

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

**PREPARING STUDENT TEACHERS TO TEACH INCLUSIVELY:
A CASE STUDY OF A HIGHER EDUCATION PGCE COURSE IN
WALES**

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DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION

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**PREPARING STUDENT TEACHERS TO TEACH
INCLUSIVELY:**

**A CASE STUDY OF A HIGHER EDUCATION PGCE COURSE
IN WALES**

By

EMMA PALFREY

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ABSTRACT

The 1978 Warnock Report, and the 1994 Salamanca Statement have been instrumental in shaping inclusive education in the UK. Within Wales, these two key drivers have promoted the development of greater inclusive policies and practice, calling for inclusion to be the norm and recommending that all children should be educated in a mainstream setting, where possible. To support these developments, it is important that initial teacher training (ITT) courses and providers are able to ensure that newly qualified teachers (NQTs) have both the skills and knowledge to be effective, inclusive practitioners.

The catalyst for this research was the Welsh Government's 2012 consultation document "Forward in Partnership for Children and Young People with Additional Needs", which outlined its intention to introduce new legislation relating to special educational needs (SEN) and additional learning needs (ALN), bringing extensive reforms to the system. This was ongoing throughout much of the empirical research, with the new Bill gaining Royal Assent in January 2018. The implementation of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act will commence in September 2020, with the implementation period anticipated to span three years. During this time, the existing SEN legislation applies.

The purpose of this study was to investigate how well one higher education institution in Wales, and within that institution, one post graduate certificate of education (PGCE) course, prepared its ITT students to be inclusive practitioners.

The empirical research was designed to answer three research questions, which focused on self-efficacy, coaching and mentoring, and reflection. The research

consisted of an 18-month longitudinal case study, involving seven student teachers. The case study investigated the training the participants received during their one-year PGCE and how their self-reported self-efficacy changed throughout the year. The views of four participants, following their first term of teaching as NQTs, are also reported.

The findings of the study indicate that mentoring played a fundamental role in developing the participants' self-efficacy, as did the practical, hands-on experience they gained throughout the year. This study provides a timely summary of the current situation in Wales, and by drawing on the findings of the research, recommendations to develop and improve future practice are offered.

DEDICATION

For my Grandad, who I wish more than anything was here to see me finish this.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At times it felt as though I'd never get here, but I've made it, and it's thanks to the support I've received from certain people along the way.

Firstly, to the three supervisors who have guided me throughout this journey; Dr Christopher Rhodes, who was with me at the start of my research, and Professor Mike McLinden and Professor Graeme Douglas who have seen my work through from its initial starting point to this finished piece. I know it cannot have been an easy job for you, at times life got in the way a little too much, but you managed to keep me on track and help me reach this point – a very sincere thank you to you all.

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And last, but by no means least, to all of my friends and family who have patiently asked, "how's the thesis going?" over the past few years; thank you so, so much for all of your encouragement and reassurance.....here it is, finally!

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ABBREVIATIONS

ALN	Additional Learning Needs
ALNET	Additional Learning Needs Education and Tribunal
ASD	Autistic Spectrum Disorder
FSM	Free School Meals
GTCW	General Teaching Council for Wales
IDP	Individual Development Plan
IEP	Individual Education Plan
ITT	Initial Teacher Training
LEA	Local Education Authority
LNF	Literacy and Numeracy Framework
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
MAT	More Able and Talented
MEP	Masters in Educational Practice
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities
SE1	School Experience 1
SE2	School Experience 2
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulty
TA	Teaching Assistant

1 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the training provided for student teachers on a one-year Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course at a university in Wales. The aims of the research are to gain an understanding of:

- The training given to student teachers in mainstream settings in relation to educating pupils who have special educational needs (SEN);
- Whether the student teachers believe their training adequately prepares them to teach their pupils inclusively in a mainstream classroom;
- The role that coaching and mentoring within their two placement school experiences (SE1 and SE2) plays in developing the student teachers' self-efficacy in relation to teaching inclusively.

Three preliminary research questions, based on these aims, were developed to provide relevant data to address these points (section 1.6).

The research for this study was conducted between 2013 and 2017, with details about the introduction of the new Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) (ALNET) Act, which gained Royal Assent in early 2018, also being included. When initial research began in 2013, there were two terms which were frequently used interchangeably within Wales, and often without the correct distinction. SEN was a sub-category of additional learning needs (ALN) and was used to identify “those learners who have severe, complex and/or specific learning difficulties as set out within the Education Act 1996 and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales” (Estyn,

2013, p1). ALN was used to “identify pupils whose learning needs are additional to the majority of their peers” (Estyn, 2013, p1). Following an initial consultation from the Welsh Government in 2012 titled ‘Forward in partnership for children and young people with additional needs’, in 2015 the Welsh Government released a draft ALN Bill which called for changes to how these terms were used. However, as initial research, and more importantly the interviews that form the basis for this case study, were conducted prior to this change, the term SEN is used throughout this study. The slight nuances associated with the two terms are explained in section 2.10 and then discussed further, in relation to the findings of the research in section 5.2.1, where the importance of providing a clear, unambiguous definition is explained.

In Wales, there are several routes into teaching, all involving the prospective teacher completing a programme of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) and gaining Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). For those students wishing to go straight from school onto a teaching course, they can complete a Bachelor of Education (BEd) which combines a degree with ITT. Despite a 2006 review of Welsh ITT recommending that the BEd should be phased out to make way for an “entirely postgraduate entry route for teaching” (Furlong et al, 2006, p6), that route is still available at several institutions. However, the number of students gaining QTS in this way has reduced, with almost all secondary teachers entering the profession through the postgraduate route and about 60 per cent of primary teachers entering through the postgraduate route (Tabberer, 2013, p6). A BA or BSc with QTS is another undergraduate route.

In Wales, the most common route into teaching is a PGCE. During the academic year 2014/2015, 78 per cent of the 1,500 first year ITT students were enrolled on PGCE

courses, “1 per cent higher than the previous year, and 12 percentage points higher than in 2005/06” (Welsh Government, 2016a, p3).

The PGCE is a one-year course which is completed after an initial undergraduate degree. It involves spending 18 weeks on school placement, referred to as school experience (SE), for primary courses and 24 weeks on SE for secondary courses. Following the one-year course, student teachers are awarded QTS providing they meet the 42 standards set out by the Welsh Assembly Government (2009) (Appendix 1).

With the PGCE being the most common route into teaching in Wales, I decided that should be the focus of this study, as the potential impact would be greater; with more teachers entering the profession through this route, there would be a larger audience and any recommendations would apply to a greater number of people. The study examines one specific PGCE course at one institution in Wales.

With the PGCE following on from a degree, it focuses on developing the student teachers’ pedagogy, rather than their subject knowledge. The exact content of PGCE courses varies across providers, however, the Welsh Government sets out the criteria for school-based ITT to be accredited by the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) and specifies what all accredited providers of ITT must do. There is a requirement that providers should design the structure and content to allow the delivery of training which will enable student teachers to demonstrate they have met the QTS Standards (Welsh Government, 2013a). Several of the standards have a “specifically Welsh dimension” (Welsh Government, 2013a, p22) and as such, student teachers are required to undertake their teaching experience “wholly or

mainly in a school, independent school or other institution (except a pupil referral unit) in Wales” (Welsh Government, 2013a, p22). Within these standards, there is direct reference to teaching pupils with SEN; anyone gaining QTS will understand their responsibilities under the SEN Code of Practice for Wales, know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of SEN and differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of learners, including the more able and talented (MAT) and those with SEN (Welsh Assembly Government, 2009, p50).

1.2 Context

Following a referendum in 1997, the UK parliament passed the Government of Wales Act 1998 which gave Wales its National Assembly. At the time, the “Act limited the National Assembly to the making of secondary legislation only when authorised by the UK Parliament” (National Assembly for Wales, 2013). In 2007 the Assembly gained powers to make laws for Wales in defined areas. Devolution has played an important role in educational policies, with subtle, and in some cases not so subtle differences, with those in England. Wales often fairs poorly when comparisons are made to pupil outcomes in England, with recent A Level results seeing the gap between the two countries grow; in 2013 the pass rate amongst English students was of 98.1 percent (up 0.1 percent from 2012), with only 97.6 percent of Welsh students achieving the same success (with no increase seen from the 2012 results) (WalesOnline, 2013). In Wales in 2015 the “overall pass rate fell from 97.5 percent to 97.3 percent” (BBC News, 2015) with Wales achieving lower than Northern Ireland, England and any of its regions. Further evidence of this can be seen by looking at both the 2006 and 2009 Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests, in which Wales performed badly;

We did not fare as well as we would have liked in the 2006 PISA assessments and we all hoped that our policies would have yielded improvements by the 2009 assessments. Sadly, that is not the case. The 2009 figures paint an even more disappointing picture of our performance and progress.

Welsh Government, 2010

The Welsh Government has been making changes to all manner of educational policy, including those that govern the way pupils with SEN are taught. The policies referred to in the above statement have obviously not had the desired effect; Wales has not moved up the PISA league tables, in fact “out of 67 countries taking part, Wales was ranked 38th for reading, 40th for maths and 30th for the tests for science, the lowest of the UK countries” (BBC, 2010)

In 2013 The European Network on Inclusive Education & Disability (incluD-ed) published its views on PISA. They welcomed PISA’s desire to be as inclusive as possible, noting the selection of participating schools and students included students from a broad range of abilities and backgrounds. However, incluD-ed wants PISA to include more SEN students in the samples, explaining that there are huge differences within participating countries in the number of SEN students involved in the tests, and that the numbers are generally low. They go on to explain that the amount of existing data is far from being sufficient to draw conclusions and make international comparisons (incluD-ed, 2013).

There are many, often conflicting, explanations offered for the differences in performance of Welsh pupils compared to those elsewhere in the UK. Gorard (2000) argues that once you consider local socio-economic factors, there is no evidence that English students are outperforming their Welsh counterparts. In 2016 the number of pupils entitled to and claiming free school meals (FSM) in England was 14.3 percent,

whereas the number in Wales was at 16.8 percent (Department for Education (DfE), 2016; Statistics for Wales, 2016a).

In a speech at the Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) Annual Conference in Birmingham in 2016, ASCL President Allan Foulds discussed the cuts to pupil spending in England; “these problems are so acute that there is a serious danger we will not be able to maintain current standards, let alone raise them further,” (ASCL, 2016) with analysis of pupil spending across England finding that the “10 best-funded areas will on average receive grants of £6,297 per pupil in 2015-16, compared to an average of £4,208 per pupil in the 10 most poorly funded areas”. The average spending per pupil in Wales in 2015/16 was £4,128 (Statistics for Wales, 2016b), meaning pupils in the most poorly funded areas in England still receive more funding than the average Welsh pupil. With an additional 50 percent funding per pupil in the best funded areas of England, the differences in performance could be as simple as money.

Another factor that could be affecting the results is the number of pupils with SEN. In 2014, 22.6 percent of Welsh pupils were identified as having SEN, this was the highest percentage amongst the home nations; 17.9 percent of English pupils, 20.8 percent of Scottish pupils and 21.8 percent of Northern Irish pupils had SEN (Shaw et al., 2016, p8):

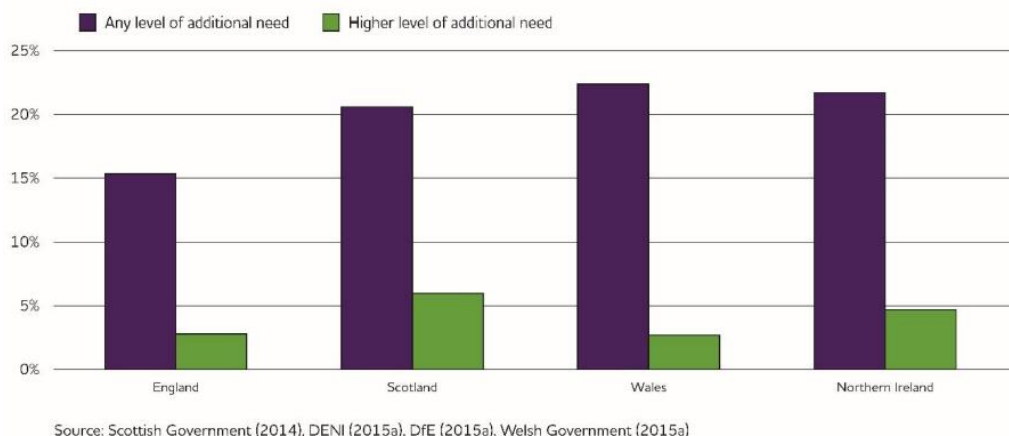


Figure 1.1: Children identified as having SEN as a percentage of all UK school pupils, 2014

In July 2015 the then education minister Huw Lewis announced the Welsh Government (2015a) had published its draft ALN Bill, setting out “provisions which have the potential to significantly improve multi-agency working around the planning and delivery of provision for learners with additional learning needs”. With the introduction of this new Bill, the Welsh Government hopes to transform expectations, experiences and outcomes for children in Wales by updating the current system which is based on a model introduced over 30 years ago (Welsh Government, 2017a). The consultation period for this document ran until December 18th 2015. SNAP Cymru, who facilitated an event where the Children, Young People and the Education Committee met with stakeholders to discuss some of the content of the draft Bill, stated at the time that they believed the Bill would be introduced in December 2016 “and that it will include some of the proposals contained in the draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Bill” (SNAP Cymru, 2016). However, the process has continued to progress slowly; the Bill did not receive Royal

Assent until January 2018, with the implementation set to span three years, commencing in September 2020 (ERW, 2019).

As well as the changing SEN policy, the Welsh Government has been making changes to teacher training courses. In the academic year 2004/05, they began reducing the number of places available on ITT courses, leading to a 35 percent reduction in the number of new teachers coming into ITT by 2014/2015 (Welsh Government, 2016a).

The reduction of places stemmed from a suggestion in the Furlong Report (2006, pp 7-8), which recommended reducing the number of ITT providers in Wales, in a similar way to Scotland, where there had been a move to consolidate provision.

The number of training providers in Wales has also changed in recent years. When the Furlong report was published in 2006 there were seven providers in Wales, with the Open University set to become the eighth in the year 2006/07. Since the report, the number of providers has been reduced to three:

- North and Mid Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training – (bringing together Aberystwyth University and Bangor University)
- South West Wales Teacher Education and Training (bringing together what was at the time Swansea Metropolitan University and Trinity St David's, Carmarthen – now combined as the University of Wales Trinity Saint David)
- South East Wales Centre for Teacher Education and Training (bringing together Cardiff Metropolitan University and what is now the University of South Wales, having merged Newport University and the University of Glamorgan)

(Tabberer, 2013, p6)

In a review of Initial Teacher Training in Wales (2013, p2) Tabberer explains that “progress to improve ITT since the 2006 review has been slow and Wales does not yet meet the top international benchmarks to which it aspires” with standards across

Wales being judged to be adequate rather than good. The challenge Tabberer (2013) explains, is to ensure consistency in ITT quality and practice.

Thinking about this research on a more personal level, I have had an interest in SEN since completing my own PGCE and being fortunate enough to do one of my placements in a school with an ASD base. I currently teach in a school with an SEN base (including a separate ASD base) and have run a number of interventions for pupils with SEN. Working in a mainstream school with a high proportion of SEN pupils, where the importance of inclusive teaching is so apparent, I wanted find out how student teachers in Wales viewed their ITT courses and how well they felt they had prepared them to teach inclusively.

1.3 Aims of the study

Following an initial literature search in 2013, I formulated three preliminary research questions (section 1.6), I then developed these (section 2.12) following a detailed literature review. The principal aim of this study is to answer these research questions to provide the reader with a deeper understanding of a subject that, at first look, seems to be under-researched; there is plenty of literature available on teacher education and ITT courses, but I was unable to find any which concentrated on SEN and had a Welsh focus.

In this study, I focus my research specifically on the training given to student teachers in relation to teaching pupils who have SEN and whether the student teachers report that training adequately prepares them to teach their pupils inclusively in a mainstream classroom. There are many elements to this; coaching and mentoring is used throughout the PGCE to develop the student teachers' self-

efficacy and enable them to become reflective practitioners. The extent to which this and the practical experience the student teachers gained during the year aided their development, is fully examined.

1.4 Research justification

During my initial literature search, I found numerous studies that examined the quality of SEN cover and the opinions of student teachers on ITT course in England (Golder et al, 2005; Hodkinson, 2009; Nash and Norwich, 2010; Lawson et al, 2013). The research looks at the attitudes of the various stakeholders, the implications for these stakeholders, and makes recommendations on how the various aspects of ITT could be improved. However, I was unable to find anything that was specific to Wales. As Wales has the highest proportion of pupils with SEN in the UK, it could be argued that the need for research with a Welsh focus is greater than in any other area of the UK. Wales was already in the process of reforming its SEN Code of Practice and in 2016 the then education minister Huw Lewis announced plans to reform the way teachers are trained in the country, which he said would be “focused on driving up standards across the board” (Welsh Government, 2016b). Research that could potentially suggest improvements to the way teachers are trained to teach pupils with SEN in mainstream schools could aid in this drive to increase standards.

In 1978 the Warnock report outlined the right of every child to attend a mainstream school, wherever possible. This recommendation was echoed in the 1996 Education Act and also the 2002 Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, so with more than one in five Welsh pupils having SEN and requiring specialist support, the proportion of pupils with SEN growing steadily (Shepherd, 2009; StatsWales, 2016a),

and the funding for SEN falling (National Assembly for Wales, 2015), the need for teachers to feel comfortable teaching inclusively is more important than ever.

In 2012 the General Teaching Council for Wales (GTCW) published a survey involving newly qualified teachers (NQTs) who had studied on ITT courses in 2011. They found that the majority of students thought they needed more preparation for supporting pupils with ALN, with inconsistencies across Wales in the standard of training provided being reported. Furthermore, the inspectorate for education and training in Wales, Estyn, highlighted this as an area for improvement in their 2009 report looking into the quality of ITT and ALN.

During the literature review in chapter 2, I examine the seminal work of Bandura (section 2.7) in depth and his definition of self-efficacy is explored. Self-efficacy is the level of belief a person has in their own ability to complete a task or achieve their goals (Bandura, 1977). In the context of ITT, a goal may be a target set by the student teacher for themselves, or it could be a target their mentor or the university asks them to meet as they work towards meeting the 42 standards required to gain QTS. With Bandura (1977) noting that people are more likely to participate in an activity when they feel they are likely to succeed, it is important that any goals set are achievable. Equally, goals need to pose enough challenge that a person feels the reward of success. For a teacher to be a successful practitioner and teach inclusively, they require a high level of self-efficacy, something that "is moulded to a decisive extent by authority figures" (Popper and Lipshitz, 1992, p15), so we start to see just how significant a role the student teachers' mentors will take as they fill the role of authority figure on the PGCE. An important factor to note, is that Popper and Lipshitz (1992, p16) claim that the development of a person's self-efficacy "cannot

find meaningful expression in short-term learning relationships”. During a secondary PGCE course, students will be with their mentors for a maximum of 14 weeks, so it was important to establish if this was sufficient time to build a supportive and meaningful relationship.

1.5 Initial literature review and search strategy

Initial searches were conducted in 2013 to find out what knowledge there was of ITT courses in Wales (section 2.3.2) and their coverage of issues relating to SEN; the searches yielded very little information. In fact, I was unable to find any papers that focused exclusively on Welsh ITT providers. There were however, many journal articles and papers on the subject in other areas of the UK and further afield (Garner, 2006; Sari et al., 2009; Lawson et al., 2013). Many of these papers mentioned that the success teachers had teaching inclusively was dependent on their self-efficacy. I subsequently expanded my search to include self-efficacy, and from this the use of coaching and mentoring to develop these skills. Finally, I expanded my search to include research relating to the need for student teachers to be reflective practitioners. Google Scholar was used to identify appropriate literature, and an electronic library catalogue search was used to download relevant papers and identify key authors on the subjects (section 2.2). I identified two key pieces of literature which are discussed in depth in chapter 2 (section 2.4). The first is Winter’s 2006 review of initial teacher education (ITE) in Northern Ireland and the second is Hobson’s 2002 report into mentoring on ITT courses.

To ensure any new material was not overlooked, a ZETOC alert was set up at the beginning of the research in 2013 and TES online was viewed weekly.

Following the completion of the empirical research, it emerged that a study similar to this one had been ongoing in Ireland. Published by Hick et al. in 2018, the paper examines the impact of the changes to Irish Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes, which had been introduced in 2012. As this paper was not published until after my research had been completed, I was not able to include it in my literature review. However, it is discussed alongside the findings of my research in section 5.3.

1.6 Preliminary research questions

Following an initial review of literature, I formulated three preliminary research questions, relating to the general aims set out in section 1.1. Key themes had emerged early in the research; self-efficacy could influence how positively a student teacher approached inclusive teaching, reflecting on one's own performance could help a student teacher develop, coaching and mentoring would play an important role in the development of student teacher to NQT. As I considered these themes alongside the aims of the study, three questions were formulated. RQ2 relates directly to the third of the initial aims. The other two aims, which broadly cover the training provided to PGCE students during their ITT, along with the themes identified during the initial literature searches, are covered by RQ1 and RQ3. At the time, I anticipated these questions would paint a picture of how well one ITT course in Wales prepares its students to teach inclusively, and potentially provide me with data to suggest improvements in practice. The preliminary research questions, what Thomas (2013, p91) describes as "prima facie" are offered here, with "more refined, targeted questions" being presented in section 2.12 following a more in-depth review of literature:

1. Does the perception student teachers have of their own competency to teach pupils with SEN change throughout their one-year ITT course?
2. What role does coaching and mentoring play in developing the self-efficacy of Student teachers to teach pupils with SEN as they transform from student to teacher?
3. What opportunities are there for student teachers to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking theory to practice in relation to teaching pupils with SEN?

1.7 Ethics

As with all educational studies, making sure data was collected and handled ethically was a fundamental requirement of this study. I adhered to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Guidelines (2011) throughout, as well as any additional requirements set out by the University of Birmingham. All participants gave consent to participate, on the condition they remained anonymous. Their right to withdraw at any time was fully explained, with one participant doing so when he dropped out of the PGCE. Ethics is discussed in further detail in section 3.10.

1.8 Audience

When first thinking about the focus of this study, I had anticipated that the findings would be of value to several groups. The Welsh Government revealed its plans to reform ITT following the publication of a review of ITT that was carried out during the academic year 2012/13, which included a proposal for all teachers to eventually be educated to masters-level (Tabberer, 2013). As the PGCE immediately precedes the NQT year in terms of the training an NQT receives, if the quality of ITT could be

improved, this could raise that starting standard for the NQT year. It will be of interest to the universities in Wales who currently provide PGCE courses and to the school mentors who help to provide training to the student teachers they have on placement in their schools. The results of this research were fed back to the university involved and the published thesis will be available online through the University of Birmingham's e theses repository.

1.9 Thesis structure

The thesis is divided into six chapters. Following this introduction there is a review of literature, guided by the preliminary research questions (section 1.6). A detailed account of the research design follows the literature review, specifying the methodology, methods and management of the research. Presentation of the empirical research follows this, with six themes being identified for detailed discussion in the following chapter. The penultimate chapter discusses and summarises these six themes and the findings of the research in relation to the three developed research questions. Finally, conclusions are drawn, recommendations presented and possible developments for future research are offered.

2 CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the rationale for the study, reviewing the key literature related to the preliminary research questions and that which was required to develop these preliminary questions. It paints a picture for the reader of the developing situation, in relation to this study, of inclusive education in Wales.

The function of a literature review is not simply to present the reader with information, it needs to be put into context; it should set the scene for the study by showing how it fits into the existing literature (Lewis-Beck, 2004) and build on this knowledge. Sir Isaac Newton famously said in his letter to Robert Hooke (1676) “if I have seen further it is by standing upon the shoulders of giants” referring to the work of others he had built on. Thomas (2013, p57) argues that as a researcher you are not an island; your research must take place in the context of what is already known and in the process of a literature review you should focus your original research ideas. It is important that any preliminary research questions are precise enough to guide a literature review, whilst at the same time allowing you to define more exactly what you wish to do, and ultimately refine your research questions. This is the approach I took; my first task was to find out what was already known and develop my preliminary research questions. This chapter picks up from the initial search detailed in the introduction (section 1.5). I started with my preliminary research questions which I used to guide the focus of my empirical research, with the ultimate aim being to build on current knowledge and offer something new.

