them.

There is also a need for TODs to be skilled in offering advice and support for deaf pupils with additional SEN, if teachers are not receiving this advice from elsewhere. This has implications for universities training TODs and also requires a personal commitment from TODs to pursue CPD opportunities regarding additional SEN (Luckner and Carter, 2001; Guardino, 2015).

5.1.2. *Suggestions regarding training*

It was established that teachers welcomed training to enable them to work with deaf pupils and valued the TODs' support. Yet, this training could be further improved, according to research participants.

5.1.2.1. *Training for teachers*

With the variability in length of teaching-experience and differences in prior knowledge of working with deaf pupils, it is necessary to consider training needs. Training must be fit for purpose and as such, it is useful to consider the teachers' background when designing it. Individuals with longer teaching experience have different training needs, when compared to NQTs, for example. This means that training cannot follow a 'one size fits all' model and needs tailoring to teachers' individual needs.

5.1.2.2. Training for new staff members

Given that over 70% of teachers stated that their perceptions of working with deaf pupils had changed, it is clear that there is a need for training for teachers new to working with deaf children. Vermeulen et al. (2013) highlight that if teachers are lacking in confidence, this could negatively impact on deaf pupils' learning experiences.

One participant suggested an induction programme for new staff members might be helpful in their school with a resource-base. This would have implications for the TOD team, but it might alleviate some of the stress of working with deaf pupils for the first time and raise confidence levels (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986).

5.2. Validity of this research

5.2.1. Limited literature

From examining the literature, very little research had explored teachers' perceptions of working with deaf children. Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham's (2013) research was small in scale and limited to a small geographical area in Canada and Salter et al. (2017) had examined Teaching Assistants' views.

There is currently a gap in the literature concerning teachers' views of working with deaf pupils in England and the research from Eriks-Brophy and Whittingham (2013) and Salter et al. (2017) has been drawn upon heavily in this study. Their assertions may be challenged in the future and this would impact on the validity of the findings presented here. However, this research now forms part of the body of evidence into mainstream teachers' perceptions.

5.2.2. Small-scale research

It is recognised that this is a research project that is small in scale. It involved 21 participants in Phase 1 and four in Phase 2. It is neither possible to state that these individuals were representative of the wider teacher population nor that their thoughts and opinions are true of all mainstream teachers working

with deaf children in primary schools in England. It is understood that for the researcher to be able to generalise the data gathered, a much larger sample-size would be needed (Denscombe, 2014), although Popper (2002) contradicts this assertion, stating that even with a larger sample-size, conclusions drawn may still be inaccurate.

5.2.3. Skills of the researcher

As highlighted by Steinfeld and Fulk (1990), Scott (2017) and Butler-Kisber (2010), the skills of the researcher are paramount in data analysis. This novice researcher has aimed to be objective, however it is noted that while the literature and data have been linked, and connections made, this may be due to the researcher's perceptions and understanding, rather than a completely accurate presentation of the findings (Butler-Bowden, 2013). As Popper (2002) suggests, any inferences or conclusions drawn by this researcher may be mistaken, even if different participants have offered the same viewpoint. However, in terms of this small-scale research project, the views shared by these individual teachers are their 'truths' and must be respected as such (Scott, 2017).

6. Conclusions

“If we wish to understand the deepest and most universal of human experiences... or if we wish to use our privileges and skills to empower... we should value the narrative.” (Richardson, 1995:218-219)

In this study, participants offered compelling narratives concerning their work with deaf pupils. For TODs to effectively support and “*empower*” teachers, they need to first understand and value their viewpoints and stories.

The teachers offered many positive comments about their TOD colleagues’ work, explored the challenges the teachers faced and suggested ways to improve the TOD service further. TODs must reflect on what they have already achieved but also recognise, as reflective practitioners (Marcos et al., 2011; Ghaye, 2011), that there are still areas for potential development.

This study offers its contribution to academic literature concerning mainstream teacher perceptions. There is scope to broaden the scale of the research; in using an increased number of participants; comparing teacher perceptions in different Primary Key Stages; extending the research into other Local Authorities; examining perceptions across the four nations of the United Kingdom; and indeed, going beyond the sphere of primary education into secondary education.

Such studies would add validations to this study’s findings, or challenge them, and would add to TOD knowledge about mainstream teacher perceptions. Without understanding and appreciating differing viewpoints, it is impossible for TODs to offer the best possible advice and guidance to teachers. Thus, there is a need for further exploration of mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf pupils.