The preliminary research questions had been developed following an initial search which was carried out in 2013 when this study began. The initial search concentrated on inclusive teaching in Wales and how well teachers were able to achieve it in mainstream schools. This inevitably led me to examine the training they received and what factors made this successful, or otherwise. The depth of the initial search was by no means sufficient, but it did allow me to develop the preliminary research questions.

The main starting point for this study was the publication of a consultation document by the Welsh Government titled “Forward in Partnership for Children and Young People with Additional Needs” (Welsh Government, 2012a) in which it outlined its intention to introduce new legislation relating to SEN, bringing broad reforms to the system. A summary of responses to the consultation was published in 2013. It was clear that things would change during this study; therefore, the literature review would need to evolve and develop to address the changing state of educational policy in Wales.

The literature reviewed is presented in sections, starting with an outline of the situation in Wales, as this is the focus of my research; I felt it was vital to provide the reader with a clear understanding of the situation in Wales at the time of my research. Following the presentation and discussion of the literature relating to Wales, I identify and explore four key pieces of literature. This literature includes research which I relied on substantially for developing my own understanding of inclusive education for trainee teachers and what was already being done when I began my research. It was from this literature that I developed my preliminary research questions.

The four key pieces of literature mentioned above provided a starting point, to somewhat misquote Newton's metaphor, I had been able to stand on some shoulders, but I still wanted to see further. To allow me to do so, I included a further seven sections which explore literature relating to the following topics:

- A comparison between the education systems in England and Wales;
- Coaching and mentoring;
- Self-efficacy;
- Reflective practice during ITT;
- Inclusive education, including a discussion relating to the situation in other countries;
- A discussion on the terms 'SEN' and 'ALN' in relation to the proposed new ALN Bill in Wales;
- Assessment of SEN pupils.

The seven sections were carefully selected, some related directly to the preliminary research questions, others were included to further explain the current situation and to discuss future changes.

The first of the seven sections focusses on a comparison between Wales and England. Wales and England may be neighbours geographically, but demographically there are significant differences between the two countries. These differences and the possibility of Wales learning from the changes England are already implementing in terms of their new ALN Act are discussed.

The subsequent four sections all relate to the preliminary research questions, and whilst the literature does not exclusively focus on Wales, the literature from further afield helps put the current situation into context.

The penultimate section was included as the proposed changes to the ALN Bill were what initiated this research. The proposed changes to ALN in Wales could have a dramatic effect on the content of ITT courses in the future. The final section concentrates on the assessment of pupils with SEN. This was included for a similar reason; the 2014 Donaldson report recommends wide-reaching changes which, if implemented, cannot fail to also impact on the content of ITT courses.

The chapter concludes with a discussion and summary of the themes identified in the literature.

2.2 Literature search

The literature review was carried out between January 2013 and December 2017, but also includes details of Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill, which gained Royal Assent and became an Act on 24 January 2018. To ensure the search was conducted in an efficient manner, I needed to employ a methodical approach; I started by using keywords and the previously identified themes which related to my research questions to search online resources. I used the keywords independently and in combination to find relevant literature, these included: Wales; inclusive education; inclusion; special educational needs; SEN; teacher training; beginner teacher; ITT; self-efficacy; coaching and mentoring; reflective practice; reflection. I chose to use Google Scholar as the starting point for the majority of my searches, as it provided me with a simple way to begin my

research, allowing me to search for literature in various forms; books, journals, conference papers, policy documents, websites, government publications, abstracts, and theses. With this as my starting point, the electronic resources available through the University of Birmingham's library catalogue were used in addition.

With my research being based in Wales, the Welsh Government's website was also regularly accessed to keep up-to-date with any proposed changes in educational policy.

The literature review started by addressing my broad aim, to find out about ITT in Wales and to what extent it prepares teachers to teach inclusively. This encompasses the key areas mentioned above as these were fundamental to painting a complete picture. The quantity of literature located during my search, relevant to this study varied. For some areas, such as coaching and mentoring I was able to find a vast number of studies. However, when trying to find literature relating specifically to the provision given to SEN on ITT courses in Wales, things became more difficult. The literature review initially helped me build a sound understanding of the situation at the time, laying the foundations for further research.

It was important to put the research into context. Wales' National Assembly has powers to make laws and change policies, but it is still overseen by the UK Government. Wales and England have their differences in terms of demographic, but they are not too dissimilar that something which works well for one, could also work well for the other. Thus, policy changes in England were also considered as they could have some bearing on future changes in Wales; in 2014(a) the Welsh Government (p10) acknowledged this, explaining that the reforms England had

introduced to their SEN framework under the Children and Families Act 2014 “raised issues and provided lessons for consideration as well as having some cross-border impacts”.

A methodical and discriminatory approach was needed when searching for literature. For example, a Google Scholar search for the phrase ‘coaching and mentoring in teaching’ yielded over 130,000 results. Adding ‘pre service teachers’ reduced the number of results by more than half. By changing the date range for the publication of this research to 2000 – present, I was able to reduce the results to just under 18,000. Conversely, when looking for research that focused specifically on ITT courses in Wales, there was very little available. The phrase ‘teacher training in Wales’ yielded almost 100,000 results, however the majority of research also included English ITT courses or focused on the UK as a whole. As a result, the search was extended to include these studies, with a discretionary approach being taken towards this literature. Once the search had been extended and English teacher education was included, I felt it was appropriate, and would give the research more of a context, to include a greater focus on the comparison of the two countries. I discuss this further in section 2.5.

2.3 Wales

Before the key literature is discussed, it is important to understand the policy context in which this study sits and any literature that relates to this. This section considers Wales-specific policies and how they relate to the study.

2.3.1 Welsh education policy

Since devolution Wales has changed. The Welsh Government can make its own laws and steer its education policies as it sees fit. These have often been along a different path to England. Ware (2014, p345) looks in depth at the “major policy initiatives which have the potential to impact radically on the education of all learners” in Wales, including those with SEN that have been implemented in the past decade.

These policies are:

- the Welsh Language Strategy (WAG, 2003; WG, 2010, 2012a);
- the Foundation Phase (Welsh Assembly Government Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills, 2008);
- the Literacy and Numeracy Framework (WG, 2013a);
- the Masters in Educational Practice;
- special educational needs policy reform (WG, 2012b, 2014a);
- reviews of initial teacher education and training (Furlong, Hagger, Butcher & Howson, 2006; Tabberer, 2013).

(Ware, 2014, p345)

A number of these are covered in this research and whilst only one of the policies listed above is explicitly linked to inclusive education, Ware (2014, p345) explains that they are all likely to affect inclusive education and the education of pupils with SEN.

Following Wales’ poor performance in the 2012 PISA tests, the Welsh Government introduced a new literacy and numeracy framework (LNF) in 2013. As part of this, every 7-14-year-old in Wales will now sit annual literacy and numeracy tests. Wales’ “framework has been deliberately designed to include all learners and the term ‘all learners’ actually means just that – all learners” (Ware, 2014, p353). The LNF provides a complete series of steps from those pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD) through to the more able and talented (MAT) 14-year-

olds (Ware, 2014, p353). With all learners being tested, data should be more readily available meaning interventions can be put into place earlier.

Wales' PISA results have been the catalyst for several educational reforms, including in 2011, when "Wales embarked on a large-scale school improvement reform and introduced a range of policies to improve the quality and equity of its school system" (OECD, 2017, p3). In 2014 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), who are responsible for administering the PISA tests, reviewed the reforms and made several recommendations. Building on this review, "as well as several other research reports" (OECD, 2017,p7), the Welsh Government published 'Qualified for Life: An Education Improvement Plan' in October 2014. In this, they set out their vision and aims for education to 2020 (Welsh Government, 2016). In 2016 the OECD were invited by the Welsh Government "to conduct an "education rapid policy assessment" to propose recommendations to further strengthen Wales' reform efforts" (OECD, 2017, p3). At the time their report was published in 2017, the OECD (p3) explained that Wales was "in the midst of a number of important changes, including a large-scale curriculum reform, a reform of initial teacher education and the revision of its education strategy", noting that they had shifted their approach to reforming education "towards one that is guided by a long-term vision and characterised by a process of co-construction with key stakeholders" (OECD, 2017, p3).

The OECD acknowledged that progress had been made in several areas, including supporting the professional learning of teachers. However, they warned that for Wales to realise its vision that all Welsh learners will develop into lifelong learners, "further policy attention" (OECD, 2017, p7) is needed to "continue with the initial

teacher education reforms, including the promotion of strong partnerships between initial teacher education institutions and schools” (OECD, 2017, p7).

Teacher education in Wales, including these recent changes is discussed in the next section.

2.3.2 Teacher education in Wales

The number of ITT students in Wales has decreased steadily in recent years. Between the academic years 2005/06 – 2014/15 there was a 35 percent decrease in the number of students enrolling onto ITT courses:

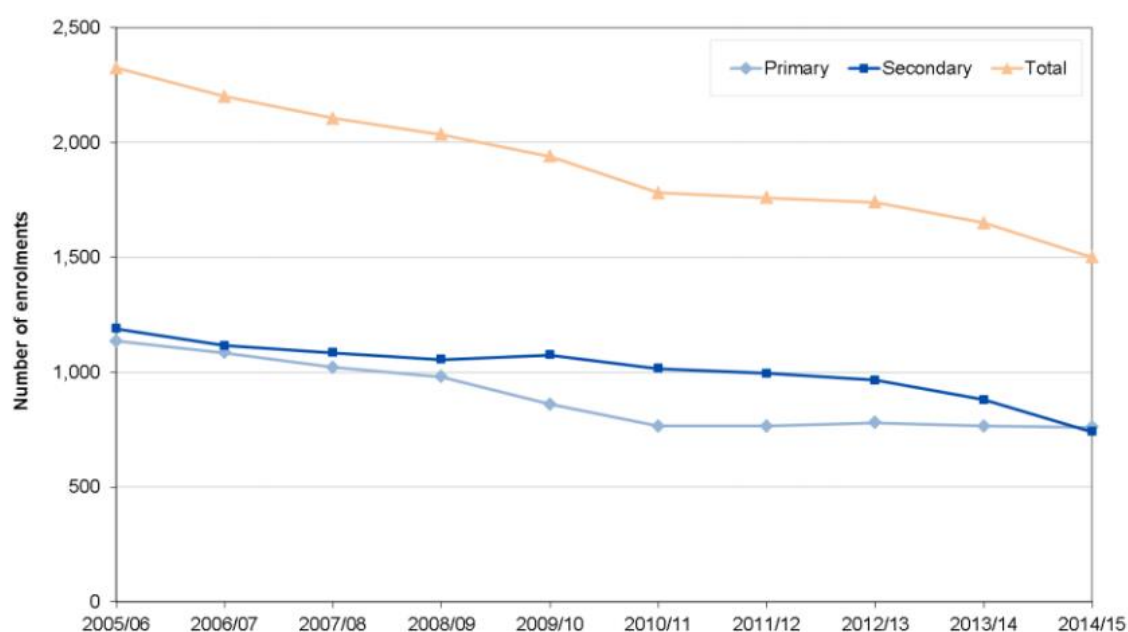


Figure 2.1: First year enrolments on ITT courses in Wales

(Welsh Government, 2016a)

Furlong et al (1996, p1) reviewed the ITT provision in Wales and explained that new teachers in Wales must “have the right skills, knowledge and understandings to realise the full potential of Wales’ increasingly distinctive educational agenda”. Since

devolution, Wales' educational policies are progressively diverging from those in England. The report explains that as policies diverge still further, the ITT courses will need to reflect these differences in their content and recommends that the Welsh Government encourages ITT providers to develop courses that are "focused, first and foremost, on preparing new teachers to teach within Welsh schools" (Furlong et al., 1996, p39). This would simplify things in a way; it would allow ITT providers to concentrate solely on Welsh policies, giving more time on the course to focus on issues relevant to teaching in the country. When thinking about inclusion, the details from the new ALN Bill could be covered in depth. However, it may also discourage students who want to teach in England from studying in Wales, and inevitably make it harder for students from England to teach in Wales. Reducing the number of potential teachers can only have a detrimental impact on development and could lead to shortages of teachers in key subjects.

As there are several routes into teaching, the amount of time that can be dedicated to teaching students about SEN varies. The content of ITT courses is not set in stone; institutions have a degree of flexibility, providing the content of their courses allows their students to meet the standards required to achieve QTS. Sessions teaching students about these issues are delivered in university and at their partnership schools. During these sessions, student teachers receive guidance on responding to pupils with SEN, on the Code of Practice (2002) and they also learn about the legislation related to, and the different types of, SEN (Roberts and Watkins, 2013, p3). The Department for Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills (2001, p6) stated that they would ensure that teachers "acquire the necessary skills to work effectively with learners with additional learning needs as part of their initial teaching training",

with the key word being 'skills'. Skills are gained predominantly through experience rather than learning the theory, so it is vital student teachers gain a diverse range of experiences during their ITT. However, Roberts and Watkins (2013, p4) highlight the inconsistencies experienced by student teachers in their different partnership schools and explain that consistency is difficult as the experiences of staff varies. They discuss the increasing need to have experienced mentors to inform practices in schools or for universities to train mentors. Having a more rigid curriculum for what must be covered on ITT courses in relation to SEN would also help; it would ensure that all student teachers cover the same topics, in the same depth, regardless of which university they attend. Nevertheless, it would still be difficult to ensure complete consistency as there are so many variables. One further consideration is that student teachers undertake placements in two secondary schools during their one-year ITT course. As far as possible, students should be placed in schools that will provide them with divergent experiences.

The standards referred to in the previous section, which must be met for a student teacher to obtain QTS, are another area of concern highlighted by Furlong et al (1996, p15). They describe them as "attributes and achievements that NQTs must be able to demonstrate" and explain that the problem with "such a model is that it may encourage a 'tick box approach' to learning". The English system whereby NQTs are offered guidance that places the emphasis on their own involvement in the process of learning is hailed as a better alternative. Developments could be made in Wales to move it more towards the English system.

In 2015 the Welsh Government published a report by Furlong on the future of ITT in Wales; 'Teaching Tomorrow's Teachers'. The report is one of a number of measures

being considered by the Welsh Government, in an attempt to raise the quality of education in Wales. Furlong's report suggests that the contribution of both universities and schools needs to be strengthened, as well as how both partners work together. Furlong explained that "potentially universities have a huge amount to offer but I don't think current arrangements capitalise on that properly" (EWC, 2015).

In their 2017 review of Welsh education reforms, the OECD discussed proposed changes to ITT in Wales, explaining that the Welsh Government adopted the changes suggested by Furlong, including the creation of "the Teacher Education Accreditation Group, which is tasked with developing new accreditation requirements" (OECD, 2017, p26). In 2016 there was a consultation on the draft criteria for ITT accreditation (Welsh Government, 2016). One point to note from the findings of the consultation is that several of the respondents mentioned the new ALN Bill, and suggested that "ALN, dyslexia/SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties) and deaf awareness should be a mandatory part of [ITT]" (Welsh Government, 2017, p26). This would definitely be a step in the right direction, should the advice be acted upon.

2.4 Key literature

The Welsh Government's consultation in 2012 and subsequent responses to a proposed reform to ALN policy in Wales was the starting point for this study in terms of helping me to identify a need for research. Once I had identified this and decided that I wanted to examine the way teachers are trained to teach inclusively, I identified two further pieces of key literature, which I used to formulate the paradigm for this research. These are discussed in depth in the following two sections.

2.4.1 Winter: Preparing new teachers for inclusive schools and classrooms

The first was a paper published by Winter in 2006 titled 'Preparing new teachers for inclusive schools and classrooms'. Winter's research was based in Northern Ireland, and presents the findings of her study into practitioners' perceptions of their ITT relative to SEN. In the very early planning stage, before any research questions had been formulated, Winter's research sounded very similar to the ideas for this study. With my personal interest in SEN and working in a mainstream school with a high proportion of SEN pupils, my initial thoughts were to find out how student teachers in Wales viewed their ITT courses and how well they felt they had prepared them to teach inclusively.

Winter discusses various works and authors and she identifies what makes a good teacher in terms of teaching inclusively. She refers specifically to the beginnings of a teacher's career and explains that teachers require good knowledge, the right attitude towards pupils with SEN, as well as having the skills to teach. She suggests that provision in Northern Ireland is inadequate in preparing a student teacher to teach inclusively. The training student teachers receive in Northern Ireland is similar to the training received by student teachers in Wales, so one assumption could be that the training provided in Wales may also be inadequate. I planned to conduct research to explore if this was indeed the case. However, before I began, it seemed prudent to look at further key literature to see if there was any foundation to my assumption and if it was worthy of in-depth research, or indeed, if a study of this kind had already been carried out.

With several routes into teaching having already been discussed (section 1.1) it is inevitable that student teachers will start their ITT with differing experiences. Whilst

the PGCE may never completely level the playing field, it should offer a broad range of experiences to prepare its students to enter the classroom. If the pre-service training a teacher receives is not adequate there is an obvious 'knock-on effect'. A poorly trained teacher may have lower confidence, and in turn lower self-efficacy, which may taint their views and perceptions of pupils with SEN and ultimately affect the way they interact with their pupils. This all culminates by having a detrimental effect on pupils' performance and achievement in school. This is particularly relevant with Wales having the highest proportion of pupils with SEN and their overall performance in the PISA tests being so much lower than the rest of the UK. PISA is an international survey that takes place every three years and aims to evaluate worldwide education systems by testing the skills and knowledge of 15-year-old students (OECD, 2016). In 2015 Wales scored lower than the rest of the UK in English, mathematics and science and was below the average of the 72 countries and economies taking part.

Winter's literature review found that teacher training in Northern Ireland did not adequately prepare its student to teach inclusively and was reinforced by her mixed methods empirical research. Winter distributed a postal questionnaire to 153 teachers and 50 head teachers from Northern Ireland's five Education and Library Boards (responsible for local education and youth services), with a return rate of 53 percent and 54 percent respectively (Winter, 2006, p88). Following this, respondents were invited to participate in a follow-up focus group. Even early on it was clear that Winter's research had been conducted on a much larger scale than mine would be. Despite this, her findings were still of interest. Northern Ireland is the closest of the UK nations to Wales in terms of the proportion of pupils with SEN; in 2014 21.8

percent of Northern Irish pupils were identified as having SEN in comparison to 22.6 percent in Wales (Shaw et al., 2016). Student teachers in Northern Ireland have two routes into teaching which are similar to those available to Welsh student teachers; a four-year undergraduate Bachelor of Education (BEd), or a one-year PGCE offered at five institutions across Northern Ireland (UCAS, 2016). With the context of the two studies being similar, and considering Winter's results, I anticipated that I would find Welsh PGCE courses too were lacking in their preparation of student teachers. However, this was just one study and despite Winter's findings that 89 percent of participants stated their ITT "programs did not prepare them to teach in inclusive settings" (Winter, 2006, p88), some of the participants had been teaching since 1976. As previously stated, policies change, and the content of ITT courses would certainly have changed in 30 years, so the relevance that some of the views expressed is questionable; whilst it may be the case that their ITT course did not prepare them adequately, the researcher should also have questioned if their memory of what they learned was reliable. If research is to look at the views of participants on ITT courses, they need to be far more recent participants. The counter argument to this is that Winter's study involved a range of teachers, meaning she was able to collect a wide cross section of opinions.

2.4.2 Hobson: Student teachers' perceptions of school-based mentoring in initial teacher training

During the early stages of the literature review I read several papers and articles about teacher training (Maynard, 2000; Hobson and Malderez, 2005; Hobson et al, 2009) and from these it became evident that that mentoring would play a fundamental role in student teachers' development. Therefore, the second key piece

of literature is a report into student teachers' perceptions of school-based mentoring in ITT, published by Hobson in 2002. Hobson collected his data via 16 in-depth student teacher interviews, supplemented by questionnaires which were completed by 224 student teachers from four different training courses in central and northern England. Hobson's (2002, p5) main findings were that:

1. Student teachers consider mentoring to be a, if not the, key aspect of school-based ITT;
2. Student teachers' accounts of their school-based experiences suggest that teacher-mentors are not always successful in creating conditions for effective student teacher learning.

I considered this literature key for two reasons; firstly, the subject of the research is the impact mentoring has on ITT student's development. Secondly, the research method and methodology seemed appropriate for my own study.

Hobson (2002, p 5-6) begins by identifying three of the main factors that indicate how important mentoring is during ITT, and consequently, why it must be implemented successfully. Firstly, with two thirds of the course being spent in school on placement, students will be spending the majority of their time working with their school mentors. Secondly, the quantity of literature that identifies mentoring as a tool to aid development, and finally, the student teachers' views that identify mentoring as being vital to their development (Hobson, 2002, p6). None of these points are specific to English institutions, so all will be relevant for Welsh ITT courses. Hobson's research found that ITT students perceived mentoring to be important before they began their course, and this was a view that changed very little throughout. I used Hobson's research in the development of RQ2, which was initially stated as being 'What role does coaching and mentoring play in developing self-efficacy amongst student

teachers as they transform from student to teacher?'. With the philosophical standpoint of this research being interpretivist, it was essential that the views the student teachers had about mentoring were investigated. I planned to conduct a longitudinal study as it seemed appropriate to map any changes in these views, with the research question being developed to investigate the student teachers' changing views.

Hobson's research found that student teachers preferred mentors that were supportive and reassuring, mentors who would offer practical advice and ideas. With the mentor being identified as fundamental to student teachers' development, it is disappointing to learn that the quality of mentoring was found to be variable. I anticipated this may also be the case during my own study. Within RQ2 I had decided to find out how the student teachers' views of their mentors changed, but I wanted to take this further; to provide worthwhile results the reasons behind why these views changed also needed to be explored.

Hobson (2002, p17) makes several suggestions for improvements to the mentoring system; the encouragement and selection of teachers who will be effective mentors, more time and training for mentors, and finally matching mentors and mentees to avoid any potential clashes, either of personality or approach (Hobson, 2002, p17). These suggestions are backed by the findings of his research and I anticipated that this study would present similar findings, particularly when you consider the views expressed in Winter's paper, that many existing teachers did not feel adequately prepared to teach in an inclusive setting; it is these teachers, who may have had no further training to teach pupils with SEN, who will be acting as mentors to the ITT students today. When you consider this, it is clear there can be no 'quick fix' to this

issue; any changes put into place for student teachers today may take years to take effect.

2.4.3 Further afield: What makes ITT successful?

In addition to these two papers, I decided it prudent to consider what made ITT successful in terms of inclusion outside of the UK. There did not appear to be much consistency in terms of approach, with Sharma and Sokal (2015, p276) offering one explanation, when they state that “despite the efforts of researchers worldwide, the essential components of successful inclusive education programmes have remained elusive”. Forlin (2010) explains that some countries base their ITT courses on formal standards for the inclusive teaching. However, in other countries, the nature and content of the courses depends on the institution. Pijl (2010) points out the importance of providing positive experiences of inclusion to trainee teachers, so that they develop positive attitudes and self-efficacy. According to Pijl (2010), teacher training in the Netherlands does not promote inclusive education adequately because the course only dedicates one unit of study to cover inclusive education, over one semester. He proposes looking for informal, less conventional ways to prepare student teachers for inclusive teaching, suggesting that learning should take place through doing as well as learning from colleagues. This sounds good in principle, however when you consider all the variables (varying demographics, diverse backgrounds of the student teachers, the various types of placement schools, the variable experience of mentors etc.); could it really be applied consistently across a country? In a study that considered international and intercultural contexts, Rose and Gardner (2010) echoed Pijl’s views and emphasised the importance of practical, school-based experiences during ITT, in addition to the theory side. They claim this

approach allows students to become reflective teachers and agents of change. It was clear these were all factors I would need to consider in my own research.

2.4.4 Teacher Education for Inclusion Project

The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education highlighted the topic of Teacher Education for Inclusion as a top priority and began a project, involving 25 member countries, which ran between 2009 – 2012. The project addressed several key issues, including the types of teachers needed and what they believed to be essential competences for inclusive education. It “set out to identify the essential skills, knowledge and understanding, attitudes and values needed by everyone entering the teaching profession” (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018). The project focused on various aspects, including ITT and how teachers were prepared by this to be inclusive.

The project produced a “Profile of Inclusive Teachers” (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018), which was developed as a guide for ITT courses, linking “to a framework of values and the areas of competence necessary for all teachers if they are to be effective in inclusive classrooms.” (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2018). The profile includes four core values:

1. Valuing learner diversity – learner difference is considered as a resource and an asset to education;
2. Supporting all learners – teachers have high expectations for all learners’ achievements;
3. Working with others – collaboration and teamwork are essential approaches for all teachers;
4. Continuing personal professional development – teaching is a learning activity and teachers take responsibility for their own lifelong learning.

Whilst these are values that have been identified as being important for teaching inclusively, they can equally be applied to teaching in general, and match very closely with three of the standards set out in the 2009 Welsh QTS Standards (Appendix 1) S1.7, S3.3.1 and S3.3.13. As trainee teachers in Wales must meet all 42 standards to gain QTS, it can be assumed that the ITT course will provide sufficient opportunities for participants to meet these standards, if trainee teachers are gaining QTS.

2.4.5 Summary

The two main papers detailed in this section, along with the study by the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education and the literature from outside the UK, were key starting points for my study; they confirmed to a certain extent what I had expected, that mentoring would be key to a student teacher's development and that current ITT provision did not sufficiently prepare student teachers to teach inclusively. International literature appeared to show there was uncertainty in the best approach to take, with differences across ITT courses. The literature did however appear to suggest that a more practical ITT course would help to develop self-efficacy in relation to teaching inclusively.

From this, the story of my research was starting to emerge. I had developed one of my preliminary research questions and had a clearer idea of what I expected my research to show. The literature review continued, with the aim of developing the other research questions further and identifying any other factors that may influence the outcome of my research.

2.5 Wales and England; a comparison

Before considering literature specific to the research questions, having already identified a significant amount of literature related to English ITT courses, I felt that expanding my research to include a comparison between the often very different approaches England and Wales take would give the research a broader context.

2.5.1 Demographics

As well as differing approaches to education, the demographics of the two countries also differs significantly and needs to be considered; Wales is a small country, with a population of approximately 3,000,000, less than 5 percent of the total UK population (Ware, 2014, p346). The Department for Education reported that in the 2016/17 academic year there were 200 secondary schools and 39 special schools in Wales with 174,812 pupils attending secondary schools and 4,727 pupils attending special schools. This contrasts with the 3,408 state-funded mainstream secondary schools in England, attended by 3,223,089 pupils and the 973 state-funded special schools with 109,854 pupils (BESA, 2018).

Average earnings in Wales are lower than any region of the UK other than Northern Ireland (Statistics for Wales, 2013b). It is perhaps not surprising then, that a significantly higher proportion of children in Wales are living in poverty than in England. In 2012 Save the Children reported that there are approximately 600,000 children in Wales and that one in three of these children are living in poverty, with 90,000 (14 percent) living in severe poverty. On both counts, this is the highest rate of child poverty of any UK nation.

There is a clear link between poverty and SEN (Shaw et al, 2016). In Wales, FSM eligible pupils are twice as likely to have ALN (Cook et al, 2014). Shaw et al. (2016, p12-13) put forward some possible reasons for the links. Firstly, that children living in poverty are more likely to develop some form of SEN such as behavioural problems, due to their challenging family circumstances. The educational background and lifestyle of parents is also discussed (Blackburn et al. 2010 and Anders et al., 2011). Finally, the increased cost of caring for a child with SEN may push a family into poverty (Parsons and Platt, 2013, p20). Whatever the reasons, the result is that a large proportion of Welsh pupils with SEN will be living in poverty. Poverty is a key barrier to children reaching their potential and participating fully in society. These children are more likely to leave school without qualifications, with fewer life experiences, reduced ambition and restricted ability to access a good job (Save the Children, 2012, p1). Whilst student teachers may not be able to do anything to directly reduce the effect poverty has on pupils with SEN, they should be aware of the link.

2.5.2 Teacher training

Looking at the way teachers train in England and Wales, there are several differences. In both countries student teachers must meet certain standards in order to gain QTS, with standards in England being split into two parts. The first part relates to 'Teaching' and the second to 'Personal and Professional Conduct'. Within part one, there are 35 standards they must meet, with these standards being organised under 8 headings relating to various aspects of teaching (DfE, 2011, pp10-14). This differs from Wales where the standards that student teachers must meet fall into three categories; S1: Professional values and practice, S2: Knowledge and

understanding and S3: Teaching, with the final category of teaching being subdivided into three categories. In total there are 42 standards that Welsh students must meet. There are several references within the Welsh standards to policies specific to Wales; Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales being one of these. S2.2 (iii) outlines how teachers must “develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales” (Welsh Government, 2009, p7).

Looking specifically at the standards required to become an NQT in Wales, there are two that directly reference SEN; S2.6 and S3.3.4 (Appendix 1). S2.6 states that in order to gain QTS, a student teacher must “understand their responsibilities under the SEN Code of Practice for Wales and know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of special educational needs” (Welsh Government, 2009, p8). With the SEN code of Practice set to change, the standards for gaining QTS will also be required to change. The standard, in its current form, is rather vague. With the introduction of the new ALN Act in Wales comes the opportunity to make the corresponding teaching standard far more descriptive, and possibly provide a summary or what is required for beginner teachers. The current standard appears to acknowledge how broad a subject SEN is with the caveat that a teacher should know where to seek advice from.

2.5.3 Welsh-medium education

Perhaps the most obvious difference is that courses in Wales contain some elements of teaching in Welsh, even if the student teacher is not planning to teach in a Welsh-medium school when they qualify. In 2012(b) the Welsh Government launched its Welsh Language Strategy, ‘laith fyw, iaith byw’/‘A living language, a language for

living', which aims to increase the use of the Welsh language. The Welsh Government is committed to ensuring every child in Wales has the right to be educated through the medium of Welsh, if their parents so wish. (Ware, 2014, p348). Despite this emphasis on the Welsh language, providing pupils with SEN a Welsh-medium education has proved rather challenging; there are only three special schools in the country that provide a Welsh-medium education for their pupils. These schools are all located in the north west of the country where over 55 percent of the population are Welsh speaking (Ware, 2014, p347). Whilst the schools may be able to staff themselves with Welsh speaking teachers, there are insufficient numbers of other Welsh speaking professionals; educational psychologists, speech therapists etc. This could prove more of a problem with the proposal that the current Individual Educational Plans (IEPs) will be replaced by Individual Development Plans (IDPs), and the responsibility for preparing and implementing an IDP will rest with local authorities.

2.5.4 Changes to SEN and ALN policy

Whilst Wales may still be in the process of implementing a new SEN policy, England revised their SEN and Disability Code of Practice in 2014. The Children and Families Act 2014 is a wide-ranging act, intended to give greater protection to, and reform services for, vulnerable children. The Act aims to help families as a whole, but pays special attention to those children and young people with additional needs, "giving children, young people and their parents greater control and choice up to 25" (gov.uk, 2014). Part 3 of the Act focuses on SEN and contains provisions following the green paper 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special educational needs and

disability', which was published by the Department for Education in March 2011, and the follow up paper 'Progress and next steps', published in May 2012 (Gov.uk, 2014).

The Children and Families Act 2014 made changes to SEN provision in England; any interventions made to a child's education in England involve, where necessary, interventions with health care also, so both are provided for within one plan. Under the new system, children and young people who have more complex needs undergo a co-ordinated assessment process and an Education Health and Care plan (EHC plan) replaces the previously issues statements. (DfE, 2015, p14). An EHC plan identifies educational, health and social needs and sets out the additional support required to meet those needs. They are for children and young people aged up to 25 (gov.uk, 2015).

By 31st March 2018, all children who currently have a statement will be transferred to an EHC plan. The new system in England places huge emphasis on collaborative working, setting out guidelines for local authorities, who must carry out their statutory duties in a way that ensures services work together to promote "children and young people's wellbeing or improve the quality of special educational provision...Local authorities and health bodies must have arrangements in place to plan and commission education, health and social care services jointly for children and young people with SEN or disabilities" (DfE, 2015, p14).

These proposed changes are bound to impact on the content of ITT courses; for ITT courses to prepare their students to be successful, inclusive teachers, the students must be aware of the new ALN policy, so it is important to consider the changes here. Some of the changes that have been highlighted here have already taken place

in England and appear to be similar to those proposed for Wales. It should follow therefore, that the success or any shortcomings could be evaluated to inform the implementation in Wales. However, the Welsh Government explain that despite engaging with the Department for Education in England to learn the lessons from the implementation of their reforms and avoid the challenges they encountered “the system in England is very different from that proposed in Wales and is not, therefore, directly comparable”. (Welsh Government, 2017b, p18).

2.6 Coaching and Mentoring

Mentoring is not a new concept. In fact, the word mentor can be traced back to the Ancient Greeks and Homer’s *Odyssey*, with the term becoming associated with a person who helps another to learn or develop (Colley, 2002). In the context of ITT, Tomlinson (1995, p7) defines mentoring as “assisting student-teachers to learn how to teach in school-based settings”. This implies that any teacher they observe or take advice from, can be a mentor. At present, only limited training is given to teachers who have students in their classrooms. Sometimes, these teachers have never performed a formal observation before, but are expected to give feedback that is of a standard to enable a student teacher to improve their performance. When thinking specifically about SEN, all teachers should be aware of any SEN pupil(s) in their class, however this is not always the case, and when they are, they may not know how to adapt their practice to ensure they are included. As students learn from observing their mentor, the implications of this could be huge. As the PGCE follows an undergraduate degree in a related subject, it is designed to teach pedagogy rather than subject knowledge. This may create an opportunity to pair student teachers with experienced members of staff who have a good knowledge and understanding of

working with pupils with SEN, rather than with subject specialists, for at least some of their teaching.

Edwards and Collison (1996, pp27-28) suggest a variety of approaches mentors might take to support student teachers. These include listening to the student teachers and any concerns they might have, discussing their own practice, demonstrating teaching and classroom management and observing the student teachers whilst they teach. From this, they should then discuss their performance, set goals and provide constructive criticism. The list of roles a mentor must play to be successful is vast, and mentoring shouldn't just be seen as a way for the student teachers to develop the pedagogy they require. If done effectively, mentoring should allow the student teacher to develop their subject knowledge, their behaviour management strategies, their self-efficacy and even their desire to be in the classroom. Mentoring really is a vital component of any PGCE. Elliot and Calderhead (1993, p168) go as far as to say that the mentor is the biggest influence on a student teacher's development. Hobson (2002, p5) explains "the place of mentoring in ITT has become pivotal" citing the "DFE Circular 9/92 (DFE, 1992), which directed that student teachers on postgraduate training courses must spend two-thirds of their courses in schools"

2.6.1 The role of mentoring in ITT

Mentoring student teachers is not exclusive to Wales or even the UK; it is used worldwide as a means to support and develop teachers, to help them to learn to be teachers. Klob (2014, p77) describes learning as "a continuous process grounded in experience". Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of human learning explains that learning is a social process, something that is done not in isolation but with the assistance of

others (Hobson, 2002); in the context of ITT, these 'others' take the form of mentors. There are two levels on which Vygotsky believed everything is learned, both of which can be applied when thinking about learning in the context of a student teacher during their ITT. Vygotsky believed a person learns through interactions with others (inter-psychological), and that this experience is then reflected in the way that person behaves (intra-psychological) (Vygotsky, 1978). Another aspect of Vygotsky's theory is the idea that potential is limited to an area of learning for which a person is cognitively prepared, but requires support and social interaction to fully develop (Briner, 1999). In the context of ITT, a mentor is able to provide the student teacher with 'scaffolding' to support their development. Hobson (2002, p6) quotes Edwards and Collison (1996), who suggest various ways mentors might support or 'scaffold' student teachers:

listening to students; modeling teaching and general classroom management; analyzing and discussing [their] own practice; observing students; negotiating with students, their own learning goals; supporting students while they teach; [and] ... providing constructive criticism

(Hobson, 2002, p6)

It is clear that the role of the mentor is vast, but also that the student should be an active participant in their own learning; a successful mentor should facilitate this.

The content of ITT courses varies between institutions, as do the experiences offered by placement schools, however, student teacher development through experience is recognised by many as an essential (Cole and Knowles, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Butler and Cuenca, 2012). Hobson et al. (2009, p208) note that since the 1980s, the role school-based mentoring plays in supporting the initial preparation, induction and early professional development of teachers has become increasingly

prominent. Butler and Cuenca (2012, p297) describe mentors as “gatekeepers to the work and norms of teaching”, playing “a highly influential role in how preservice teachers understand the work of teaching”. In the early 1990s the UK government determined student teachers should spend at least two-thirds of their ITT in schools, this was to allow practising teachers to play a major role (Hobson et al., 2009, p208). However, there was no explanation of how an experienced teacher was defined (Rice, 2006). It was not until 2005 that ‘The National Framework for Mentoring and Coaching (2005)’ was developed to support schools in implementing coaching and mentoring to assist with CPD and other activities (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2015). The framework identified mentoring as “a structured, sustained process for supporting professional learners through significant career transitions” (CUREE, 2005, p3). The statements are rather idealistic, with the increasing pressure and workload experienced by practising teachers today, the constant “juggling of priorities” of school life (Maynard, 1996, p115) can they really be expected to provide a structured and sustained support? Evans et al. (1996, pp147–149) found that teachers sometimes viewed mentoring as “subordinate to what they perceived as their primary role of teaching”. In contrast to this, there is substantial evidence to suggest that mentoring is not only beneficial to the mentee, but also to the mentor. There is a considerable amount of research that suggests mentors learn through self-reflection or critical reflection on their own practice when mentoring a student teacher (Abell et.al., 1995; Lopez-Real and Kwan, 2005; Simpson, et.al., 2007; Hobson et.al, 2009).

In 2009 Hobson et al published an article examining research into the mentoring of student teachers or early career teachers. They acknowledged the limitations with

the evidence base they were working from as they found it was “based predominantly on mentees’ and mentors’ perceptions and accounts” (Hobson et al., 2009, p209). It was clear early on that this would also be a limitation of my own research, and would be something I would need to consider and address when analysis my data.

Whilst there are numerous studies citing various reasons why it is believed mentoring on ITT courses is essential, Hobson (2002, p6) explains that the fact that student teachers believe it to be important, is in itself a reason to count it as so. However, as Hobson’s 2002 study identified the quality of mentoring as being variable, it is clear that not every student experience is equal. On the other hand, it could be a case of unrealistic, unattainable expectations on behalf of the student teacher. If a student teacher goes into their PGCE with a preconceived view of what mentoring should be, they may be creating a situation where they will always feel the mentoring they receive is neither adequate nor helpful. Looking specifically at the development of RQ2, I decided that if it was the case that some students reported receiving structured and sustained support where others had not, it was important to identify what was different about their experiences.

2.6.2 Early career mentoring

The benefits of effective mentoring extend past the PGCE year, and it has been suggested by some (Carter and Francis, 2001; Marable and Raimondi, 2007) that mentoring is an important and effective approach in supporting the professional development of early career teachers. In 2012 the Welsh Government introduced a postgraduate qualification for newly-qualified teachers; the Masters in Educational Practice (MEP). During the three-year course, all participants are provided with a mentor. Providing this relationship is good, it means the participant will have this

positive influence during their first three years of teaching. For those NQTs who decided not to take up the MEP, the Welsh Government revised its guidelines for their induction. The guidelines stipulated that NQTs must be assigned an external mentor to support them through their induction period and that their head teacher must assign them a school-based mentor to support them on a day-to-day basis. The external mentor would have to meet with the school-based mentor, set targets for the NQT, aid them in collecting a portfolio of evidence to pass their induction year and observe the NQT teaching (Welsh Government, 2013b). The Welsh Government obviously recognised the significant role a mentor could play in the early stages of a teacher's career. However, just six months after the revision of their guidelines it became apparent that finding suitable mentors is a problem that is not exclusive to the PGCE. The GTCW complained that six months into their NQT year, a considerable number of NQTs were still waiting to be assigned mentors from the new regional pool (SecEd, 2013). The GTCW's chair Angela Jardine wrote to the then education minister, Leighton Andrews, warning that there were not enough experienced teachers available to staff the regional teams. So where do you find these experienced teachers? Retired teachers or those who have left the profession may have the time to commit to the role, but their knowledge may not remain current and up-to-date. Teachers who are still in the profession are busy and may not have the time to dedicate to their mentees. An increase in funding may allow for the release of teachers from their teaching duties to spend the required time with their mentees. Another incentive for the mentors is what they can also gain from the experience. Kwan and Lopez-Real (2005) conducted a study involving mentors on an ITT programme in Hong Kong and found 70 percent of mentors claimed to have

benefited professionally from mentoring. In other studies, mentors have reported gaining new ideas and perspectives from their experiences (Simpson et al., 2007) as well as being able to improve their teaching styles and develop strategies. They also reported feeling reassured when they had their ideas validated by university tutors (Kwan and Lopez-Real, 2005). However, this only works if both parties are fully invested and open to accepting each other's ideas, lending more weight to Hobson's argument that mentors and mentees need to be carefully matched.

Having discussed the benefits to both the mentors and the mentees, it's not unreasonable to assume that these benefits will have a knock-on effect within a school as a whole. Once a student teacher has finished their ITT, they will enter a classroom with their ultimate goal being to aid pupil achievement. If these beginner teachers, and the mentors that helped them get there, are committed and enthusiastic because of the mentoring process, the result should be enhanced pupil learning (Moor et al., 2005).

2.6.3 Issues with mentoring

Whilst there are many advantages for all involved in mentoring, it's not all positive. Some mentors have commented that they have experienced an increased workload (Simpson et al., 2007) which will have an obvious impact on their ability to build a relationship with their mentee, not to mention their own teaching. While Beck and Kosnick (2000, p207) found that some mentees on ITT courses in Canada were treated rather harshly by their mentors, being given a heavy workload which caused them anxiety. On the other end of the scale, some mentors may be too easy on their mentees, failing to provide them with sufficient challenge (Dunne and Bennett, 1997, pp 225–238). This may be a particular problem when the mentees are completing

SE1. Some student teachers may have never been in a classroom before the start of their PGCE, and understandably may be nervous. Mentors, who want to avoid adding to their worries, may avoid adding to their workload. In the short-term this could help, however a mentor needs to help their mentee to develop strategies to cope with the workload they will face as a teacher, so this shouldn't be avoided during ITT.

A thorough review of the literature relating to the mentoring of new and student teachers has found, when implemented correctly, it is a valuable tool to aid their development. The numerous benefits to both mentor and mentee show that it is something that time and money should be invested into, something that at present appears not to be happening.

One of the major benefits of mentoring, as it has been referred to here, and coaching as discussed by Popper and Lipshitz (1992, pp15-16) is empowerment and the role of the coach in strengthening a student teacher's self-efficacy. An increased sense of efficacy has been linked to improved student outcomes and achievement (Armor et al., 1976; Ashton and Webb, 1986; Moore and Esselman, 1992; Ross, 1992) and increased motivation (Midgley, et. al, 1989). The significant role it could play during ITT warranted a wide review of literature, so the next section will cover the development of self-efficacy in detail.

2.7 Self-efficacy

Miller et al (2017) define teacher self-efficacy as the belief a teacher has in themselves to produce changes in student learning, and claim it is one of the most studied aspects of the classroom context. People are more likely to engage in

activities when they perceive themselves to be competent at those activities (Bandura, 1977), with past experiences having an influence on this; tasks that have been successful “provide evidence of competence and bolster efficacy beliefs” whereas “failure can lead to the development of very low self-efficacy” (Tuchman and Isaacs, 2011, p414). It is easy to see why Pendergast et al. (2011, p46) claim that ITT courses play an important role in developing student teachers’ self-efficacy and identity. Tuchman and Isaacs’ (2011) report into the influence of formal and informal training for developing the self-efficacy of teachers, supports this view, explaining that “formal pre-service training has been shown to be effective in building teacher self-efficacy beliefs” (Tuchman and Isaacs, 2011, p413), although there is no reference to the backgrounds of these teachers, whether or not they have gained experience in a school situation, prior to completing their ITT. It seemed an obvious gap and something that should have been considered as any prior experience related to working with children could potentially impact on their self-efficacy, either in a positive or a negative way. Consequently, it was something I covered with the participants in my research. It also rather interestingly leads onto the question of whether prior experience should be a prerequisite of the PGCE (discussed in sections 5.2.2; 5.4.1; 6.2.1).

It has been claimed that a teacher’s self-efficacy, or their confidence that they are able to facilitate student learning, is one of the few characteristics that is able to reliably predict teacher practice and student outcomes (Woolfolk and Hoy, 1990; Pendergast, Garvis, and Keogh, 2011; Zee, de Jong, and Koomen, 2016). Teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more resilient and less judgemental in the classroom. They spend longer with pupils who are struggling to help them reach their

potential. They are likely to be more enthusiastic and open to trying different approaches (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001; Pendergast et al 2011). Ross (1992) claims that a teacher's self-efficacy is linked to motivation and can influence classroom outcome and student achievement. Teachers with high self-efficacy are more persistent and patient. These are precisely the characteristics needed to teach inclusively, so nurturing a student teacher to allow them to develop a high sense of self-efficacy can only be beneficial to developing an inclusive classroom. It could be argued that this is more important during SE1 when the effects of a negative experience are likely to have greater implications.

Bandura (1977) identifies four ways in which self-efficacy is learned; performance accomplishments, vicarious learning, verbal persuasion and physical/affective status. Thinking about the PGCE, the most relevant of these are performance accomplishment, which is to do with how achievements are received by others and vicarious learning where beliefs are acquired through observing and modelling the behaviour of others. If a student teacher's lesson observation goes well and they receive praise it can reinforce self-belief. However, it is important that praise is only given if it is deserved; a false sense of one's ability is not beneficial and may actually reinforce bad practice. Modelling observed behaviours can be a powerful influence on the development of a person's perception of their own competence (Schunk, 1987), providing they observe the correct behaviour. The provision for teachers to record these observations should therefore be an element of their PGCE. Verbal persuasion applies to a slightly lesser degree; this is when a person's beliefs about their self are influenced by what another says. If a person has their own agenda, they can inadvertently, or in some cases overtly affect the learning of another. If a mentor

has a negative view about inclusive teaching, there is a real danger this may be passed onto their mentee.

Much of the research into self-efficacy amongst student teachers looks internationally. In 2014 Peebles and Mendaglio examined the impact on trainee teachers' self-efficacy in western Canada. They concentrated on a unit of study which focused on inclusive education. It involved 10 weeks of coursework and three weeks of experience in schools. Whilst in schools, student teachers worked with individual learners, and small groups of learners. To measure the impact of the unit of study, Peebles and Mendaglio used the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Education scale (Sharma, Loreman, and Forlin 2012) at three points; at the start of the coursework, after the coursework was complete and after the school experience. They found that coursework had its role to play in developing self-efficacy, however, "the combination of coursework and field experience made even more substantial gains to the participants' self-efficacy" (Peebles and Mendaglio, 2014, p1331).

It is clear that high self-efficacy is an essential quality for a student teacher and that mentoring and self-efficacy are inextricably linked. Saffold (2005, p13) refers to the "four main sources of influence" from Bandura's 1977 paper, stating that the most influential source of the beliefs people hold about their efficacy "is the mastery experience. When a person believes they have what it takes to succeed, they develop a resilient sense of efficacy" (Saffold, 2005, p13). Once this sense of efficacy has been developed, a teacher will have the experience to know that, with perseverance, they can be successful despite suffering difficulties or setbacks (Saffold, 2005, p13). In contrast, if a student teacher experiences failure early on in their training, their sense of efficacy will be undermined (Saffold, 2005, p13). The

experiences encountered during the first years of teaching are arguably the most important with Bandura's theory suggesting efficacy may be most malleable early in learning (Hoy and Spero, 2005, p344).