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Appendix A: Ethical Approval Notification from the University of Hertfordshire



SOCIAL SCIENCES, ARTS AND HUMANITIES ECDA

ETHICS APPROVAL NOTIFICATION

TO Emma Edwards
CC Helen Nelson
FROM Dr Brendan Larvor, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities ECDA Vice
Chairman
DATE 06/11/17

Protocol number: EDU/PGR/CP/03287

Title of study: Mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children

Your application for ethics approval has been accepted and approved by the ECDA for your School and includes work undertaken for this study by the named additional workers below:

This approval is valid:

From: 06/11/17

To: 02/05/18

Additional workers: no additional workers named

Please note:

If your research involves invasive procedures you are required to complete and submit an EC7 Protocol Monitoring Form, and your completed consent paperwork to this ECDA once your study is complete. You are also required to complete and submit an EC7 Protocol Monitoring Form if you are a member of staff.

Approval applies specifically to the research study/methodology and timings as detailed in your Form EC1A. Should you amend any aspect of your research, or wish to apply for an extension to your study, you will need your supervisor's approval (if you are a student) and must complete and submit form EC2. In cases where the amendments to the original study are deemed to be substantial, a new Form EC1A may need to be completed prior to the study being undertaken.

Should adverse circumstances arise during this study such as physical reaction/harm, mental/emotional harm, intrusion of privacy or breach of confidentiality this must be reported to the approving Committee immediately. Failure to report adverse circumstance/s would be considered misconduct.

Ensure you quote the UH protocol number and the name of the approving Committee on all paperwork, including recruitment advertisements/online requests, for this study.

Students must include this Approval Notification with their submission.

Appendix B: Form EC6: Participant Information Sheet

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE

ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR STUDIES INVOLVING THE USE OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
(‘ETHICS COMMITTEE’)

FORM EC6: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a study. Before you decide whether to do so, it is important that you understand the research that is being done and what your involvement will include. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Do not hesitate to ask us anything that is not clear or for any further information you would like to help you make your decision. Please do take your time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. The University’s regulations governing the conduct of studies involving human participants can be accessed via this link:

<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/RE01.htm>

Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of this study?

The majority of deaf children receive their education in mainstream schools. Salter et al. (2017) have investigated the view of TAs on the inclusion of deaf children in mainstream settings, but there is currently little research about mainstream teacher perceptions on teaching deaf children and you are central to their success.

In order for Teachers of the Deaf to best support you, and the deaf children in your class, it is important to know your views, including understanding the challenges you face and how confident you feel in best meeting the needs of the deaf children in your class.

Do I have to take part?

It is completely up to you whether or not you decide to take part in this study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. Agreeing to join the study does not mean that you have to complete it. You are free to withdraw at any stage without giving a reason

How long will my part in the study take?

If you decide to take part in this study, you will be involved in it for 3 months maximum.

What will happen to me if I take part?

The first thing to happen will be an online survey, which should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Then a sample of the participants will be contacted to arrange follow-up face-to-face interviews. These will be arranged at a time of your convenience and should last no more than 1 hour. Undertaking the online survey does not mean that you automatically have to be involved in the interview stage. You can decide to undertake the survey only or to take part in the interview as well if you are selected.

What are the possible disadvantages, risks or side effects of taking part?

Involvement in the research project will involve a limited time commitment as outlined above and all efforts will be made to keep this to a minimum. There are no risks or side-effects.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

The data gained from this research aims to improve the practice of Teachers of the Deaf who work with you to meet the needs of children and young people who are deaf more effectively.

How will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

All the information you supply will be fully anonymised and stored in a password secured file on a secure laptop. All participants will be assigned a randomly generated code and identifying details will be known only to the researcher. Interviews will be recorded, to enable the researcher to analyse them in detail. These will be transferred from the recording device onto a secure laptop in a password secured file as soon as possible.

What will happen to the data collected within this study?

All the data collected will be collected and stored electronically, in a password-protected environment. All data will be anonymised. An anonymous summary of the overall findings will be shared with Teacher of the Deaf colleagues.

Who has reviewed this study?

This study has been reviewed by:

The University of Hertfordshire Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities Ethics Committee with Delegated Authority
The UH protocol number is EDU/PGR/CP/03287.

Who can I contact if I have any questions?

If you would like further information or would like to discuss any details personally, please get in touch with me, in writing, by phone or by email:

Emma Edwards

Teacher of the Deaf

School name, address

Tel.: *School telephone number*

emma.edwards@rodingprimary.co.uk

Although we hope it is not the case, if you have any complaints or concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please write to the University's Secretary and Registrar.