Hoy and Spero (2005, p344) identify gaps in the knowledge relating to beginner teachers and the development of their self-efficacy, explaining that "little is known about the kinds of context variables that affect efficacy" despite the early years of teaching being so critical for the development of efficacy beliefs. Following on from Bandura's concept of self-efficacy in 1977, in 1998 Tschannen-Moran Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy presented a model of teacher efficacy suggesting that teachers may partly base their judgments relating to efficacy on the resources and constraints in various teaching contexts, as well as support and feedback from colleagues and parents (Hoy and Spero, 2005, p344). When student teachers undertake school placements as part of their PGCE, the inevitable, and unavoidable, variation in these factors could have a huge impact on the development of their self-efficacy. It is vital therefore, that student teachers are provided with as positive experience as possible.

It is important to remember that self-efficacy is about a person's perception of their own ability, rather than what their actual ability is; a very confident person may have high self-efficacy, but not actually possess the ability to match. Dunning (2011, p260) explains how people with significant deficits in their expertise or knowledge will not be able to recognise those deficits, that despite the fact they make error after error, they assume they are doing fine. This is sometimes referred to as the Dunning-Kruger effect (Kruger and Dunning, 1999). This leaves the person with two problems, not only does their "incomplete and misguided knowledge lead them to make mistakes, but those exact same deficits also prevent them from recognizing when

they are making mistakes” (Dunning, 2011, p248), reinforcing the fact that it is vital students receive accurate feedback. It is for this reason that Holzberger et al (2013) call for research to examine teachers’ self-reported self-efficacy with methods such as observations of their classroom practices.

Throughout the PGCE course student teachers are required to reflect on their performance. Their reflections are monitored by their school and university mentors, so any discrepancy between perceived and actual ability should be identified. This is important because people regularly underestimate or overestimate their abilities (Hoy and Spero, 2005, p344). Despite this, at present, there is limited research that links teachers’ perceptions of their self-efficacy and their actual classroom practices (Poulou et al, 2019).

High self-efficacy can mean a teacher is more open to new ideas, that they are more tolerant in the classroom and so it is important for teachers to develop their self-efficacy in regard to teaching inclusively “because of its role in regulating classroom teaching practice” (Loreman et. al., 2013, p28). Loreman et. al (2013) and Bandura (1994) break this down into four distinct ways; cognitive, motivational, mood or affective and selective approaches. When thinking about these four distinct ways and how they relate to teaching inclusively, cognitive is about the teacher’s aspiration to teach inclusively and their choice of tasks. Whilst completing a PGCE the tasks that the student teachers are required to undertake are restricted somewhat, however, to meet the required standards to gain QTS, student teachers are required to teach inclusively so they must demonstrate this during their PGCE year. Thinking about self-efficacy being developed from positive experiences, if a student teacher has a mentor who aspires to teach inclusively, they will be more likely to do so themselves.

It is also important that a mentor provides tasks that help to develop a trainee teacher's self-efficacy. In a study of a Canadian ITT course, Peebles and Mendaglio (2014) examined a unit of inclusive education study which involved 10 weeks of coursework and three weeks of practical experience in school. They found that the coursework was effective, however the combination of that with the experience in school significantly improved the participants' self-efficacy.

Motivational is about the goals student teachers set themselves and the extent to which they persevere when faced with setbacks. Student teachers are observed weekly and set goals for the following week. However, there is no requirement for the goals to focus on inclusive education. The quality of the goals they set can vary; some student teachers will do the minimum that is required, whereas others will go above and beyond; this may depend on the mentor.

Mood or affective is to do with the levels of stress encountered when teaching in an inclusive classroom. This is something that will vary for each student teacher as there are many factors which can have an effect; the placement school, the particular classes they are required to teach, the quality of the mentoring they receive and the type of person they are, all play their part. It may also vary depending on where they are in their placement; during SE1 there may be less stress as they are less involved in the actual teaching., equally, they experience more stress because of the apprehension of the unknown. Clearly early experience should be positive and enlightening to aid this development. The higher a person's self-efficacy, the more resilient they are (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy and Hoy, 1998) and teachers with a high level of self-efficacy have been shown to be more resilient in their teaching (Pendergast et. al., 2011, p46).

Finally, selective approaches are the decisions the students make within the classroom to create an inclusive environment. This again will be guided by their mentors and the requirement to meet the standards relating to inclusive education, but will be easier for the student teachers who have higher self-efficacy. Looking at these four areas, it is clear to see that the extent to which a student teacher can develop their self-efficacy can play a fundamental role in how they develop into an inclusive practitioner. For this research, self-efficacy will be defined as the level of belief a person has in their own ability to complete a task or achieve their goals.

Throughout the review of literature relating to self-efficacy, there were several references to reflection upon one's own performance. Being able to reflect critically is a product of good self-efficacy. Reflection is something that is required during the PGCE and directly links to RQ3. It is covered in detail in the next section, with the reviewed literature leading to another development in the preliminary research questions.

2.8 Reflective practice

Reflective practice, along with inquiry and professional development has been linked by several studies (Harris, 1998; Vega-Barachowitz and Brown, 2000; Vega-Barachowitz, 2003) to effective practice in education and professional growth. Donald Schön introduced the concept of reflective practice in 1987 as a critical process in developing one's skill in a specific discipline (Ferraro, 2000). Reflective practice can be used by beginners to identify and link successful elements of their own practice to those of successful practitioners. Schön (1987) explains that reflective practice requires the thoughtful consideration of your own experiences when applying

knowledge to practice while at the same time being coached by professionals in the discipline. Ferraro (2000) explains that by using reflection to gain a better understanding of their individual teaching styles, teachers can improve effectiveness.

In 2013 Florian and Spratt published the findings of a study with NQTs in Scotland, who had recently completed their ITT at Aberdeen University. The course, a Professional Graduate Diploma in Education, “was informed by a concept of inclusive pedagogy” (Florian and Spratt, 2013, p119). Florian and Spratt (2013) argued that teacher education programmes must prepare teachers to be reflective practitioners who are equipped with strategies that enable them to be responsive to the individual needs of all learners. For a student teacher to reflect successfully on a task, they must have been fully involved in it; they shouldn’t merely have completed it, they will need a good knowledge of the task and they should have interacted with others whilst completing it.

Reflective teaching is believed to be a powerful tool, in fact it has been argued that the concept could potentially play a part in the moving from a special education paradigm to an inclusive education paradigm (Symeonidou, 2017). Sharma (2010) suggests a framework for reflective teaching which involves teachers evaluating and effectively questioning their teaching, including questions to find out what happened, why it happened and what the implications for future practice are. He goes on to suggest that teachers should participate in collaborative problem-solving and identify, evaluate, and use evidence-based practices. This all sounds very similar to what *should* happen during a student teacher’s ITT.

Stones (1994, p317) discusses the use of reflection of ITT courses and warns about using it simply because it is the done-thing, explaining there is a place for it, but only if it aids the student teachers' teaching. Clift et al (1990) also warn about putting too much emphasis on reflective practice as it may come at the expense of other important content on ITT. Whilst Boud and Walker (1998, p192) take issue with Schön and cite Greenwood (1993) who "argues that he neglects the importance of reflection before action" and Eraut (1995) who "suggests that there is little evidence of reflection-in-action in the crowded setting of classrooms". These concerns are valid, especially as the time available of ITT courses is limited. Boud and Walker (1998, p193) explain how students are often required to reflect on demand having gone through a sequence of steps. However, a more beneficial approach may be to proactively identify any potential concerns and address them before they have chance to become major issues. The practice of reflecting on a lesson or activity is too often turned into a checklist that students work through in a mechanical fashion, neglecting to acknowledge their own questions or uncertainties. This needs to be avoided. It is clear there is a place for reflection on ITT courses, however, it shouldn't be there just because it has aided effective practice in the past, it needs to remain relevant and may be something that could be developed; yes, a weekly form ensures a target is set and should be addressed, but is it the best way of doing things? The reason for including reflection must be real and valid; it must help student teachers develop their own practice. This is particularly true when thinking about inclusive teaching. Pupils with SEN may prove more demanding for several reasons, so being able to reflect upon a challenging situation that has involved a pupil or group of pupils

with SEN could allow a student teacher to modify the way they approach a similar situation in the future.

The 42 standards that student teachers in Wales must demonstrate they have met before they can be awarded QTS are split into three categories; S1 professional values and practice, S2 knowledge and understanding and S3 teaching. S1.7 is concerned with ITT students being reflective, stating that to gain QTS, students must be:

able to contribute to the wider development of the school and profession and are aware of the importance of maintaining up-to-date professional knowledge, understanding and skills and are able to reflect on their own practice. They recognise their own needs and take responsibility for their continuing professional development.

Welsh Assembly Government (2009, p5)

Student teachers reflect on their practice at various times; after lessons, at the end of a week, or following SE1 and SE2. Roberts and Watkins (2013, p8) explain how this reflection will be in the form of “written points on strengths and weaknesses including targets for improvement.” In reality this reflection often doesn’t go deep enough; student teachers have to include points reflecting on the effectiveness of their planning, teaching and assessment, but unless this reflection is checked immediately after a lesson, or when assessment has taken place, there is no way of confirming if it accurately reflects on what actually happened. A lengthy reflection would mean instant checking may prove more difficult. Any reflection should be to-the-point and relevant, allowing a check on its effectiveness.

Moran and Dallat (1995, p20) argue that much of the responsibility for developing student teachers to have “reflective capabilities falls to the mentors”. As previously

discussed, the quality of mentoring is inconsistent, so it follows that the way student teachers are developed into reflective practitioners may also be inconsistent. Following the initial research for this study, RQ3 was stated as being ‘what opportunities are there for student teachers to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking theory to practice?’ Whilst I still believed it was important to consider this, I felt that the question could go further. It has already been stated that student teachers reflect upon lessons they have taught and complete weekly evaluations, so I wanted to know how useful these opportunities proved; how reflection throughout the year changed future practice.

2.9 Inclusive education

The Welsh Government (2016c) describes inclusive education as “an ongoing process concerned with ensuring equality of educational opportunity”. There has been a move worldwide towards full inclusion which Evans and Lunt (2002, p1) attribute, at least in part, to the Salamanca Statement of 1994. In 1994 more than 300 participants from 92 governments and 25 organisations met to consider the policies required to further the objective of education for all. The conference adopted the Salamanca Statement, with the document being informed by the principle of inclusion and working towards ‘schools for all’. Wales supports the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994) which argues that children with SEN must have access to mainstream schools which should accommodate them “within a child centred pedagogy capable of meeting [their] needs”. However, there are calls for a more “cautious” or “responsible” form of inclusion (Evans and Lunt, 2002, p1), with the argument that there are a number of children who have needs which are so severe and complex that it is difficult to include them in mainstream schools (Pijl and Meijer,

1991). Some have called for a step away from full inclusion to promote responsible inclusion (Hornby, 1999) or cautious inclusion (Fuchs and Fuchs, 1994).

A child is said to have SEN if they have a learning difficulty which requires special educational provision to be made for them. The National Assembly for Wales (2015) explain how these children are classified in schools:

- School Action – Pupils receive interventions that are additional to or different from those provided as part of the school’s usual curriculum;
- School Action Plus – If the interventions on School Action aren’t working, the SENCO and teacher(s) in consultation with parents and specialists, may decide to involve external support services;
- Statement – If School Action and School Action Plus have not led to sufficient improvement, or a child’s needs are sufficiently serious, a statutory assessment is undertaken by the local authority. This can lead to a statement of SEN being issued.

However, this is set to change when the new ALNET Act. With the new Act due to go live in September 2020, “IDPs will begin to replace plans that currently support learners with SEN” (Welsh Government, 2018c, p7). Statements will be converted to IDPs within two years, with School Action and School Action Plus taking three years to convert.

Looking at the data from Stats Wales’ School Censuses between 2010 and 2013, the number of pupils in secondary schools in Wales with SEN has been steadily increasing. Between 2010 and 2013 there was a reduction of over 12 percent in the number of pupils with a SEN and a statement, despite an increase of over 6 percent in the number of pupils with SEN.

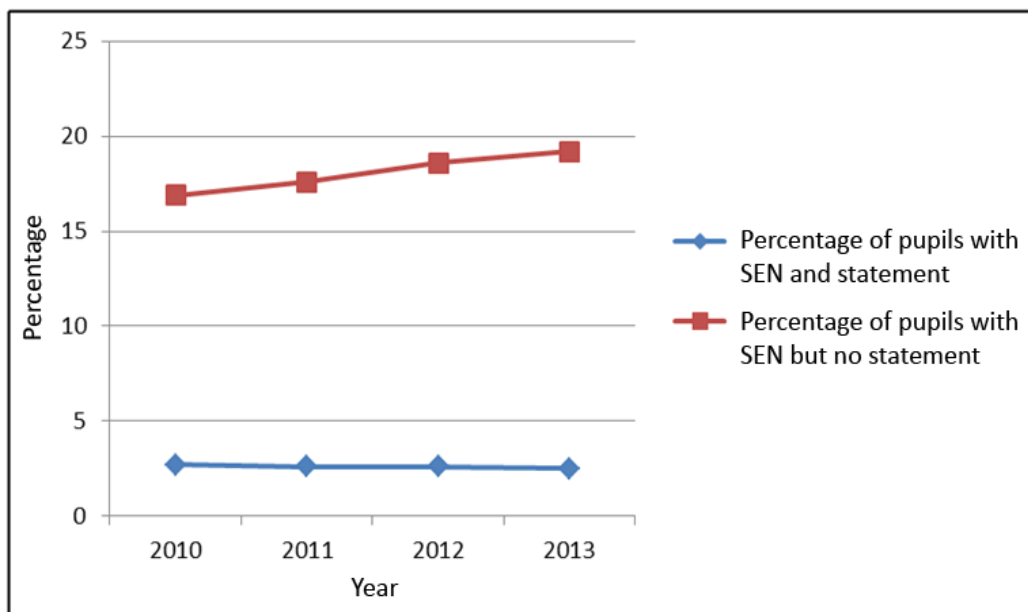


Figure 2.2: Pupils in Wales with SEN and SEN and a statement, 2010-2013

	2010	2011	2012	2013
SEN with statement	5,419	5,290	5,084	4,745
Percent of pupils with SEN and statement	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5
SEN no statement	34,553	35,477	36,746	36,800
Percent with SEN but no statement	16.9	17.6	18.6	19.2

Table 2.1: Pupils in Wales with SEN and SEN and a statement, 2010-2013

Figure 2.2 and Table 2.1 show the widening gap which has, in part, been due to tougher guidelines for the awarding of a statement. In 2012 the Welsh Government began a consultation which suggested that statements in their current form should be replaced with integrated Individual Development Plans (IDP). This is a move that has been welcomed by many who believe “the more modern approach to multi-agency working is to the benefit of the child or young person” (National Assembly for Wales, p1). But what does it mean for teachers? A statement in its current format sets out how many hours of support a child is entitled to, what strategies should be used to help the child and ensures a certain level of funding. Under the new plans, the IDPs

are intended to be more accessible and easier to update, to take into account the changing needs of pupils (Snap Cymru, 2014).

There are various acts and legislations that cover educational provision for pupils with SEN. “The Education Act 1993 placed a duty on the Secretary of State to issue a Code of Practice” (DfE 2001, piii) and following this, the first Code of Practice came into effect in 1994. Subsequently, the “rights and duties contained in the 1993 Act have been consolidated into Part IV of the 1996 Education Act” (DfE 2001, piv). The 1996 Education Act and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (2001) outline the current statutory framework for SEN (National Assembly for Wales, 2007). However, probably the most relevant document for this study is the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales (2002). This offers guidance intended to allow children and young people with SEN to “reach their full potential, to be included fully in their school communities and make a successful transition to adulthood” (National Assembly for Wales, 2007, p1).

In 2010 Cerebra published a report looking at the attitudes of mainstream educators towards inclusive education in south Wales. The report’s author (Christian, 2010, p1) found that the views of teachers who had entered teaching through the PGCE route were more positive than those who had completed a BEd course. Despite this, the report established that teachers’ views echoed what had been stated in the Warnock report (1978), “that all teachers should consider themselves as teachers of children with special needs, is not realised in practice” (Christian, 2010, p5). When talking about the anxieties of taking a child with Down’s syndrome into their school for the first time, one teacher stated “inevitably, we have the children before we have the knowledge. It’s not ideal – but that’s the reality. The most difficult thing for schools to

get is the expertise they need". This is likely the case in many schools; with increasingly limited resources, schools may not be prepared for 'every eventuality' in terms of pupils with SEN. Therefore, having teachers enter the profession who are not only well equipped and confident, but also able to adapt, becomes all the more important.

The Cerebra report was limited, firstly in terms of its response rate; from the 108 school science departments invited to take part, the author only received 80 individual responses (67 from teachers and 13 from teaching assistants) and secondly by the fact that it concentrated only on science teachers. However, the negative views expressed are worrying, and seem to come from a lack of training or expertise in how to adapt practice to include pupils who have SEN.

The reasons for teachers' reluctance to include all pupils in their classrooms may be complex. Florian (2012, p277) explains how many teachers resist including students identified as having SEN in their class on the basis that their inclusion may affect the education of others. But this need not be the case; if teachers are more positive in the way they approach teaching inclusively, they are able to both teach inclusively and raise academic achievement (Rouse and Florian, 2006; Florian, Rouse and Black-Hawkins, 2007; Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). A positive attitude to inclusion can again be linked to high self-efficacy, which causes teachers to employ a more positive approach. At this point the complex picture surrounding preparing teachers to teach inclusively was starting to emerge, and it was becoming obvious that many factors need to be considered.

RQ1 initially asked if the perception student teachers have of their own competency changed throughout their PGCE. If it is the case, as the Cerebra reports suggested, that a lack of confidence stems from a lack of training, the student teachers should become more confident throughout the year. However, assuming this is purely down to training may not tell the whole story. Therefore, I felt it was necessary to develop this question to ask what caused any changes.

2.10 SEN and ALN in Wales

Understanding what the terms ALN and SEN are referring to is fundamental to providing appropriate support. The two terms are often used interchangeably. ALN refers to learners whose “needs are additional to the majority of their peers” (Estyn, 2013,p1). SEN is a sub-category of ALN and is used to identify those learners who have “severe, complex and/or specific learning difficulties as set out within the Education Act 1996 and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales” (Estyn, 2103,p1). Estyn (2013, p1) defines a pupil as having additional learning needs if they fall into one or more of the following categories:

- have special educational needs (SEN);
- have disabilities;
- have medical needs;
- have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and/or mental health needs.

Some of the language used in these definitions is vague, referring to learners whose needs are additional to the majority of their peers. To an experienced teacher, being able to identify those pupils with ‘additional’ needs may be fairly straightforward, however, for a student teacher or an NQT with no idea of what ‘normal’ is, this may prove more troublesome. Avramidis et al (2000) explain that “the process of

implementing policies related to inclusion...presupposes that teachers understand the concept". For new teachers, there will be an inevitable reliance on more experienced staff. This in itself may cause problems, considering the findings of the 2010 Cerebra report (discussed in section 2.9), that many mainstream teachers held views that were negative towards teaching pupils with SEN.

Another solution to the confusion between terms would be to simplify them or have easily accessible definitions with clear guidelines. The Special Educational Needs Code of Practice for Wales, which was effective from April 2002, concentrates on those pupils that it defines as having special rather than additional needs, giving a definition for SEN, but not ALN. However, both definitions look set to change. In May 2014, the Welsh Government began a consultation period setting out its proposal to create a fairer system of support for children with ALN in Wales (Welsh Government, 2014a). A new framework is proposed that will replace the existing legislation for the assessment and provision of support (Welsh Government, 2014a). Under the plans, the term 'Additional Learning Needs' and 'Additional Learning Provision' will replace 'Special Educational Needs' and 'Special Educational Provision' (SNAP Cymru, 2015). On July 6th 2015 the Welsh Government launched a consultation on their Draft Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill. One notable recommendation is that a single category of 'Additional Learning Provision' should replace Statements, School Action, and School Action Plus. The consultation period ran until December 2015, and in addition to this, in September 2015 the Welsh Government published an initial working draft of a proposed Additional Learning Needs Code and outlined a plan for implementing the proposed new ALN system (National Assembly for Wales, 2015). In 2015 SNAP Cymru stated that the earliest

any proposals could take effect would be for the academic year 2016/17. This did not happen, and the current timescale suggests that September 2020 is when the new Act will go live. However, many local authorities have already reformed the way they provide for pupils with SEN, resulting in inconsistency across Wales (National Assembly for Wales, 2015, p1).

Under the new proposals, the statutory duty for preparing and implementing an IDP will rest with local authorities, ensuring accountability (SNAP Cymru 2015). Outside agencies will be required to work together collaboratively and flexibly to ensure that children, young people and their families and carers receive coherent, well-coordinated support. Whilst these factors may not directly affect what a teacher does day-to-day in the classroom, they need to be aware of the new Draft Code of Practice. Particular attention should be paid to the points that state “meeting the needs of learners with ALN should be part of a whole school approach to school improvement” and that “learners must be supported to participate in mainstream education and in the National Curriculum as fully as possible wherever this is feasible” (Welsh Government, 2015b, pp11-12). With regards to meeting the needs of learners with ALN being a whole school approach, the Welsh Government (2015b, p11) explains:

The key to meeting the needs of all children and young people lies in the teacher’s knowledge of each child and young person’s skills and abilities. The teacher’s capacity to then match this knowledge with identifying ways of providing appropriate access to the curriculum for every child and young person is also critical.

There are echoes of the Warnock report, with the draft proposal explaining that pupils with ALN should, “wherever possible, be fully included within the normal school life,

have access to a broad and balanced curriculum and be supported and challenged to achieve their potential” (Welsh Government, 2015b, p12). However, it acknowledges that a whole school approach is needed for the policy to be successful (Welsh Government, 2015b, p12). The view that mainstream education should be presumed to be the most suitable setting for all learners may be somewhat idealistic as it relies on teachers sharing this view. The 2010 Cerebra report discussed in section 2.9 found that many teachers were rather negative with regards to teaching inclusively. This could be a result of poor training or a lack of experience; whatever the reason, it reinforces the argument that there is no quick fix for this.

In January 2018 the Additional Learning Needs Education Tribunal (ALNET) Bill received Royal Assent and became the ALNET Act. Since then the Welsh Government has published its guidelines and timescale as to how the changes should be implemented.

The definition of ALN has changed very little, however, it is not limited to children and pupils below the age of 19, as was the case with the previous definition of SEN. A person has ALN if they have a “learning difficulty or disability...which calls for additional learning provision” (Welsh Government, 2018b, p2)

The first stages focus on implementing IDPs for children “of compulsory school age and under” (SNAP Cymru, 2018). This stage involves school and local authorities working together to transfer children who currently have statements or IEPs to the new system. Priority will be given to pupils with statements, with conversion of statements taking up to two years, and IEPs up to three years.

It is anticipated that a draft ALN code will be published for consultation in December 2018, with a consultation period of 15 weeks. This will then be presented to the National Assembly in 2019, with the final pieces of legislation being put into place by the end of 2019, ready for implementation training to be rolled out in January 2020, with the new ALN system going live in September 2020 (SNAP Cymru, 2018).



Figure 2.3: Additional Learning Needs Timeline

(ERW, 2019)

2.11 Assessment

In March 2014 the Welsh education minister announced a “comprehensive, wide ranging, review of the National Curriculum and assessment arrangements in Wales”. (Welsh Government, 2014b) following the publication of the Donaldson report. The findings of this review were announced in February 2015. Donaldson (2015, p53) suggested that the current Key Stages be replaced with progression steps, “relating broadly to expectations at ages 5, 8, 11, 14 and 16”. These ‘Progression Steps’ should be reference points, providing a ‘road map’ for pupil progress, not “universal expectations of the performance of all children and young people at fixed points”

(Donaldson, 2015, p114). Donaldson (2015, p 115) referred to pupils with additional needs in his report, stating that “all children and young people should make progress along the same continuum, regardless of any additional learning needs they may have, although they may reach and move between Progression Steps more slowly or more quickly than others”.

In England when a pupil is in Years 2, 6 or 9 and they reach the end of a Key Stage, they sit national tests in English, mathematics and science. These tests are known as Standard Assessment Tests (SATs). Key Stage 2 and 3 SATs were abolished in Wales in 2004, following on from 2002 when Key Stage 1 tests were abolished. However, from May 2013 these tests were replaced with national reading and numeracy tests as part of the new LNF, which all children in Wales from Year 2 to Year 9 must sit. The tests can identify individual children who might be struggling with a particular area of numeracy and/or literacy, and where teachers should target any additional help.

When it comes to public examinations, pupils with SEN must sit these if they wish to achieve the qualification. However, access arrangements are made to accommodate their individual needs where possible. With regards to the PISA tests, pupils with SEN should sit the tests, although in practice, this doesn't always happen. Includ-ed (2013, p2) notes that “in many countries and many schools, SEN students or students with learning difficulties are removed from the classroom at the time of the application of PISA, which decreases the number of participating SEN students”. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) who introduced the PISA examinations in 1997 themselves commented that “in general, too few students with special education needs are included in PISA from not enough

economies and the conclusions that can be drawn are therefore extremely limited” (OECD, 2009, p127). That said, in 2006 Finland topped the PISA tables, with credit, at least in part, being given to their special education system. The system involves early identification and multi-professional help, which is always done in collaboration with the child’s parents (Thuneberg et al., 2013). Wales are moving towards a system that should ensure more continuity, however until it is implemented, it is difficult to comment on the effect it may have on its SEN pupils.

2.12 Discussion

At the beginning of the chapter I explained that I had planned to follow Thomas’ (2013) approach to my literature review and place this study in the context of what was already known, in a hope of building on this existing knowledge. To do this, I used my preliminary research questions to guide the research, discover what was already known and focus my original ideas. Ultimately, this allowed me to refine my research questions. The themes to be researched remained the same, but the developed questions were designed to probe deeper and produce more meaningful research:

Preliminary research questions (2013)	Developed research questions (2014)
Does the perception student teachers have of their own competency to teach pupils with SEN change throughout their one-year ITT course?	What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?
What role does coaching and mentoring play in developing the self-efficacy of student teachers to teach pupils with SEN as they transform from student to teacher?	<p>a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher?</p> <p>b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?</p>
What opportunities are there for student teachers to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking theory to practice in relation to teaching pupils with SEN?	<p>a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice?</p> <p>b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?</p>

Table 2.2: Preliminary research questions and developed research questions

Several themes emerged during the literature review; mentoring could be fundamental in developing a student teacher's self-efficacy, however, it was often inconsistent. Reflective practice on current ITT courses was frequently a tick-box exercise, too often failing to inform future practice. Inclusive education was not always viewed as a positive thing by practising teachers. It also became clear that

the landscape of inclusive education was ever changing with new policies in England and Wales having been discussed.

Throughout the duration of the literature search I continued to look for research that focused on the views of student teachers in Wales, in relation to inclusive teaching. However, I was not able to find anything. There were papers which drew comparisons between Wales and England, but with England having introduced the Children and Families Act in 2014 and Wales' Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal Act set to be introduced by September 2020, it is clear the two countries approach inclusive teaching differently. Thus, this obvious gap in knowledge appeared to justify my research; as the two countries approaches diversify, research that is specific to Wales is required.

2.13 Conclusion

The broad aim of this literature review was to ensure the proposed preliminary research questions were appropriate. To do this, I explored the current, evolving situation in terms of education and SEN policy within Wales. This was followed by a review of literature concerning the four primary areas that I identified from the initial search; coaching and mentoring, self-efficacy, reflective practice and inclusive education. Whilst undertaking the literature review I became aware that other themes would need to be considered and supplementary research would be required. For example, the difference in educational policies in Wales and England were considered. This then fed into the refining of the preliminary research questions to provide the final research questions presented in table 2.2.

It was clear from the start that there would be an overlap between the research topics. It became evident throughout the research just how much of a part this overlap could play in the development of ITT participants from student teachers into NQTs who were competent and confident to teach inclusively. Mentoring was highlighted throughout the research as being one of the most powerful tools for development, both on ITT courses and into the early years of a teacher's career. A good mentor seemed to be the starting point from which the other areas could be implemented. A good mentor could help build and develop a student teacher's self-efficacy. If a student teacher has a high sense of self-efficacy, they are more likely to possess the characteristics that will make them a good teacher for an inclusive classroom; they tend to be more patient, will spend longer with pupils who are struggling, are less judgemental and more open to trying different approaches. The earlier a student teacher can develop these characteristics, the better. Reflection can be used to help develop student teachers' self-efficacy, but it must serve a purpose, and shouldn't be performed to simply tick a box. A good mentor can help develop student teachers to become reflective practitioners, they can help improve their self-efficacy and inform their practice. However, too often student teachers' experience of mentoring is inconsistent, as is the content of PGCE courses. There are currently guidelines for what needs to be covered in relation to SEN, but a more rigid curriculum would benefit all involved.

The literature review provided me with a sound understanding of the current situation and showed that there is a definite need for further research. Possible areas for improvement have been highlighted and several key questions posed. The empirical research carried out to investigate these is explained in the next chapter.

3 CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I describe, critically evaluate and justify the methodology that underpins my research. The chapter starts by describing the wider frameworks in which the research sits. From this, I establish my philosophical approach and a research strategy is formulated. The chapter moves on to explain the research methodology and methods and concludes with a discussion about the management of the research, in terms of my role as the researcher, ethics, validity and reliability and its limitations.

The research design is interpretivist in nature as it is centred around the people involved and takes a humanistic approach. Cohen et al. (2007, p22) explain that interpretive researchers “begin with individuals and set out to understand their interpretations of the world around them”. One limitation of interpretivist research is that the results may not be objective, as every person may interpret a situation differently and possibly with bias. One such limitation was highlighted in the review of literature; student teachers may begin their course with a preconceived idea of what mentoring should include; if they have unrealistically high expectations, they may view their experience as poor, when in reality it may be very similar to another student who starts with low expectations that are exceeded and reports their experience more positively. It was clear therefore that the questions would need to be carefully structured to address this and the results would need to be interpreted bearing this, and any other influencing factors in mind.

The research also has a grounding in phenomenology as it investigates experience as experienced from the subjective or first-person point of view. A case study design was used with the data being collected through a series of semi-structured interviews providing qualitative data. This was supplemented by a limited amount of quantitative data, yielded by questionnaires. This chapter details the integration of several elements that Thomas (2013, p103) explains are essential for a successful research project; the purpose of the research, the research questions that needed to be answered, the approach I took and the methodology I employed.

3.2 Wider frameworks

To investigate the topic fully, I formulated and developed three preliminary research questions which are outlined in section 2.12. The research questions were designed to generate data to build a comprehensive picture of several issues relating to the research topic; I wanted to know how student teachers' perception of their competency changed over the course of their PGCE and what factors influenced these changes. From their stories I was able to paint a picture of how well prepared they felt and the factors that influenced this.

The type of research to be conducted was determined by the research questions, and what type of data was sought. Bearing this in mind, and to place the research in a wider framework, I considered the work of Wallace and Poulson (2003) and Ribbins and Gunter (2003). Wallace and Poulson (2003) identify five different types of intellectual project (shown in table 3.1), with Ribbins and Gunter (2003) focusing on five knowledge domains (shown in table 3.2).

	Knowledge-for-understanding	Knowledge-for-critical evaluation	Knowledge-for-action	Instrumentalism	Reflective action
<i>Rationale</i>	To understand policy and practice through theory and research	To critically evaluate policy and practice through theory and research	To improve policy makers efforts to improve practice through research and evaluation	To improve practitioners' practice through training and consultancy	To improve practitioners' own practice through evaluation and action for improvement
<i>Value stance towards an aspect of the social world</i>	Disinterested towards policy and practice	Critical about policy and practice	Positive towards policy and the possibility of improving practice	Positive towards policy and the possibility of improving practice	Critical about practitioners' own practice and positive about the possibility of improving it
<i>Typical question about the outside world</i>	What happens and why?	What is wrong with what happens and why?	How effective are interventions to improve practice?	How may this programme improve practice?	How effective is my practice and how may I improve it?

Table 3.1: Five intellectual projects for studying aspects of the social world, adapted from Wallace and Poulson (2003, p24)

My motivation for this research was never merely to understand how PGCE courses prepare their students, so it would never fit into the first of Wallace and Poulson's intellectual projects. However, understanding what happens during a PGCE course is part of the research. Simply understanding what happens though wouldn't allow any suggestions for improvements to be made; highlighting shortcomings or limitations in current practice and understanding these and why they happen, does. On this basis, my research appeared to sit well within the second of Wallace and Poulson's intellectual projects. For example, Hobson (2002) had identified the quality of mentoring on PGCE courses as variable; this study was intended to find out why, and what effect this had on student development. It was also designed to find out more broadly what aspects of the PGCE had a positive effect on student development. As Wallace and Poulson (2003, p23) talk about educational research being "applied

fields of enquiry” which are principally driven by a concern for improving practice, it was essential that this research would allow suggestions to be made for improving practice on PGCE courses in Wales. I was never concerned with simply highlighting any shortcomings; I had always intended to make suggestions for improvement from them, so there was somewhat of an overlap with ‘knowledge for action’.

With the research sitting between two of Wallace and Poulson’s intellectual projects, I felt it was important to consider other standpoints. Ribbins and Gunter (2003) explain the different knowledge domains in which they believe educational research may sit. Whilst they are referring specifically to leadership, these domains can be adapted as shown in Table 3.2. Humanistic research is what will take place here; the research is focused nearly entirely on the experiences of the student teachers.

Knowledge domain	Meaning
<i>Conceptual</i>	Concerned with issues of ontology and epistemology, and with conceptual clarification.
<i>Humanistic</i>	Seeks to gather and theorise from experiences and biographies.
<i>Critical</i>	Concerned to reveal and emancipate practitioners from social injustice and injustice of established power structures
<i>Evaluative</i>	Concerned to measures impact and effectiveness at micro, meso and macro levels of social interaction
<i>Instrumental</i>	Seeks to provide effective strategies and tactics to deliver organisational goals.

Table 3.2: Five knowledge domains, adapted from Ribbins and Gunter (2003, p262)

3.3 Philosophical approach

The philosophical approach this research took determined the research strategy, methods and methodologies needed to answer the research questions. This section addresses ontology and epistemology; what I as the researcher thought about the research, with ontology being what I looked at and epistemology being how I looked to find out about these things (Thomas, 2009, p87). Marsh and Furlong (2002, p18) explain that despite ontological and epistemological positions being related, they do need to be separated. They claim that “one’s ontological position affects, but far from determines, one’s epistemological position”; that one’s ontological position is established before they can decide upon the epistemological position. This is a view shared by Hay (2006, p8) who states, “we cannot know what we are capable of knowing (epistemology) until such time as we have settled on (a set of assumptions about) the nature of the context in which that knowledge must be acquired (ontology)”. For this research however, I adopted the view that ontology and epistemology are linked; that ontology is grounded in epistemology.

3.4 Ontology

“Ontology is a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of being and is about matters relating to reality and truth” (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2013, p23). Ontological assumptions are concerned with the principles of realities, be it by factors that are external to the individuals involved or the realities produced by those individuals’ consciousness (Cohen et al, 2007). Davies and Hughes (2007) identify the researcher’s upbringing and life experiences as factors that may affect their neutrality. Mason (2002, p154) notes no research can be ontologically neutral. The

two opposing positions of ontology are subjective and objective. Those who adopt the subjective position believe reality and truth is the product of individual perception, that there are multiple realities shared by groups of people. On the other side are those who take an objective view; they believe that reality and truth are a given and are external to the individual. They believe in a shared reality that most people would subscribe to. For this research, student teachers will give their perception or interpretation of reality, which may be affected by their individual experiences. One such interpretation already discussed is their preconception of mentoring; what they expect will affect how successful they believe it to be. Therefore, the ontological position of the research is subjective. As the researcher, I also needed to consider Martin's warning that the research cannot be ontologically neutral. By highlighting any possible preconceptions or bias, the results presented in the next chapter are done so as neutrally as possible.

3.5 Epistemology

"Epistemology is the philosophical study of the nature, limits, and grounds of knowledge" (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2013, p24), it's a concept that concerns how you know what you know, and the means you employ to test the validity of this knowledge (Davies and Hughes, 2007). Epistemology, as ontology, can come from two opposing standpoints; interpretivist and positivist. The interpretivist approach believes that knowledge is subjective and based on experience and insight, that we have constructed the world the way it is due to our preconceptions and understandings and that the different way we all experience the world is important. At the other end of the spectrum is the positivist approach; this believes that knowledge is hard, real and capable of being transmitted in a tangible form. That the world is

independent of ourselves and that knowledge is there to be discovered, invented and passed on in a concrete form. As epistemology is intrinsically linked to ontology, my epistemological standpoint matches my ontological one; truth is the result of a person's interpretation, members of the same group can all interpret a situation slightly differently, with differing views because of how they see a situation. Therefore, it is not possible for the knowledge to be set or transmitted in a tangible form. Instead, it is subjective, with my epistemological standpoint for this research being interpretivist.

3.6 Research strategy

The epistemological and ontological standpoints lend themselves best to qualitative research methods and take a 'bottom up' approach. Qualitative research is defined by Lincoln and Denzin (2003, p4) as:

A situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world...Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

In this study the participants were fundamental to understanding and interpreting the situation. Their views and perceptions of their PGCE and the meanings behind them were recorded and analysed to help answer the research questions.

The foundations of the research strategy are phenomenological in nature; the research studies experience as experienced from the subjective or first-person point of view. Phenomenology questions how individuals make sense of the world around them (Bryman, 2012, p714). Phenomenologists attempt to see things from the point

of view of the subject of the research, they view human behaviour as a product of how people view the world and they try to understand a person's behaviour (Bogdan and Taylor, 1975, pp13-14). The behaviour and the views of the student teachers were always central to this research. It was clear that the views and behaviours displayed, along with any preconceptions the participants may have had or obstacles they may have created, would need to be considered when reporting the findings of the interviews.

3.7 Research methodology and design: Case study

To execute research successfully, it is vital to understand the type of evidence that needs to be collected to answer the research questions, and the process that needs to be followed to best achieve this. Gorard et al. (2010, p4) explain that research design is a way of organising research "from inception in order to maximise the likelihood of generating evidence that provides a warranted answer to the research questions".

Thomas (2016, p11) considers forms of enquiry that could be used, which he "liberally adapted from Hammersley and Gomm (2000)":

	Case Study	Experiment	Survey
Investigates...	One case or a small number of cases	A relatively large number of cases	A relatively large number of cases
Data collected and analysed about...	A large number of features of each case...	A small number of features of each case...	A small number of features of each case...
Study of...	Naturally occurring cases where the aim is not to control variables	Cases where the aim is to control the important variables	Naturally occurring cases selected to maximise the sample's representativeness of a wider population
Quantification of data...	Is not a priority	Is a priority	Is a priority
Using...	Many methods and sources of data	One method	One method
Aiming to...	Look at relationships and processes	Look at causation	Look for generalisation

Table 3.3: A comparison of case study with other forms of inquiry

Having considered Thomas' work, I started by thinking about my research questions; what were they asking? What type of evidence was required to answer them? This led me to consider what exactly it was that I was going to be studying in this research. Stake (2003, p134) explains that a "case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied. By whatever methods, we choose to study the case". So for me, case study was not so much a choice, but the most appropriate methodology to study my chosen case, which would be one PGCE course at one institution in Wales. I had started my research wanting to find out how ITT in Wales generally prepared student teachers to teach inclusively, but it was clear this was rather vague, so by now I was starting to focus my research far more.

Whilst researching into this methodology, and looking for a succinct definition, it appears that many researchers have a slightly different view of exactly what a case study is. A case study may be described as “an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on inquiry around an instance” (Adelman et al, 1977, p140). Yin (2009, p18) describes a case study as being the study of a case in context, while Sturman (1999, p103) talks about contexts being “unique and dynamic”. Denscombe (2010, p52) suggests researchers “buy into a set of related ideas and preferences which, when combined, give the approach its distinctive character”. The varying descriptions could lead us to infer that case studies must have a degree of flexibility in them. In fact, “Bassey (1999) argues there are at least three different forms of educational case study” (Rose and Grosvenor, 2001, p70). This study would fall into the third of Bassey’s types; ‘evaluative’ as it aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision on a current PGCE course. Despite the definitions differing slightly in their explanation of what makes a case study, they all seem to suggest that case studies should focus on the ‘case’ in depth. Involving just one, or possibly a small number of cases presents the researcher with a trade-off; greater detail can be collected, but generalisations about the wider population may not be able to be made (Hammersley, 1992). Cohen and Mannion (2013) also discuss the fact that there can be problems controlling the multiple variables associated with case studies, making them scientifically weak and subject to bias.

In terms of a ‘case’, what does that mean? I had decided early on that the case for this study would be a PGCE course, but I needed to be sure this was correct. Again, there are varying definitions for what exactly the ‘case’ could be; Stake (2003, p135)

explains it might be a “child or a class of children”. Thomas (2016, p3) initially refers to it as a “thing” and suggests that the thing might be “an institution, a country, an event, a period in time or whatever” while De Vaus and De Vaus (2001, p220) suggests that “time periods” could constitute a case. In fact, there seems very little restriction on just what the case can be, providing it is a contained entity; Thomas (2016, p13) goes on to talk about the complexity of a case study, describing it as “a state of affairs bonded by the case”. This flexibility may have benefits, but it has also attracted criticism with De Vaus and De Vaus (2001, p219) explaining how the case study was once described as ‘the ugly duckling of research design’ as it can be difficult to identify a definitive approach (Atkinson and Delamont, 1985). Simply identifying a ‘case’ is not sufficient; it needs to be a “case of something” (Thomas, 2016, p15). Thomas (2011, pp14-15) suggests that a case is comprised of two parts; a “subject” and an “analytical frame” through which to view it, with the analytical focus extending beyond mere description. For example, had I simply described the fact that the views student teachers held regarding their self-efficacy changed throughout their PGCE, it would not make a case study, or at least not an interesting one. By offering explanations as to why these views changed, my study becomes a case study; the ‘why’ behind the changing views becomes my analytical frame.

Cohen et al, (2011) discuss how case studies are sometimes carried out over an extended period of time, during which it may become necessary to adapt how the data is collected, as was the case with this study. Following the completion of the initial, planned research, further questions had been raised and it became evident that additional interviews would be of benefit in helping me draw conclusions. Cohen et al (2011, p289) talk about case studies providing a “unique example of real people

in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than by simply presenting them with abstract theories or principles". With 'real people' and 'real situations' being involved, it was never going to be possible to precisely plan the case study. However, one of the advantages of this type of research is its adaptability, and that it allowed for the addition of follow up interviews. Case studies provide the researcher, and in turn the reader, with in-depth data on their chosen subject. Case studies can "replace quantity with quality and intensity, separating the significant few from the insignificant many" (Cohen et al, 2011, p294). They provide a reason behind why instances occur, rather than just reporting that they do (Denscombe, 2007, p37). This research definitely doesn't involve quantity, but its longitudinal nature does allow the reader to gain an in-depth insight into the changing views of student teachers on their journey to gaining QTS and subsequently into their first year of teaching.

The case study in this research is what Yin (2003, p6) describes as an 'exploratory' case study. At the time of commencing my research, I was unaware of any other studies of its kind in Wales. Before I began my empirical research, I anticipated that this study should be a pilot for further studies, the nature of which would depend on the findings of this one. I hoped that my study would generate a hypothesis to be tested in larger scale research. With the study being restricted to student teachers on a physics PGCE, one obvious question is whether the findings apply across all subjects. This is discussed further in the chapter 5. Primarily, case studies have been used "in relation to the discovery of information...less commonly, in relation to the testing of theory" (Denscombe, 2014, pp56-57). The nature of the research questions posed denoted that longitudinal research should be conducted. The appeal of such research is its ability to make inferences, establish causality and understand the

complexity of human behaviour (Cohen et al, 2011, p266). They can also combine qualitative and quantitative data. That was precisely what I wanted to do with this study; I wanted to get to know the students over their one-year PGCE course and understand what parts of the course and their school practice they felt helped them to teach inclusively, and what could be improved; this was my 'analytical frame'. I also wanted to get to know them to allow me to better understand their answers and the reasoning behind them, allowing me to report the findings more objectively and identify any bias. It was inevitable that this would be more challenging when reporting the data collected at the first interview; I would have only met the students once and they may feel uncomfortable opening up straight away. They also had fewer experiences to draw from and discuss, so were less able to contextualise their responses to the interview questions. This is one of the reasons the first interview was very brief; it was intended more to give me a starting point from which to draw comparisons; a baseline to work from.

3.8 Research method

The research paradigm for my study is mixed methods. Creswell (1994, p177) advocates using this approach, explaining "it is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested". Simpson (1992) argues that the most valuable features from both approaches should be incorporated, where appropriate, into research if it is to have significance. In terms of collecting evidence, Denscombe (2014) argues that a case study encourages the researcher to use a variety of sources while Simons (2011) explains how a researcher should select methods based on their potential to answer or inform the research questions.

Gorard et al. (2010, p3) discuss how a researcher's background may affect their choice of paradigm; those who are reluctant to work with numbers will tend to select the qualitative paradigm and turn their "weakness in handling an essential form of evidence into a pretend bulwark and eventually a basis for criticising those who do use numbers". A researcher who favours working with numbers will "tend to find that the system both forces them to become quantitative and positively encourages them as well". I would say that I fall into the latter category; I have more of a mathematical background and like to work with numbers. I like a situation that is clear and easy to understand; where right or wrong is palpable. The thought of having to conduct qualitative research was initially daunting, while at the same time, there was a certain appeal to discovering the reason behind a respondent's answer, particularly as I was aware it would provide me with more evidence to suggest improvements to practice.

It was previously mentioned that this research would be interpretivist, using Johnson et al's (2007, p124) definition, this research falls into the category of "qualitative dominant mixed methods" on the left of Figure 3.1; much of the research will yield qualitative data, however there will be a certain amount of quantitative data collected to enhance the findings.

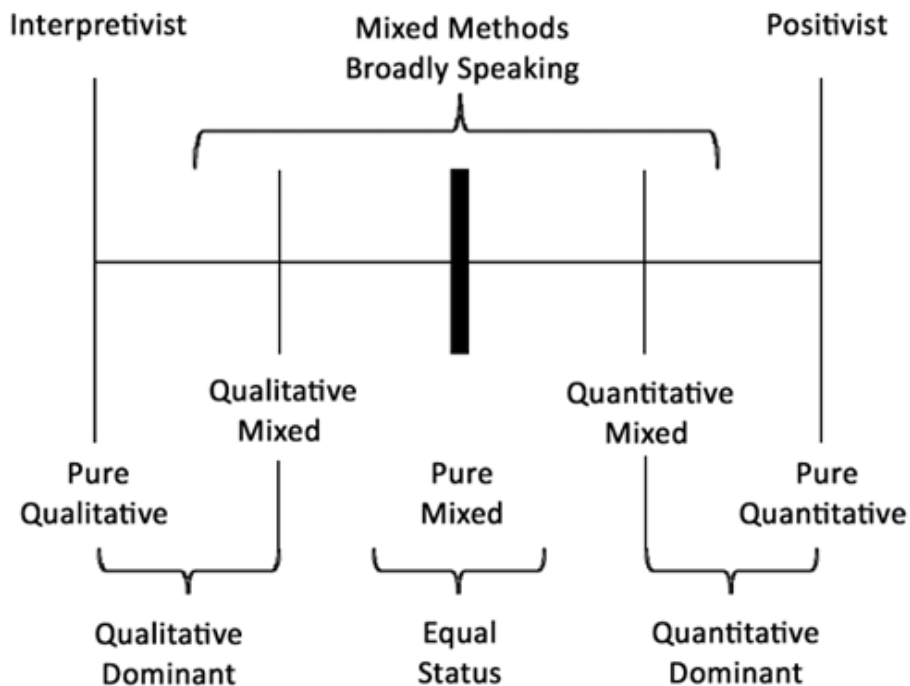


Figure 3.1: Graphic of the Three Major Research Paradigms, Including Subtypes of Mixed Method Research, adapted from Johnson et al (2007, p124)

Qualitative dominant mixed methods research is:

The type of mixed methods research in which one relies on a qualitative, constructivist-poststructuralist-critical view of the research process, while concurrently recognizing that the addition of quantitative data and approaches are likely to benefit most research projects.

Johnson et al (2007, p124)

Putting aside my preference for numerical data, the inclusion of a questionnaire was designed to provide clear evidence of the change in views of the participants. It was a more clinical approach to mapping change and recording the participants' feelings.