Thank you very much for reading this information and giving consideration to taking part in this study.

Appendix C: EC3: Consent Form for Studies Involving Human Participants

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
ETHICS COMMITTEE FOR STUDIES INVOLVING THE USE OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
(‘ETHICS COMMITTEE’)

FORM EC3 CONSENT FORM FOR STUDIES INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

I, the undersigned *[please give your name here, in BLOCK CAPITALS]*

.....
of *[please give contact details here, sufficient to enable the investigator to get in touch with you, such as a postal or email address]*

.....
hereby freely agree to take part in the study entitled

MA/MSc Educational Studies Research Methods and Dissertation Mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children

(UH Protocol number: EDU/PGR/CP/03287)

1 I confirm that I have been given a Participant Information Sheet (a copy of which is attached to this form) giving particulars of the study, including its aim(s), methods and design, the names and contact details of key people and, as appropriate, the risks and potential benefits, how the information collected will be stored and for how long, and any plans for follow-up studies that might involve further approaches to participants. I have also been informed of how my personal information on this form will be stored and for how long. I have been given details of my involvement in the study. I have been told that in the event of any significant change to the aim(s) or design of the study I will be informed, and asked to renew my consent to participate in it.

2 I have been assured that I may withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage or having to give a reason.

3 In giving my consent to participate in this study, I understand that voice, video or photo-recording will take place and I have been informed of how/whether this recording will be transmitted/displayed.

4 I have been told how information relating to me (data obtained in the course of the study, and data provided by me about myself) will be handled: how it will be kept secure, who will have access to it, and how it will or may be used.

5 I have been told that I may at some time in the future be contacted again in connection with this or another study.

Signature of participant.....Date.....

Signature of (principal) investigator **E Edwards**

Date **01.09.17**

Name of (principal) investigator **Emma Edwards**

Appendix D: List of Questions in the Phase 1 ‘SurveyMonkey’ Questionnaire (SurveyMonkey Ltd. 2018)

Mainstream teacher perceptions of working with deaf children

This questionnaire is part of an MA research project with the University of Hertfordshire.

By completing the survey, you are consenting to take part in this study and have understood in the information in the Participant Information sheet.

Many thanks in advance for your help in this research. Your time is appreciated.

- 1. How many years have you been teaching in primary schools?**
(Respondents to choose one)
 - NQT
 - 1-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - 11 years +

- 2. What is your current place of work?**
(Respondents to choose one)
 - Mainstream primary school (without resource-base provision for deaf children)
 - Primary school with resource-base provision for deaf children

- 3. What experience do you have of teaching deaf children prior to this academic year?**
(Box for comments)

- 4. I understand the issues that deaf children face in school. Please explain your response.**
(Respondents to choose one)
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
(Box for comments)

- 5. I feel confident in meeting the needs of the deaf child/ren in my class. Please explain your response.**
(Respondents to choose one)
 - Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
(Box for comments)

- 6. What training have you received about deafness and teaching deaf children? e.g. initial teacher-training; inset sessions**
(Box for comments)

- 7. Has the training you have received sufficiently prepared you to teach deaf children?**
(Box for comments)

- 8. Are there benefits in having a child who is deaf in your class/ school? Please explain your answer.**
(Box for comments)

9. Are there any circumstances where you believe a deaf child should not be educated in a mainstream classroom? What are they?

(Box for comments)

10. The ideas that I had about teaching deaf children have changed, since having a deaf child in my class. Please explain your response.

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.

(Box for comments)

11. How challenging do you find the following aspects of having a deaf child in your class? Please rank them.

	Extremely challenging			Not challenging		NA
	1	2	3	4	5	o
Managing audiological equipment	o	o	o	o	o	o
Communication	o	o	o	o	o	o
Planning and differentiation	o	o	o	o	o	o
Assessment	o	o	o	o	o	o
Liaising with support staff	o	o	o	o	o	o
Social inclusion for the deaf child	o	o	o	o	o	o
Other (please specify)	o	o	o	o	o	o

If you chose 'other', please explain:

(Box for comments)

12. What are the most important things that a Teacher of the Deaf can do to support you and the deaf child/ren in your class?

(Box for comments)

13. What is the biggest challenge for you professionally in having a deaf child in your class? Why is this particularly challenging for you?

(Box for comments)

14. Please supply your name and email to allow the researcher to contact you, with regard to discussing your responses further. (You are not obliged to take part in the interview stage of this research.)

(Box for comments)