3.9 Data collection

At University X, students spend the first 5 weeks in university before beginning SE1, a further 6 weeks in university in between SE1 and SE2, and a final two weeks in

university after they have completed SE2. It was during the periods when they were in university that the interviews were conducted, see schedule in figure 3.2:

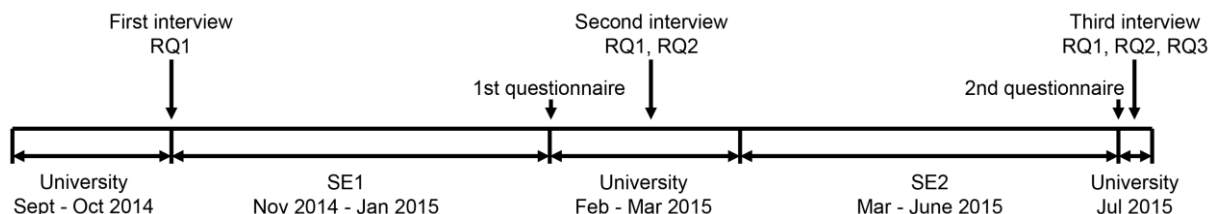


Figure 3.2: Data collection schedule

For RQ1, students were interviewed 3 times throughout the year. I felt that an interview at the start of their course, before they had taught any lessons, would provide a baseline against which any changes could be mapped. For RQ2, interviews took place between SE1 and SE2 and at the end of the course. For this question, questionnaires were also distributed, with the interviews being used to understand the reasons behind the quantitative data. When student teachers are on placement, they are required to complete short, tick-box evaluation forms following every lessons they have taught and three longer evaluation forms per week. These forms (Appendix 2 and 3) were used to track how the views of their own competency changed. They were also required to fill in a form following their weekly mentor meeting (Appendix 4), on which they set targets, agreed with their mentor, for improving their performance. The student teachers were asked to keep a weekly diary, making note of any opportunities they had to be reflective. However, it became clear at the second round of interviews that the students had been reluctant to do this as they felt it was adding to their workload, and that it was simply a duplication of what they were writing on their feedback forms. I decided therefore, that analysing what the students had written on these forms would replace the weekly diaries.

3.9.1 Interviews

Interviews can be structured and have predetermined questions, they can be unstructured where there are no set questions, or they can fall somewhere in the middle, providing enough structure to ensure the relevant, key points are covered, but also giving the researcher enough flexibility to probe for in-depth answers. This semi-structured approach was taken for the interviews to collect the data for this research. Denscombe (2014) talks about the questions in semi-structured interviews being open to change through the course of the research, allowing the interviewee to expand on certain points or to deviate away from what the interviewer had planned. They also allow for the interviewer to change how they ask the questions, making omissions or additions as they see fit. There are several advantages to this semi-structured approach as it allows for a degree of flexibility; this in turn can increase the validity of the data as wide-ranging and detailed information can be collected. However, it does have its shortcomings; semi-structured interviews can be time-consuming; the flexibility in posing the questions means the data that is collected is not consistent making analysis a lengthier process; this can have an adverse effect on the reliability. This is discussed further in section 3.11.

Throughout the research design process, I repeatedly looked back at my research questions to ensure the data I planned to collect, and the methods I intended to use, would be appropriate to answer them. Thus, another type of interview I considered was narrative interviews. These are acknowledged as “a mode through which individuals express their understandings of events and experiences” (Mishler, 1991, p68). During these types of interviews, the participants tell their account or story, which is prompted by the interviewer introducing a theme to be addressed.

Consequently, any areas that are explored during the interviews “arise from the interviews themselves and are not predetermined” (Mroz and Letts, 2008, p75). The data collected is then presented as a collaborative story, from interviewer and interviewee. Whilst I liked the idea of hearing the participants’ stories, the openness of the process in terms of the themes to cover, did not lend itself to my research.

In semi-structured interviews, the interviewer should have a clear list of questions to be answered and issues to be addressed, but must be prepared to be flexible and allow the interviewee to develop ideas (Denscombe, 2014). It was important that I was able to map changes to allow me to answer RQ1, so the openness of narrative interviews would not work. However, by conducting semi-structured interviews, I would be able to do this. I first decided what themes I would like to discuss in relation to the three research questions. Following this, I devised a list of questions for the three rounds of interviews. However, these questions were not set in stone, and I anticipated there would be a degree of deviation. The benefit of the semi-structured interview over the narrative interview was that I would be able to steer the interviewee to the topics I needed to address, while still allowing them to discuss topics they wanted to address. A list of the topics and possible questions is listed in table 3.4:

Research question	Strands to address	Semi-structured interview questions
RQ1 - What causes the perception Student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?	Previous experience in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What experience have you had in school in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?
	Previous experience with SEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What experience have you had of children with SEN? ▪ How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?
	Perception of competency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How competent do you think you are to teach in an inclusive classroom? ▪ How has this competency changed (since beginning PGCE/finishing last placement)? ▪ What has made you feel more/less competent? ▪ What do you feel you are most competent at in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ What do you feel you are least competent at in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ What helps the most in developing your competency in teaching pupils with SEN?
RQ2a - To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst Student teachers as they transform from student to teacher? B - How do the Student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?	Importance of school mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How important do you think your school mentor has been in developing your self-efficacy in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ What has your school mentor done to help you develop self-efficacy in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ (After SE2) What has your second school mentor done differently to help develop your self-efficacy in relation to pupils with SEN?
	Importance of university mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How important do you think your university mentor has been in developing your self-efficacy in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ What has your university mentor done to help you develop self-efficacy in relation to pupils with SEN?
	Time to build 'meaningful relationship'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Do you think you had enough time to build a meaningful relationship with your school mentor?
RQ3a - How useful are the opportunities the Student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice? b - To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?	When reflection has been used	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At what points in the year did you get the chance to reflect on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN?
	Types of reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How did you reflect on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ Did you reflect in any other way, not on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN? (For example on knowledge)
	Usefulness of reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How useful did you find reflecting on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN? ▪ Do you think reflecting on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN help improve your practice? ▪ How did reflecting on your practice in relation to pupils with SEN change your practice?

Table 3.4: Proposed questions for semi-structured interviews

Despite semi-structured interviews being the obvious choice for data collection for this case study, it is important to acknowledge their disadvantages, one of these being that they can be time consuming. Specifically, looking at this research, each participant in the study was interviewed for an average of 140 minutes over three occasions in the first instance, with two of those interviews being conducted in the university where the participants studied. The university was more than an hour's drive from me, so it involved a considerable amount of time travelling and then following the interviews there was additional time required to complete the transcription. Consideration of the time requirements guided to a certain extent the scope of the research. One other disadvantage is what Denscombe (2010, p69) refers to as the "observer effect". He notes that people are likely to alter their behaviour when they are being observed, before going on to advise that the researcher should remain as passive and neutral as possible. However, Simons (2009, p81) explains that as a researcher, you become "an inescapable part of the situation". Cohen et al. (2011, p186) refer to the Hawthorne effect which threatens "to contaminate experimental treatments in educational research when subjects realize their role as guinea pigs." Using semi-structured interviews meant, to a certain extent, a relationship developed between interviewer and interviewee and with it the potential to compound the problem. Reluctance to express views, feeling embarrassed, disguising normal practice or being defensive about it (Denscombe, 2010) were all factors I considered. However, my position as researcher alleviated this to a certain degree; I did not know any of the participants personally; I was not in a position of authority over them; they were not on placement at the school where I taught, so I did not have any influence over their progression. They were also

reassured their responses would be reported anonymously. The positives of a good relationship between interviewer and interviewee partly negated some of the negatives; participants were more relaxed and as a result quicker to open up and talk in greater depth about their experiences. All participants were different, so the degree to which these factors influenced their answers differed. In terms of my bias, I did my utmost to ensure there was not any. From the literature review, I expected to find that there were shortcomings with the PGCE in terms of preparing its student teachers to teach inclusively, however I ensured I remained neutral in the way I posed the questions and in any opinions I expressed to the participants. I had no vested interest in findings either way.

3.9.2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire (table 3.5) was also distributed to the students to provide quantitative data about their self-efficacy. When considering the inclusion of a questionnaire, as with my interview questions, I started by considering just what it was I wanted to find out; how would this data help me tell the story? The work of Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) appeared relevant; they had developed a questionnaire from the work of others in the field of teacher efficacy, something they describe as “a promising new measure of teacher efficacy” (Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy, 2001, p783). However, their questionnaire was more general; I wanted to concentrate specifically on teacher efficacy in relation to teaching inclusively. Sharma et al (2012) developed the teacher efficacy for inclusive practices (TEIP) scale, which they describe as “timely” to allow institutions who provide ITT ensure they are adequately preparing teachers to teach inclusively, claiming that to date, “there has been no suitable scale that targets teacher efficacy specifically in relation to inclusive

education” (Sharma et al, 2012). Thus, this seemed like the most appropriate questionnaire to use. I altered the wording of some of the questions, for example changing “student” to “pupil” as this is the term used on the PGCE. Also, rather than asking if participants felt ‘able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., aides, other teachers) to teach students with disabilities in the classroom’, they were asked if they felt ‘able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., LSAs, TAs, other teachers) to teach pupils with SEN in the classroom’. I needed to ensure there would be no misunderstanding as this would be completed online, so the participants would not have the opportunity to clarify points. I also decided to omit two questions, one relating to MAT pupils and the other to getting pupils to work in pairs or small groups, as they were not relevant to my study:

TEIP questionnaire	My questionnaire
I can make my expectations clear about student behaviour	I can make my expectations clear about pupil behaviour
I am able to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy	I am able to calm a pupil who is disruptive or noisy
I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school	I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school
I can assist families in helping their children do well in school	I can assist families in helping their children do well in school
I can accurately gauge student comprehension of what I have taught	I can accurately gauge pupil comprehension of what I have taught
I can provide appropriate challenges for very capable students	
I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behaviour in the classroom before it occurs	I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behaviour in the classroom before it occurs
I can control disruptive behaviour in the classroom	I can control disruptive behaviour in the classroom
I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with disabilities	I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with additional learning needs
I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated	I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of pupil with additional learning needs are accommodated
I am able to get children to follow classroom rules	I am able to get children to follow classroom rules
I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g., itinerant teachers or speech pathologists) in designing educational plans for students with disabilities	I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists) in designing educational plans for pupils with additional learning needs
I am able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., aides, other teachers) to teach students with disabilities in the classroom	I am able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., LSAs, TAs, other teachers) to teach pupils with additional learning needs in the classroom
I am confident in my ability to get students to work together <i>in pairs or in small groups</i>	
I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., portfolio assessment, modified tests, performance-based assessment, etc.)	I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., formative, summative AfL, etc.)
I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of students with disabilities	I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of pupils with additional learning needs
I am confident when dealing with students who are physically aggressive	I am confident when dealing with pupils who are physically aggressive
I am able to provide an alternate explanation or example when students are confused	I am able to provide an alternative explanation or example when pupils are confused

Table 3.5: Self-efficacy questionnaire

There were six options when responding; strongly disagree; disagree; disagree somewhat; agree somewhat; agree; strongly agree.

3.10 Ethics

Thomas (2013, p38) explains that ethics is much more than a practical matter, it is about how the researcher conducts their work, how they think about the project and the respect they have for others and warns against “putting these concerns into a box” and minimising any interest in conduct and respect. Conducting research ethically is about doing right; it is imperative that all research is conducted ethically.

In 2014, before starting my empirical research, I ensured I gained ethical approval from the University of Birmingham (ERN_14-1069) and had fully considered the requirements set out in the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Guidelines (2011). I contacted the PGCE tutor at University X to request her involvement in the study, and also the involvement of her students (Appendix 5). I also outlined the proposed research and emphasised that any data would be reported anonymously.

All student teachers on the physics PGCE at University X were informed of the study by their tutor and given the opportunity to take part. Those who showed interest were given a participant information sheet (Appendix 6) and I explained the process to them. They were then asked to sign a consent form (Appendix 7). As is standard with all educational studies, the participants involved in this research were informed they could withdraw, for any reason, at any time and without prejudice. All data would remain anonymous, and the university involved would not be named. Following the first round of interviews, one participant decided that a career in teaching was not for him, so this left seven participants who completed the three rounds of interviews.

3.11 Validity and reliability

Making sure research is valid is vital; “if it is invalid, then it is worthless” (Cohen et al, 2011, p179). Brundrett and Rhodes (2013, p24) explain how validity has been viewed historically as the extent to which research measures what it purports to measure, they go onto talk about how researchers seek to establish the trustworthiness of research to enhance its credibility.

Validity in qualitative research is very different from validity in quantitative research. Lincoln and Guba’s (1985) concept of trustworthiness or reliability in ‘naturalistic inquiry’ is grounded in the assumption that qualitative research is credible, providing certain methods are employed during the investigation, or to put it another way, techniques are understood to be a medium to ensure an accurate reflection of reality (Cho and Trent, 2006). Cohen et al (2011, p180) state how this can be achieved:

- the data must be descriptive;
- concern will be shown for the process rather than the outcome;
- data will be presented in terms of the respondent with the seeing and reporting of the situation being through the eyes of the participants;
- finally, the meaning and intention will be recorded.

Along with validity, another factor that I needed to ensure during research was reliability. Brundrett and Rhodes (2013, p28) discuss how Cohen et al (2011) explained reliability is “essentially regarded as a synonym for consistency and replicability of outcomes over time”. Reliability is therefore, easier to guarantee in quantitative research. Experiments where the researcher controls the variables are more likely to produce consistent results. Brundrett and Rhodes (2013) use the example of an experiment where chemical A is mixed with chemical B to make

chemical C. The experiment could be repeated tomorrow, or in 2 years' time and the result would always be chemical C. In qualitative research, the researcher is not able to control the variables in the same way. In semi-structured interviews, even the questions are open to change. The researcher reserves that degree of flexibility to 'tease out' extra details and increase the validity of the data. So, we see that sometimes there is a 'toss up' between reliability and validity. Although the questions may be posed in slightly different ways during the interviews, they will still explore the same themes; the answers will explore the same situation from various perspectives. This amounts to what Simons (2009) describes as 'triangulation' or perspectives, which she explains can be used to increase validity. Basey (1999) suggests that bringing together data from different observers can help the researcher identify significant features of the case. This was indeed the case during this study; two participants had a placement school in common but reported their experiences very differently. This allowed for an interesting discussion as to the possible reasons behind this (section 6.4).

Brundrett and Rhodes (2013) talk about the researcher's own objectivity and consistency, or lack of, compromising the reliability of data. It is not the case however that the researcher has no control over the variables in qualitative research. During this study I ensured, where possible, that the variables I had control over remained constant. For example, the first round of interviews were all conducted on the same day, so all students were in the same position in terms of their experience from the PGCE. The second round of interviews were conducted following the completion of SE1 and prior to the commencement of SE2, so again, all students were in the same position in terms of their experience from the PGCE. This was again true for the final

round of interviews, with all students being interviewed following the completion of their second teaching practice. Before the second and third round of interviews I ensured that I read through the transcript of the previous interview(s) and listened back to the recording(s) to remind myself of what was said, any concerns the participants may have had and how their views had changed.

It has already been discussed how validity and reliability are very different for qualitative and quantitative methods. Looking at this in more detail, Cohen et al (2011, p180) explain that “in much quantitative research, validity must be faithful to its premises of positivism and positivist principles”. Validity can be ‘internal’ or ‘external’. Internal validity is the extent to which the findings of the research accurately represent the focus of the research (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2013, p26) with external validity being concerned with whether the results can be generalised in other settings and contexts. The way I posed the interview questions, along with the timing of the interviews and following this the reporting and analysis of answers, ensured internal validity. As for external validity, the size of the sample may somewhat restrict this. This is true for many case studies, with Thomas (2016, p4) acknowledging the difficulties in generalising results from just one case or the “anecdotal evidence” provided by a case study. However, he explains that case studies look at the subject from “many and varied angles”, allowing the researcher to get closer to the 'why' and 'how'.

3.12 Case and participant selection and recruitment:

Sampling

The nature of a case study means that the data to be collected should be in great depth; this ruled out involving the entire population. Even using a large sample would not be feasible due to time and cost restraints. Bechhofer and Patterson (2012) explain the importance having a clear idea of what the sample or study should be representative of, and why it needs to be representative in this way. Cohen et al (2011, p143) sets out five key factors that should be considered in sampling:

1. The sample size;
2. The representatives and parameters of the sample;
3. Access to the sample;
4. The sampling strategy to be used;
5. The kind of research being undertaken.

In terms of the sample size and ensuring it was representative, this was discussed with the PGCE tutor at University X. The university offers 16 different PGCE courses, which lead to their students gaining QTS. Students from the physics PGCE course were chosen to take part in this study; physics is a core subject, so something that all pupils will study at school. As this is an exploratory study, I intended to examine a complex area, so restricting the sample to student teachers from one course seemed appropriate. I offered all students, or the “population” (Thomas, 2013, p136) of the physics PGCE (n=22) the opportunity to take part in the study, eight showed an interest. Despite Thomas (2013) warning that a sample is often not representative of the population, through discussions with the PGCE tutor, it was decided that this sample was as representative of the population as could be expected; there was an equal number of male and female participants, all of whom had a varying degree of

prior experience. One of the eight students dropped out following the first round of interviews, having decided teaching was not for him. This left seven participants who completed the study.

Access to the sample was relatively easy as the participants in the sample were based at a university reasonably local to me. I had contacted the senior tutor on the physics PGCE course at University X (Appendix 5), and together we used purposive sampling to ensure that “the knowledge gained [was] representative of the total population” (Cohen et al, 2011, p143), or at least as representative as possible, bearing in mind Thomas’ (2013) warning. The kind of research undertaken was a case study using semi-structured interviews; this has been discussed in section 3.7. This eliminates the possibility of a large sample in the context of this research, due in part to the constraints of time and money.

3.13 Analysis

The concluding part of this chapter touches on what happened to the data I collected. The ways in which the data were presented and analysed varied for each research question. I had considered, but subsequently discounted narrative interviews to collect the data for this research due to their openness in terms of the scope of results they could potentially yield. I did however like the idea of telling the story of a participant’s journey from student to teacher. Thus, I decided that for RQ1 I would use the data I collected to tell individual stories before conclusions were drawn to answer the question. RQ2 and RQ3 took a more holistic approach with comparisons being made throughout the analysis.

Analysing the data collected in a reliable and efficient manner was paramount to this study; if the data was not analysed correctly, conclusions could not be drawn, and the research would be worthless. Miles et al (2014) describe qualitative data analysis as a process that is interactive and cyclical. They explain how the researcher moves between condensing the data, displaying the data and verifying/drawing conclusions. This is a development of an earlier model offered by Miles and Huberman (1994, p10) where they describe “three concurrent flows of activity”:

- Data reduction; selecting, focusing, simplifying and abstracting the data that appears on field notes or transcripts.
- Data display; organised, compressed assembly of information which allows the research to make inferences and draw conclusions.
- Conclusion drawing and verification; researcher notes regularities, discerns patterns, makes explanations, notes casual flows and outlines propositions derived for the data.

Reduction of data occurs naturally throughout the research process, before the interviews take place as the researcher decides which research questions and which data collection approaches they will use (Miles et al., 2014). For this study, the condensing part involved relevant data from the interviews being selected, simplified and abstracted. This was done through thorough analysis of the interview transcripts, reading through field notes taken at the time of the interviews and listening back to the recordings of the interviews, making further notes as required. Brundrett and Rhodes (2013) advocate the importance of a researcher knowing their data well, through taking notes and identifying emergent themes. This was done throughout the research process and one thing that I felt it was particularly important to do was to listen back to any previous interviews before conducting the following one. This allowed me to remind myself of anything relevant the participants may have said, for

example something they were apprehensive about that I needed to follow this up in the subsequent interview, and also the tone of their answers.

Miles et al (2014, p278) talk about assumptions being made because they appear “plausible”, but warns about hastily jumping to conclusions, explaining that “plausibility was an initial impression that needed further checking through other tactics”. It was important therefore that I did not let the questioning be prejudiced by any conclusions I thought seemed plausible, rather I needed to remain impartial in my approach to enable me to check these through other tactics. To condense the data once it had been collected, Miles et al. (2014, p74) suggest the use of coding. They describe various approaches but explain that “In Vivo coding is appropriate for virtually all qualitative studies” particularly those that “prioritize and honour the participant’s voice”. It was considered for this study, however, a slightly different approach was employed.

Displaying the data refers to it being organised and compressed to allow conclusions to be drawn. For this research, I used a series of matrices for each of the research questions with particular themes being identified (Appendix 8). The visual representation of data and the use of colour to highlight themes in the interview transcripts (Appendix 9) allowed patterns to be identified quickly. It was during this stage that I went back to Brundrett and Rhodes’ (2013) advice and identified emergent themes from the data, also following the advice given by Miles et al (2014) that displays never fully explain a situation. Explanations were offered in relation to the “theoretical models and perspectives” (Brundrett and Rhodes, 2013, p150) discussed in chapter 2.

Themes are introduced in chapter 4 with further exploration accompanying a full discussion of the results of the research in chapter 5. Conclusions are then drawn, and explanations offered.

3.14 Chapter summary

This chapter has set out the process that I followed to collect the data required to answer my research questions. The research questions were the starting point for my research design; to execute the research successfully, it was vital I understood the type of evidence that needed to be collected in order to answer the research questions, and the process that I needed to follow to best achieve this.

A qualitative dominant, mixed-methods approach was adopted. The qualitative data was provided principally by semi-structured interviews and supplemented by extracting information from the student teachers' weekly evaluation forms. These forms were considered by myself when analysing the data I had collected and were also referred to by the participants during their interviews. The addition of a questionnaire and the quantitative data it yielded enhanced the findings of my research.

My aim with this research was to improve practice through research and evaluation. My research came from a subjective, interpretivist standpoint, and is humanistic in nature. It was centred on the student teachers who were the subjects of the research. The in-depth knowledge and answers the research provided to the research questions are presented and analysed in the next chapter, allowing suggestions for how practice can be developed to be offered in section 6.2.

4 CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the empirical research that I carried out over an 18-month period between November 2014 and April 2016. It includes the initial, planned interviews with seven student teachers, from one PGCE course at a university in Wales. The chapter also includes the follow up interviews I conducted with four of the participants after their first term of teaching as NQTs, as well as their university tutor. These additional interviews help paint a far more complete picture, not only of how well the participants felt their ITT prepared them to teach inclusively at the time, but how well prepared they actually were once they began teaching as NQTs. The feedback from the university mentor also allowed me to gain an understanding as to whether my recommendations are feasible.

In this chapter I am primarily concerned with presenting my data, with a brief discussion of the implications. Following Brundrett and Rhodes' (2013) advice, I identify any emergent themes from the data; these are points that relate to my research questions and broad aims, and were common across the participants' responses. A more detailed discussion and analysis comes in chapter 5.

The data for RQ1 is presented as a discrete summary of each participant's journey through his or her PGCE. For RQ2 and RQ3 the data is presented as a whole, with comparisons being made.

I begin the chapter by setting out the rationale for the way the data is presented, before presenting a further seven sections. The first of these sections is concerned

with the participants' understanding of the terms SEN, ALN and inclusive education in the context of mainstream education in Wales. The following three sections begin by presenting the research questions before setting out the data collected to answer each of these questions. The next two sections contain details of the follow-up interviews with the participants as NQTs and their university tutor, and finally I offer a conclusion to the chapter.

4.2 Rationale

Once I had transcribed the interviews, key themes were identified. This chapter presents these findings, supported by quotations from the participants. I had anticipated some of the themes based on the findings of the literature review in chapter 2, others I had not. The use of Nvivo to analyse the transcriptions had been considered, however with a small-scale study such as this, I felt that transcription and highlighting key themes for consideration and discussion would be more effective and eliminate the possibility of points being overlooked.

It was clear I would need a different approach when analysing the data for each question. RQ1 looked at the change in the participants' opinions over the course of the study, so for this each participant's three interviews would be analysed discretely before making any comparisons. However, for RQ2 and RQ3, it would be necessary to look for common themes across the responses.

Thinking back to Miles and Huberman's (1994) process of data analysis, I decided that the data should be reduced before being presented here. I had initially planned to present seven discrete stories of the participants' ITT, however, once these stories had been written it was clear that further reductions could be made and indeed by

reducing the data it made the process of drawing conclusions more straightforward. The data I present, or 'display' to use Miles and Huberman's terminology, is that which is sufficient to allow inferences to be made and conclusions to be drawn.

4.3 Semi-structured interviews

The initial interviews included all the participants and were conducted at three points throughout the PGCE course. Eight participants were interviewed during the first round, but one of these subsequently dropped out of the course, leaving seven complete sets of data. All participants were approached to take part in a follow up interview once they had started teaching; four took part. The PGCE tutor was also interviewed following the participants completing their PGCE. See timeline below in figure 4.1:

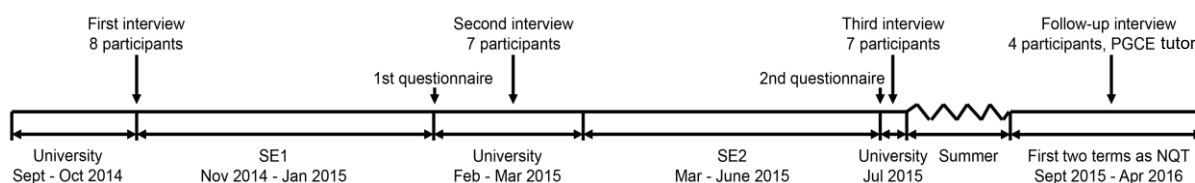


Figure 4.1: Timeline of research

The first collection point was at the beginning of the year, before the participants had taught their first lessons. I conducted these interviews in the university, as it was somewhere the students knew and would feel comfortable. I explained the ethics of the research to each participant, with them all being informed they could withdraw at any point, without prejudice. All participants were asked to read through the consent form (Appendix 7), and sign if they agreed to take part. I recorded all the interviews and later transcribed them.

Denscombe (2007, p193) assigns particular significance to the first question in the interview as it gives the interviewee “the chance to settle down and relax”. Following this advice, I asked the participants “in a general way, about themselves and their role as it relates to the overall area of the interview.” (Denscombe, 2007, p193). This allowed me to collect background information about the participants while allowing them to begin by covering familiar territory (Denscombe, 2007, p193).

The second round of interviews was conducted following SE1. These interviews were conducted over Skype as the participants were on placements around Wales, so this was easier than trying to arrange face-to-face interviews. The interviews were done using video calls so that the participants’ reactions could still be noted.

The third round of interviews was conducted when the students had completed their final placement. It was during this final round of interviews where the students were able to reflect on their PGCE year as a whole and provide me with more of an insight into the way the course had been structured; what they felt had worked well and what could be improved. I conducted the majority of these interviews face-to-face; the one exception was with participant M1 as he had moved to the south of England immediately after completing his PGCE, in preparation for starting his job in September; in this instance, the interview was conducted over Skype.

I used the research from my literature review in chapter 2 to decide what I needed to find out to answer my research questions and identify strands to address. Subsequent to this was the process of developing the interview questions, based on the identified strands. Whilst I had an idea of the kind of questions I would need to ask, I was also aware that due to the nature of semi-structured interviews, I may

need to deviate from these within the interviews. The interviews followed the interview schedule outlined in section 3.9.1. During the first interview, I asked the participants the questions relating to RQ1 to get a starting point from which to gauge their changing views. During the second interview three months later, they were asked these same questions again to allow me to see how their views had changed, as well as the questions that related to RQ2. I was not able to ask the questions relating to RQ2 during the first interview as they related to the experience the participants had gained in a placement school. During the final round of interviews the same questions were asked as in the previous interview. In addition to this I also asked questions which related to RQ3. RQ3 investigates the use of reflective practice, so this needed to be discussed once the participants had had the opportunity to undertake reflection, so I decided the end of the year would be the best time for this, as participants would have had a year to do this.

I do not name any of the participants during this study, nor do I name any of the placement schools or the university the participants studied at, in accordance with the ethical procedures for this study. Three male and four female PGCE students took part in the research, and they will be referred to as M1, F2 etc.

4.4 SEN, ALN and inclusive education

Following the introductions, the first three questions I posed to all participants were designed to measure their understanding of what inclusive education is and if they were aware of the differences between SEN and ALN. Participants were asked:

- What do you understand 'inclusive education' to be?
- What do you understand 'additional learning needs' to be?

- What do you understand 'special educational needs' to be?

After each of these questions, the Welsh Government's definition for each term was given to the participants (Appendix 10). In my literature review I discussed the proposed changes within Wales in terms of SEN and ALN (section 2.10). Part of this involved replacing the term SEN with ALN. However, as the Bill was only in the draft stages when the interviews were conducted it was important that the participants were aware of the differences. Despite having given all participants the definitions during the first round of interviews, I felt it prudent to repeat this process during the second and third round of interviews to ensure the participants were correct in their understanding of what SEN was.

4.4.1 Inclusive education

During the first interview inclusive education seemed to be relatively well understood; possibly because the name is fairly descriptive, but all participants referred to "including" all, or as many pupils as possible in the classroom. The Welsh Government's definition did little to improve their understanding; the wordy description appeared to confuse participants, and it seemed to over-complicate something which essentially is rather simple. The level of understanding changed very little throughout the research period, although participants spoke with increased confidence and used more technical vocabulary in the later interviews; this can be attributed to the knowledge gained from the PGCE.

4.4.2 Additional learning needs

During the first interview this question proved more difficult. When attempting to define ALN participants gave answers that were more specific to SEN, with M2

directly referencing this; “If they have any special educational needs, I'd say”, without giving any explanation of what he understood special educational needs to be. There was one exception, where F2 referred to pupils having “any hearing or seeing impairments”. The Welsh Government definition did little to clarify the situation for the participants, with all laughing nervously or looking confused when I read it to them.

When the question was posed again before the second interview, participants seemed a little less hesitant, but there was still reference by F4 to pupils “having special needs”, before the going on to clarify “and like, other things as well...like a hearing impairment”.

During the final interview participants all seemed to have a clear understanding of the term, with F2 referring to ALN “including medical conditions as well as SEN” and “the other things that might affect their learning, such as a sight or hearing impairment” etc.

4.4.3 Special educational needs

Participants were asked about their understanding of SEN last. As this followed the question about ALN, participants appeared confused during the first interview. Most of the participants were happy to admit they were unsure of the difference. However, M2 appeared defensive in his manner and tone; “much the same as what I said before really”. Even when the Welsh Government’s definition was given, the participants still appeared to be confused by the difference.

During the second round of interviews, there was a little more clarity, even if it was just the acknowledgment from F1 that SEN was “special needs without the extra, health-related stuff”. As with their explanations of ALN, participants appeared to have

grown in confidence, with some participants referring to children they had taught with specific needs. As with the other terms, by the time the participants took part in their third interview, both their confidence and understanding of the definition of SEN had grown. They were able to distinguish between ALN and SEN, with F1 explaining in detail how the two pupils she had spent time with in her placement school's ASD base had SEN, whereas some of the other pupils she taught who were visually impaired had ALN.

4.4.4 Summary

Following the third interview participants were both more confident and more precise with their definitions of SEN, ALN and inclusive education. The reason for the increased self-assurance and accuracy in their answers could simply be down to the fact that they had been given the definitions during the previous two interviews, and that they knew they would be asked again for these. However, it is more likely that the knowledge and experience they had gained during their PGCE allowed them to answer with greater confidence, particularly when giving examples to support their answers. Along with an increase in knowledge, came an increase in confidence from participants when they were giving their answers; a positive sign. However, there were still examples of participants mixing the terms up when they were talking about their experiences, so it was apparent there is a need for simple, unambiguous definitions. This is the first of the themes (T1) to be discussed in the next chapter.

4.5 Research question 1

RQ 1 asks: What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?

I used the first round of interviews to gain an understanding of how each participant viewed their own competency. Their changing attitudes were then mapped across their one-year PGCE course. For the purposes of answering this research question, participants' responses were analysed discretely before looking at common trends. Because participants could have viewed their competency as decreasing as well as increasing, both positive and negative themes, and their causes, were identified. My analysis of the transcripts for this was done slightly differently, with positive comments, for example reference to feeling more confident, better equipped, more prepared etc. being highlighted in green, and negative comments, for example reference to feeling unconfident, ill-equipped, unprepared etc. being highlighted in red. This not only allowed me to identify the comments, it also visually painted a quick picture of the changing attitudes between interviews, with participants going from predominantly red at the beginning of the PGCE, to being increasingly green by the end (Appendix 9). The results of this are presented as seven stories of how the participants' views changed throughout the year.

4.5.1 Participant story 1: M1

M1 had a PhD and had worked in a science related career for 5 years before deciding he wanted to become a teacher. He had some experience of working with children having completed a "small one-week primary experience". M1 started the year reasonably confidently, positive about teaching pupils with SEN but willing to admit he was "relatively unsure as to what was going to happen, unknowing and uncomfortable about what to expect". By the end of the PGCE he had gained a substantial amount of experience, predominantly from SE1 where he was in a school with dedicated SEN and ASD bases. M1 had also been very pro-active in gaining

experience with SEN pupils, he described the “challenge” this initially posed, and how he felt “a little out of [his] depth”, but a supportive mentor had helped develop his confidence. He felt most confident about the things he had experienced and quite aware that he did not know everything but thought he had gained “enough exposure to go into a classroom and know what to expect and what to prepare”. M1 identified the hands-on experience as key to developing his self-efficacy, explaining “you can read books and be told what works with SEN pupils, but hands-on interaction with them, just trying lessons to find out what works and doesn’t work is easily the best thing to help you understand. A book just doesn’t cut it!”

4.5.2 Participant story 2: M2

Prior starting his PGCE, M2 he had only spent “a little time” in a classroom to “help [him] get onto the PGCE”. M2 was interesting because right from the beginning he seemed to be very negative about pupils with SEN, not in his perceived ability to teach them, but in his desire to teach them. He explained that he thought it was “a big challenge to actually get anything out of them; to be honest, it doesn’t really matter how much time you give them, you’ll still get very little productivity despite of it.” As a result, he did not seek to further his experience with SEN. He was very definite in his assertion that it “isn’t [his] vocation to teach pupils with SEN”. It is difficult to say if more experience would have changed his perception, the experience of the PGCE had done little to alter his views, so for some student teachers, more experience may not be enough to change their attitudes towards inclusive teaching. Following the PGCE, M2 decided that he would “rather teach the more able” so had decided to undertake a PhD.

4.5.3 Participant story 3: M3

M3 appeared to be reflective throughout, reflecting on the experience he had gained before his PGCE during his first interview and how he thought elements of this would help him during his ITT. This ability to reflect could be because he had had an insight into education and SEN before the PGCE course started, having worked as a literacy intervention officer. M3 explained how his view of pupils with SEN changed during this job; “when [he] started [he] just thought pupils were lazy, but experience shows they’re not and they need help”. This prior experience seemed to give him confidence, but meant he was “aware of just how difficult things could be”. He was very pro-active in seeking out experiences during his PGCE, speaking to the SENCO during SE1 and obtaining copies of pupils’ IEPs during SE2. Unfortunately, this had been more down to necessity as he had a rather disappointing experience with his mentors. M3’s first mentor had told him she “didn’t have the answers as she was finding it difficult so couldn’t give advice” and his second mentor had “just left [him] to it”. Despite this, he described it as “a nice challenge”. M3 admitted to “not particularly wanting to teach pupils with SEN”, although he had done so positively and credited the hands-on experience he had gained throughout the PGCE for “giving [him] the confidence to do it”.

4.5.4 Participant story 4: F1

F1 had worked as a swimming teacher during her time as an undergraduate and had some experience teaching a child with autism. She started the year doubting her ability, and this took a while to change, with her focus during SE1 being more on developing her general confidence in the classroom. She had not had the opportunity to gain much experience of pupils with SEN during SE1. However, by the end of the

year it was clear her confidence had grown significantly. When discussing what had helped develop how she viewed her competency, F1 explained the importance of the experience she had gained; “before [she] started the PGCE, it just seemed really scary, going into a classroom and standing in front of 30 children, but now [she’d] done it, it doesn’t seem that bad, and it’s the same for the SEN stuff”. She acknowledged that she had not gained experience of everything but what she had, she was “fairly confident in dealing with” and she was “keen to try it out next year”. She also felt that spending time with the LSAs and teachers in the ASD base during SE2 had been “invaluable”.

4.5.5 Participant story 5: F2

F2 started her PGCE with experience of working as a Scout leader and having spent a summer working at Camp America. She had also spent 6 months helping in an A Level chemistry class. Her confidence was surprisingly low at the beginning of the PGCE, and interestingly, she described her experience as “limited”, but her confidence grew throughout the year. She had a job for the following academic year in a school where there would be a hearing-impaired pupil, so she felt particularly confident in her ability to deal with this, as she had developed strategies from SE2. F2 identified using pupils’ IEPs as something she was worried about, as she did not find them to be specific enough, “terms like moderate learning difficulties were too vague”, and “not put into context”. She was told what condition a pupil had, but not how adapt her teaching to include them. Equally, she did not feel the “supposed SEN training” she had received at university was adequate; they “were just given a leaflet with the acronyms, but no advice on how to deal with it”. She discussed the perceived merits of having specialists in to provide the training. She highlighted one

session during SE2 as being particularly helpful, this had involved an LSA talking to the PGCE students.

4.5.6 Participant story 6: F3

F3 did not have much prior experience, having only spent three weeks with an A Level class and one week in a primary school before starting her PGCE. However, she was confident and self-assured throughout. When discussing what had helped her confidence, F3 put it down to experience and “just being left to it”. She explained that during SE1 she worked from the school’s SEN-specific booklets, but during SE2 she could take ownership over her lessons; as long as she covered the scheme of work, she had more of a free reign. She acknowledged that every class was going to be different, so her confidence was really in her ability to adapt. This ability to adapt her lessons was also something she felt had developed through the year; rather than just sticking to her lesson plan, her increased self-efficacy meant she felt increasingly confident to change things during a lesson.

4.5.7 Participant story 7: F4

Before her PGCE, F4 had experience of working with young people who had dropped out of school and were covering an alternative curriculum, pupils she described as “the ones who need more support than in a normal classroom”. She was probably the least confident at the start of the year, explaining, “the unknown is the worst bit”; she had “an idea of what to expect, but no idea what [would] actually happen”. However, F4 showed the greatest increase following SE1, something she put down to the “wide variety of really interesting experiences”. This confidence grew again during SE2 and whilst F4's mentor had been “less helpful” during this placement, she did feel that reduced mentor support provided her with the

opportunity to try out some of the things she had learned during SE1. She acknowledged that she had the confidence to do this because she had been supported in trying new things during SE1, and "definitely felt more confident this time again". As with the other participants, F4 put this down to the experience she had gained.

4.5.8 Summary of interviews

The seven participants' stories told of very different experiences during their PGCE year. All participants had begun the year with different levels of experience, both with children and being in schools generally, but also specifically with children with SEN. These differing levels of experience inevitably led to differing confidence levels. However, it was not always the case that a greater level of experience meant a greater level of confidence. Rather, it appeared that for some participants a greater level of experience meant a greater understanding of the scope of SEN and resulted in a lower level of confidence at the point of the first interview. However, with the experience they gained during their two placements, all participants developed their confidence throughout the year.

4.5.9 Self-efficacy questionnaire 1: February 2015

A 16 question, likert scale questionnaire was distributed to all participants following the completion of SE1 and SE2, but prior to the second and then third round of interviews (figure 4.1). The questionnaire had been developed from the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) Scale; details on this are given in section 3.9.2.

The questionnaire was intended to be a tool to quantify changes in the participants' self-efficacy between completing SE1 and the end of their PGCE. To evaluate the

change, the results of the questionnaires were analysed after each completion. The results were used as a discussion point during the following interview. Generally, the questionnaire backed up the results of the interviews; the students who were more confident in their interviews answered the questionnaire more positively.

For the purposes of analysis, a numerical value was assigned to the answers, with 1 = strongly disagree through to 6 = strongly agree. Following the administration of the first questionnaire the mean score for the participants' answers varied from 2.29 to 5.00 (range=2.71).

	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4	Mean
I can make my expectations clear about pupil behaviour	6	4	5	4	4	6	4	4.71
I am able to calm a pupil who is disruptive or noisy	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4.43
I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school	4	3	3	2	2	4	3	3.00
I can assist families in helping their children do well in school	3	3	3	2	2	4	2	2.71
I can accurately gauge pupil comprehension of what I have taught	5	5	4	4	5	5	4	4.57
I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behaviour in the classroom before it occurs	4	4	4	3	3	4	3	3.57
I can control disruptive behaviour in the classroom	5	5	5	4	4	5	4	4.57
I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with additional learning needs	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	2.86
I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of pupil with additional learning needs are accommodated	5	4	5	4	5	5	3	4.43
I am able to get children to follow classroom rules	6	4	5	4	5	6	4	4.86
I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists) in designing educational plans for pupils with additional learning needs	3	2	2	2	2	3	2	2.29
I am able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., LSAs, TAs, other teachers) to teach pupils with additional learning needs in the classroom	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4.29
I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., formative, summative AfL, etc.)	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5.00
I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of pupils with additional learning needs	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4.57
I am confident when dealing with pupils who are physically aggressive	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	3.14
I am able to provide an alternative explanation or example when pupils are confused	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.86
Mean	4.56	3.94	4.00	3.56	3.75	4.63	3.50	3.99

Table 4.1: Results of first self-efficacy questionnaire (February 2015); N=7; 1=strongly disagree; 6=strongly agree

It is clear from table 4.1 that one element all participants answered low on referred to dealing with parents or families. This concerned three questions; “I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school”, “I can assist families in helping their children do well in school” and “I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with additional learning needs”. The mean scores for these questions were 3.00, 2.71 and 2.86 respectively. Participants’ scores were also low for the question that referred to collaborating with other professionals, with a mean score of 2.29. When discussing the results with the participants, the reason given for the results was a lack of experience in dealing with parents. M1 and F3 had attended a parents’ evening during SE1, which was reflected in the scores being higher for making “parents feel comfortable coming to school”. The highest score following this first questionnaire was for the question “I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., formative, summative AfL, etc.)”, reinforcing the theory that the participants had a greater sense of self-efficacy when dealing with something they had experience or knowledge of. Assessment had been covered during their university lectures and had been the subject of one of their written assignments.

4.5.10 Self-efficacy questionnaire 2: July 2015

	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4	Mean
I can make my expectations clear about pupil behaviour	6	5	5	5	6	6	5	5.43
I am able to calm a pupil who is disruptive or noisy	6	5	5	5	6	5	5	5.29
I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.71
I can assist families in helping their children do well in school	4	5	5	4	5	4	4	4.43
I can accurately gauge pupil comprehension of what I have taught	6	6	6	5	5	5	6	5.57
I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behaviour in the classroom before it occurs	5	4	4	5	6	5	5	4.86
I can control disruptive behaviour in the classroom	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	5.57
I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities of their children with additional learning needs	4	3	4	5	4	5	4	4.14
I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of pupil with additional learning needs are accommodated	5	4	4	6	4	6	5	4.86
I am able to get children to follow classroom rules	6	5	5	5	6	6	6	5.57
I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g., speech and language therapists) in designing educational plans for pupils with additional learning needs	5	3	4	5	5	5	5	4.57
I am able to work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., LSAs, TAs, other teachers) to teach pupils with additional learning needs in the classroom	6	4	5	5	6	6	6	5.43
I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., formative, summative AfL, etc.)	6	5	5	6	6	6	6	5.71
I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of pupils with additional learning needs	6	5	5	6	5	6	5	5.43
I am confident when dealing with pupils who are physically aggressive	4	3	4	4	3	4	4	3.71
I am able to provide an alternative explanation or example when pupils are confused	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6.00
Mean	5.31	4.56	4.81	5.13	5.25	5.38	5.13	5.08

Table 4.2: Results of second self-efficacy questionnaire (July 2015); N=7; 1=strongly disagree; 6=strongly agree

Table 4.2 shows the results of the second questionnaire, where the mean scores had increased, ranging from 3.71 to 6.00 (range=2.29).

Whilst the sample size for the questionnaire was small, it still provided some interesting results. F3 scored highest overall in both questionnaires but showed the second lowest increase. F3 had appeared confident from the beginning, which is reflected in these results. F4 scored lowest in the first questionnaire but showed the greatest increase. In the field notes made during the interviews, it was noted that she appeared nervous at the beginning, but that she spoke with increasing confidence throughout the study. The range of the participants' scores reduced significantly between the two questionnaires; following the first questionnaire, the range of participants' scores was 1.13, after the second interview this had dropped to 0.82, suggesting that, irrespective of how confident the participants had started the year, the experience they had gained during their PGCE had 'levelled the playing field' to a certain extent.

4.5.11 Summary

Experience appeared fundamental in developing the participants' self-efficacy, even M2 who was negative about inclusive teaching credited it for developing his confidence. One interesting point made by F2, which is discussed more fully in section 6.3, is the importance of student teachers to be adaptable. Overwhelmingly, responses referred to feeling confident about aspects of SEN that had been experienced during the placements (T2). Participants also discussed how they felt that there was too much emphasis on the theory side of SEN, that having more practical, hands-on sessions would be more beneficial (T3).

4.6 Research question 2

There are two parts to the second research question:

- a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher?
- b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?

In the literature review I established that for coaching and mentoring to be successful, the relationship between mentor and mentee needed to be positive, but if it was, this was an invaluable tool in developing self-efficacy. RQ2 was concerned with finding out the role coaching and mentoring played in developing the participants' self-efficacy, and how their views of mentoring changed throughout the year. Therefore, the following four themes were highlighted in the interview transcripts:

- **RQ2i**: Positive mentor/mentee relationship
- **RQ2ii**: Negative mentor/mentee relationship
- **RQ2iii**: Self-efficacy developing in a positive way/increasing
- **RQ2iv**: Self-efficacy developing in a negative way/decreasing

Initially I had considered highlighting anything the participants had identified as causing these changes, but when I started trying to do this, it became clear that they did not explicitly state this, they talked more generally about the relationship with their mentors in a positive or negative way, so this is information I had to extract from their responses.

Once I had highlighted the four themes, the transcripts were analysed for common responses, or any patterns in the views expressed.

4.6.1 RQ2i: Positive mentor/mentee relationship

The participants' first experience of mentors was predominantly good; M1, M2 and F1 said nothing negative about their first mentor at all, F2 and F4 were also very positive about their subject mentors, finding issues only with their senior mentors in school, while M3 described his personal relationship with his mentor as "okay", but said in terms of getting any help or advice from her, he had "gone as far as [he] could after five weeks".

M1 was perhaps the most positive after SE1, talking at length about the experience he had gained in the school's ASD base and with the various SEN classes he had taught. He described his school mentor as "fantastic, invaluable" explaining that "you'd get nowhere near that experience in a lecture or a seminar". During his placement he was teaching alongside, and together with his mentor "3-4 hours per day so [he] could just talk to him as needed". Similarly, F1, F2, F3 and F4 all mentioned the availability of their mentor being good and attributed this to the development of a positive relationship.

F3 was discussing her mentor being supportive, explaining that "a lot of the time you're so flustered and caught up in the mechanics of the lesson that you don't notice what's coming out of your mouth. Having someone to point things out has been absolutely essential". She described a supportive mentor who would "allow [her] to make mistakes and help [her] learn from them". M2 admitted that teaching pupils with SEN was not something he enjoyed, but explained how his mentor had been

supportive, giving him “ideas and tips about what to do when the kids were playing up”. F1 described being allowed to “experiment to a certain degree” whilst “knowing [her] mentor would be there to help if needed” and M1 said he enjoyed being “given freedom to develop lessons from the schemes of work”.

With the exception of M3, all participants had talked positively about the support they received from their first mentor. Following SE2, the results were more mixed; whilst all participants were able to say something positive about the mentoring they received in SE2, there were also more negative comments than following SE1. M1 explained that his mentor was “really good at helping out with troublesome classes, and with the SEN pupils he was very good” but did not find him as useful as his previous mentor, acknowledging that this might be “because of how good they were during the last placement, [he] didn’t need to ask them for help so much this time”. M2 liked how his mentor was “available lots of the time, whenever [he] needed them”. M3 and F2 had regular weekly meetings with their senior mentors, M3 said his senior mentor “was good to talk to about SEN stuff” and F2 liked the fact that her senior mentor had arranged for the school’s SENCO to speak to all the PGCE students. F3 described her mentor as “brilliant” explaining that “anything at all, he’d give you a range of ideas and say, ‘just give it a go, if it doesn’t work, then try something else’ but would also be there to feedback and make sure mistakes weren’t repeated”. She said this approach was “very important in developing confidence”. When discussing if there was enough time on the PGCE to develop a meaningful relationship with a mentor, all participants agreed there was. F4 said she “definitely had enough time with [her] school mentor” but the mentor’s “open door policy helped this”. Even F2, who said her mentor “wasn’t as supportive this time” thought there was sufficient time

on the PGCE with the important caveat that this was “as long as the mentor is willing”.

With the amount of time spent in school outweighing the time spent in university significantly, it was inevitable that there would be a greater focus on the school mentor. However, the mentoring role the university tutor played in developing the participants’ self-efficacy should not be underestimated. Following SE1, F3 spoke particularly highly of the tutor, describing the advice she received as “vital” when preparing to teach a class with several SEN pupils. She explained that the tutor was “always at the end of an email” and she could contact her whenever she needed to for advice. M1 said he found the tutor to be “useful, but not as useful as the school mentor” but he also said he would “rather ask school mentor for advice as they’re there”. F1 was also positive about the university mentor, explaining she was “easy to contact when needed” and that this was “a great confidence boost, a great port of call if [she] needed to say, ‘I really don’t know how to do this, what would you do?’”. Following SE2, the tutor was again spoken of positively. F3 said “she was great, she didn’t really work to any kind of list, she would just ask ‘right, what do you want to do?’ and we’d do that. It was far more useful than just being told what the SEN terms mean”. Whilst the students were on their placements, F1 said they all knew the tutor was “on the end of phone or email if needed”.

4.6.2 RQ2iii: Self-efficacy developing in a positive way/increasing

All participants reported an increase in their self-efficacy in the third interview, compared to the first. There appeared to be a slight dip when they started SE2, with one possible cause for this being that the students were in new, unfamiliar surroundings and had to learn the routines of their new school. F1 explained that

SE2 was “in a much tougher school” and that “initially, [she] hated it, the mentor didn’t seem as nice and [she] found it really tough dealing with kids that didn’t seem to want to learn; [she] felt like [she] was failing almost”. However, she explained that “as the placement went on and [she] got to know [her] mentor better, [she] realised she was just different”. The students had to get to know staff and pupils all over again and the relationships they had built with their last mentor, even in the case of those that were not entirely successful, needed to be built again from scratch. Despite this midway dip, all participants said they felt more confident at the end of SE2 than they had at the beginning of their PGCE. Adapting to new surroundings, new pupils and new staff is something the participants will have to do when they start teaching, so again it is good experience.

F2, who had described her first mentor as “supportive” explained how she had found “developing a rapport with the pupils hard work to start with” but said that “with support from [her] mentor, [she] got the hang of it”. F3 said that “having someone to point things out, if you’ve made a mistake for example, but doing it in a way that’s not criticism was vital”. F3 found it “useful” to be able to “practise and have someone tell you when something had worked and when it had not”.

Following SE2, participants spoke about building on what they had taken from SE1. M2 said he was “generally more confident” and M3 explained how he had been “thrown in at the deep end with some of the challenging classes, with this kind of thing [the mentor] was useful, it meant [he] got to try things out and learn from [his] mistakes, although at first it was a bit daunting”. He acknowledges that his mentor’s approach worked in this situation because of the type of personality he has; “it was fine for [him], but perhaps not for someone else”. So, despite saying the mentor

mentee relationship was “pretty non-existent” it might be a case of the mentor taking a ‘hands-off’ approach because he was confident in M3’s ability and thought that would be the best way to help him develop. F3’s mentor arranged for her to “work as an LSA for the day” while F4’s mentor “got [her] to do an ‘LSA trail’ and follow one of the LSAs for a day to all her lessons”. Both participants found this experience “extremely useful”. F3 said it was “insightful” and such a valuable experience that she thought “it’s something that should be included on every PGCE”. F1 “spent any free time [she] had in the school’s ASD base”, she found this “invaluable” in developing her self-efficacy. She credited her mentor for allowing her to spend the time there, verifying what F2 said; “she could have kept me in the department, I know of some mentors who treated their students like extra help, someone to help with marking and things so they could have a break”. In addition to crediting their mentors with developing their self-efficacy, participants also mentioned the hands-on experience they gained during their placements. While this was something everybody got to do, it was clear that those students with supportive mentors were given more opportunity to gain a wider variety of experiences.

A number of the participants had been on placement schools where there was a SEN unit within the school, those participants who had taken advantage of this and spent time there, or just had more experience of pupils with SEN as the proportion of the school population with SEN was higher, seemed to be more confident. They were able to give far more examples to support their answers and talked with greater confidence. They had been more willing to take on additional tasks, with M1 talking at length about how he spent time in the SEN unit of the school, outside of the lessons he was required to teach.

4.6.3 RQ2iv: Self-efficacy developing in a negative way/decreasing

Low or decreased self-efficacy seemed to stem from a feeling of being underprepared or ill-informed. Participants discussed how they had learned the theory but not how to put it into practice. F3 talked about there being “too much focus on academia in uni, but the PGCE isn’t about that, it’s about hands on doing it. You can talk about academia until you’re blue in the face, but it doesn’t necessarily help”, while F4 explained how they would “learn the theory, but not how to implement it, and that was just confusing. Improvements could definitely be made!” M3 said he “struggled with kids when their reading age was low; no strategies were given to cope with this” and that he was “told about the kids’ IEPs, but not how to get hold of them”. He admitted to “not seeing any examples of good practice”

F4 discussed a session on inclusive teaching they had done in university in the January following SE1, she explained how it “felt a bit out of place, we did it in January after we’d been in school, it would have been more useful before we’d done a placement”.

Participants talked about perceived failures and how these impacted on their confidence. A response that was common amongst many of the participants was that when starting SE2, they found classroom management to be a slight issue; F1 explained how she had it “worked out” in SE1 and then had to “start all over again”.

Following SE2, M1, who had been positive throughout, admitted that although he did not feel his self-efficacy had decreased, he did think he was “more realistic about what SEN teaching involves and the challenge it will pose”. In contrast to M1’s positivity, M2 had made no secret of the fact he did not like teaching pupils with SEN,

he explained that he had “signed up to teach physics, then everything else came with it, it opened [his] eyes, it’s not something [he’d] choose, but it’s something [he’ll] cope with” He was quite clear in his assertion that “it’s not [his] vocation to deal with kids with SEN that are challenging”. When discussing if he thought there was enough time on the PGCE to build a meaningful relationship with his mentor, he said he thought there was, but that “no amount of time would make [him] want to teach kids with SEN”.

The pressure of the paperwork requirements of the PGCE was also an issue. Every week 15 hours of lessons had to be planned, taught and evaluated, with F2 explaining she could spend “up to two hours planning a one-hour lesson”. Part of the reason for this was the lack of a relationship with her mentor. She said she had been able to go to the biology mentor for some help, but “felt like [she] couldn’t ask the her too much because then [she’d] annoy [her] mentor”

4.6.4 Summary

The quality of mentoring was variable. In the most successful examples, participants experienced a relationship that was supportive and fostered development; they had enjoyed placements where their mentors had made time for them and were available when they needed them. Participants had been able to develop their confidence through hands-on experience and were not afraid to try things out, knowing their mentor was there to help if or when they were needed. Unfortunately, not every participant experienced this, and some were left having to find alternative sources of support (T4).

4.6.5 RQ2ii: Negative mentor/mentee relationship

Whilst there were many examples of positive relationships during the PGCE course, there were also examples of where the relationships had been less successful and therefore less productive. Participant M3 seemed to have the least supportive experience during SE1; he spoke of a mentor that was “not very helpful” and “didn’t really have time”. M3’s mentor explained that she “didn’t have many good ideas herself as she was finding things difficult”, but her attitude towards SEN pupils was “definitely negative”. In contrast to F3, who in addition to having a mentor that would help her learn from her mistakes and “showed a lot of examples of good practice” M3 explained that he “hadn’t seen any good, engaging SEN lessons where things had gone well, so it was hard to know what to do”. M3 had spoken to the school’s SENCO on several occasions because of the “lack of support” from his mentor. Whilst F2 had been positive about her subject mentor, she was less so about the senior mentor, with whom PGCE students are supposed to meet once per week. She explained that “the senior mentor was not very good; they only arranged three meetings during the whole placement. He also called the SEN kids ‘bonkers’ and ‘nuts’ and moaned about them, he didn’t say anything helpful at all”. F4 did meet with her senior mentor on a weekly basis, but said the meetings were “not very useful as they didn’t focus on SEN at all”.

M3 explained he had found “alternatives” to speaking to his mentor to overcome the problems he encountered. He discussed speaking “to other PGCE students on [his] course or on placement at [his] school”.

Following SE2, the participants seemed to be a little more critical of their mentors than after SE1. This might be because the majority of them had had positive

experiences first time, or it might be that they were more confident, so the help and advice they were offered was not as beneficial. M1 said he “only saw the senior mentor once a month and had no real contact with anyone other than the department mentor”. M2 said that his mentor was “okay”, although if he wanted help he “had to go to her, but that’s just how she was and that’s how [he] was”. M3 again didn’t seem to have a positive experience, although he did say “it was better than first time”. He described his relationship with his mentor as “pretty non-existent. He just left [him] to it after a couple of weeks when he realised [he] knew what [he] was doing” He also said his mentor had been “busy so [he] didn’t get to see much of him”. F1 said she was “a bit unsure about [her] mentor when [she] started the placement, she didn’t seem as approachable as last time”. F2 said she “didn’t get that much” from her second mentor, “she said everything in a really negative way, like ‘you really shouldn’t be doing this’, rather than saying how it should be done”. F2 had tried to get experience in the school’s ASD and behaviour units, but her mentor “wouldn’t let [her] because she wanted [her] to teach her lessons because it made her life easier.” During the last month of the placement, F2 said the relationship deteriorated further when she’d heard her mentor “boasting” that she “only [had] three lessons this week”, F2 said this was because she “was teaching all her lessons, doing her marking as well as all of [her] own stuff”.

M3 seemed to be quite negative about the whole mentoring process, he explained how he thought the “January time in uni was a bit wasted, there were 6 weeks in uni, but [they] couldn’t do anything towards the assignment until [they] were back in school”. He suggested that they “could have used the time to cover SEN and have a specialist come in, or visited a centre like [the school he had been on placement at]”.

This was an interesting suggestion and fit in with one of the themes (T2) that found experience is fundamental to developing self-efficacy; this is discussed further in sections 5.2.2 and 6.2.1.

4.7 Research question 3

As with RQ2, RQ3 had two parts:

- a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice?
- b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?

The literature review found that too often, student teachers are required to reflect on demand, having gone through a sequence of steps, and that reflection becomes almost a checklist to work through (section 2.8), having no real value in aiding student development. I wanted to find out how useful the participants found the reflection they did, and whether it had been used to improve their practice. To do this, the following themes were highlighted in the transcripts:

- **RQ3i**: Reflection referred to in a positive way
- **RQ3ii**: Reflection referred to in a negative way
- **RQ3iii**: Changes made because of reflection

In addition to the transcripts, the participants' weekly lesson evaluation forms were also used to answer this question. I read through the evaluation forms alongside the transcripts of each participants' interview, to see if the responses matched up or not. The forms were filled out in varying levels of detail and very often only reinforced what the participants said during their interviews.

4.7.1 Reflection referred to in a positive way

All participants said they could see the value of reflection as a tool to improve their practice, and all were able to give at least one example of how they had used reflection during their PGCE year. As before, some participants were more positive than others, but interestingly, M1, who had been so positive about other aspects of the PGCE and his placements, was slightly less so in comparison to M3 who had been negative about his experiences with his mentors. M1 explained how there was “no real opportunity to reflect on teaching SEN, apart from the after-lesson chat with the LSA maybe” however, he described this as “really useful”, that he’d “check, what had worked well? What could be improved? Were pupils able to access the information? Did they have the right resources? That kind of stuff”. He thought that these informal chats with the LSAs were more useful than the formal feedback forms; “when you’re having a chat with someone, they’re seeing things you can’t see; it’s good to have another perspective”. M2 appeared far more relaxed during the final interview, and talked more openly than he had done previously. He said he would describe most people who enter the teaching profession as “fairly reflective” and discussed setting targets to be addressed in his subsequent lessons. He thought this “would be good, an improvement on the tick boxes”. He said that this was something he had done informally, where he’d discuss a lesson with his mentor and then decide what he should change when planning the next lesson. M3 and F1 discussed the longer self-evaluation forms they had to fill in three times per week. They both said they felt they were much more useful than the tick box ones they were required to do after every lesson. M3 admitted that “by the end of the tick box ones I was just ticking anything, but with the longer ones you could reflect on pupils’ learning, reflect on your

teaching and things you could do to improve, you could take one thing through each box and just reflected on that.” Similarly, M2, M3 and F3 said that they would reflect on their teaching and set themselves a target for their next lesson. However, there was nothing formal to check they’d implemented their target. F4 echoed their views, explaining that she thought “reflection was definitely useful, even if you didn’t write anything down, it helped you to think, ‘right this didn’t work very well last lesson, I’m not going to do it again, I’ll try it this way instead’. That kind of informal reflection made you think about things while you were filling out the forms”. F2 had the least number of positive things to say about reflection, but did find value in a microteaching activity the students took part in, in university before SE1. This involved students teaching a lesson to their peers and receiving feedback from them, on which they had to reflect.

4.7.2 Reflection referred to in a negative way

There was criticism from all participants for the tick box forms they were required to complete after every lesson. M1 described them as “useless”, F1 said she thought they were “pointless after the first week” and although M2 was slightly less critical, describing them as “a bit of a waste of time”, he said he “realised by the end you could get away with not doing them”. This was confirmed when M2 showed me his weekly evaluation forms for the last few weeks of his ITT and they hadn’t been filled in. F2 referred to the weekly forms when she was discussing the quantity of paperwork that was required on the PGCE. She felt that because there was so much of it, “you just kind of did it and got it out of the way as quickly as possible, rather than actually making it meaningful”. She suggested they would be more useful if the number required was reduced; “it would be better to maybe set one or two targets at

a time and do it in small steps to make it more meaningful". This was a view shared by other participants; F1 said she "felt like some of the paperwork was there for the sake of it, but you had to do it, so you'd spend time doing that when it would be more useful doing other things like properly reflecting on the lessons". F4 said the reflection she had to do on her weekly forms "would be very superficial, it was just 'yeah, I did that well, it was a great lesson' without realising I didn't do this or that". M1 described some of the paperwork as a "pointless exercise; it wasn't like I was sat there, thinking deeply and reflecting, it was more a case of 'I've got a box to fill in, I'd better put something there that looks and sounds about right'". When discussing the quantity of paperwork on the PGCE, M2 spoke about the university's lesson plan (Appendix 11) they were required to fill in and the lesson planning he did; "it's an interesting one because you obviously have to plan a lesson in as much as you make sure you know what you're doing, but the filling in a bit of paper, with twenty odd boxes, some of which were very repetitive, was just a waste of time". As with the tick box reflection, he admitted "I didn't do it in the end". He echoed the views of the others, that the reflection they were required to do could be improved by teaching a lesson and identifying targets to address. He did not think there needed to be a rigid structure to this, but that it should be "more self-led". Despite explaining that "in [his] head that's what [he'd] do", as there was no requirement to write anything down, he did not, so there was no way of checking back over targets and the evaluating any potential impact they may have had. F2 had said she saw the value in the microteaching activity they had done in university; in contrast M2 described it as "a joke" and "childish", explaining he "got really irritated by it, you were supposed to say what you'd done wrong, how you could improve, and other people would criticise".

M2 had been very careful to justify any potential weaknesses he highlighted and at times appeared very defensive, so it perhaps was not surprising that he did not find value in an activity where he would receive what he described as 'criticism' from his peers. M3's negativity came from the fact that his relationship with his mentor was poor; "the mentor meetings were supposed to be used to reflect on teaching and set targets, but [he] never had mentor meeting, so didn't do this". F2 could definitely see the value of reflection explaining that "it is important, and it should be important, but there hasn't really been chance to do it this year with everything else as well. Reducing the quantity would make it more meaningful". She also revealed that "nobody ever looked at [her] lesson plans or feedback forms, so [she] gave up in the end because [she] wasn't given any feedback". When I looked at the weekly forms participants were required to fill in, there was definitely a reduction in the quantity of reflection done using them as the course progressed.

4.7.3 Changes made because of reflection

Participants discussed how reflection had effected change over the year; they felt the feedback they received at the beginning of SE1, and the reflection they had to do because of this had more impact. F1, who had been very positive about her first mentor, explained that she would "discuss the lesson at length with [her] mentor and [they'd] decide together what [she] should try differently next time". M3 and F2 both said that they had made changes because of the three detailed evaluation forms they filled in weekly, M2 explaining that "this reflection was more in-depth, so it was easier to look at and say 'yeah, that's what I need to work on' and then do something about it". M1 had been quite negative about both the tick box and longer evaluation forms. However, he said he had made changes, but that these "were more from the teacher

saying to [him], what do you think went well? What could you change? And discussing it”.

When discussing the benefit of reflection in relation to teaching inclusively, the feedback from the participants was that there was nothing specific to SEN, in the case of M1, M2 M3, F1 and F4 and very little for F2 and F3. F2 said there “was only one box on the tick box sheet that mentioned differentiation, but nothing else to do with SEN”.

4.7.4 Weekly feedback forms

Participants provided me with copies of their completed weekly evaluation forms after SE2. I had planned to use these to when answering RQ3 which looked at the opportunities for participants to be reflective during their ITT. However, the forms did not provide any further detail than that which was discussed during the final interview, therefore they were used to confirm what participants had said during this interview. As expected, the weekly evaluation forms were filled in with a varying degree of detail. All of the early forms met the minimum requirements of the course, but for most that was as far as they went, and in some cases, by the end they were not being filled in at all. For others, M3 and F1, it appeared they had spent far more time completing them. This matched up with what had been said during the interviews. The overwhelming view from participants was that the feedback forms were necessary for the course, as in they had to be done to pass, but they had very little value to the participants. One, F2 revealed that she “often just filled them in at the last minute, not necessarily about things that had happened that week, but [she] had to put something”. Having self-set targets that needed to be addressed the following week was discussed as a way of making the evaluations more worthwhile.

Participants seemed reluctant to add to their workload but acknowledged this would force them to consider areas of their practice that actually needed addressing, rather than just putting something to fill the space on the form.

4.7.5 Summary

As the literature review had suggested (section 2.8), formal reflection was often a checklist to work through and seen as a tick box exercise with very little value. That is not to say there is no value to reflecting on practice. On the contrary, all participants could identify at least one area of their practice that they had improved following, sometimes informal, reflection. They agreed though that the formal requirement for reflection on the PGCE needs to change to make it more worthwhile (T5).

4.8 Follow up NQT interviews

All seven original participants were approached to take part in follow up interviews in the November of their first term teaching. M1 was too busy due to family commitments, M2 had started a PhD as he felt he wanted to “teach the more able” and F4 did not respond. The four remaining participants all agreed to take part in a follow up interview once they had completed their first full term of teaching. I felt that the results of the initial research left some unanswered questions, or rather posed further questions that needed answering, once the participants had had a chance to put into practice what they had learned during their PGCE year. The interviews were semi-structured again, to ensure the key points were covered and it was a format the participants were familiar with and had worked well. The interview questions are shown below in table 4.3:

Point to address	Question(s)
Positives from PGCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thinking about the theory side of SEN that you learned in university, what have you been able to put into practice since starting work as a teacher? ▪ How useful was theory that you learned in university? ▪ How useful was theory that you learned whilst at your placement schools? ▪ Now think about any practical experience you had during your PGCE, how useful was this? ▪ What was the most useful practical experience you gained? ▪ What has been the most useful thing you learned during the last year?
Negatives from PGCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there anything that you did not cover on your PGCE that you think would have been useful to you in your first term teaching? ▪ Is there anything that you covered that you have not used/do not think you'll use in the future?
Role of mentor post-PGCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Since starting teaching, have you been assigned an NQT mentor in school? ▪ Since starting teaching, have you been assigned an NQT mentor of outside school? ▪ How useful have these mentors been? ▪ Which mentor have you found to be the most useful? ▪ Is there anything the school mentor could do differently? ▪ Is there anything the non-school mentor could do differently?
Post-PGCE training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What support have you been given/CPD have you done in relation to SEN?

Table 4.3: NQT interview questions

The first thing that I noticed when speaking to the participants was just how much more confident they all appeared to be than when they began their PGCE. Even in the final round of interviews, despite all of them knowing they had passed their PGCE year, there was a degree on anticipation for what was to come next. The fear of the unknown had been mentioned by F4 during her first interview and it was noticeable that this was the case when the NQT year was mentioned, so I was pleased to see they all appeared to have built on the confidence they had developed during their PGCE.

Practical experience had overwhelmingly been credited for the development of the participants' confidence during their PGCE. The theory side had fared less favourably; the "lists of acronyms" they had been given, with no real-life examples of

how to cater for these pupils for example, so I wanted to find out if anything had changed when it came to putting into practice what they had learned during the PGCE. All participants said that the practical experience they had from their PGCE provided them with the knowledge and confidence to go into the classroom and teach pupils with SEN, they all gave examples of something they had experienced during their PGCE coming up since they started teaching. Where F1 had appeared nervous at the beginning of her PGCE, taking some time to develop her self-efficacy, as an NQT the constructive and supportive relationship with her school's SENCO meant she approached inclusive teaching positively. F1 was not the only one to mention their school's SENCO; F2 also appeared to have developed a very good relationship with her SENCO, discussing the various training opportunities he had arranged for her. However, M3 explained he knew who the SENCO was, but had only had limited contact, although he spoke positively about taking part in training with local school SENCOs. M3 explained that the theory side of SEN he learned at university was "largely useful, providing [him] with a toolkit of ideas to differentiate". F3 was quite definite in her assertion that she felt "theory can't necessarily be useful until you have had the opportunity to apply it in a real classroom situation" when discussing why she had been slightly negative about the "list of acronyms [they] had been given last year, without any real examples of how to implement them". F2 went further, explaining "each child has specific needs and whilst there are some 'rules of thumb' we can apply to specific situations, it is often a case that you need to speak to each child, parent, carer or SENCO to establish best practice". F3 had spent a day working as an LSA during SE2, which at the time she had spoken highly of. She made mention of this experience again and explained how it had encouraged her to approach the

LSAs in her school “who had a specific and thorough understanding of the children with whom they worked”. This is discussed further in section 5.2.2.

At the end of his PGCE M3 had said he was apprehensive about the behavioural issues associated with some pupils with SEN, and he discussed this further during this interview. He had now gained more experience of this with one of his Year 9 classes, so felt “slightly more competent”. F1 had been lucky to have two supportive mentors during her PGCE, but surprisingly, she felt this may have affected how well she started her NQT year; she explained “it was a shock to go from loads of support, to suddenly nothing”. Going into a classroom without the support of a mentor had meant participants adjusting their approach, even M3, who hadn’t had a particularly positive relationship with his mentors, commented that it was “a little scary not having someone there for backup”.

All participants had been assigned an external mentor, however F2 revealed it had taken “a few months to get sorted”. M3’s school mentor “hadn’t been particularly useful as he [was] rarely in contact”. F3 said her mentor had “the potential to be very useful, but she’s a member of the SLT who has an almost full timetable”. F1 said her school mentor was “good at the paperwork and organisation part, but not that approachable”. It seemed that as with the PGCE, the quality of mentoring was variable.

4.9 PGCE tutor interview

4.9.1 Rationale

Initially, I had planned to feedback the results of my research to the university tutor out of professional courtesy; she had allowed me to conduct my research with her

students, it only seemed appropriate to inform her of the key findings. Obviously, anything that was said in the interviews would be reported anonymously. However, as the research progressed it became clear that this was another avenue to pursue in terms of building a complete picture of the situation. I wanted to interview her to see what she thought of the results, but also what, if anything, she felt was lacking from PGCE courses in relation to preparing teachers to teach inclusively. I was able to draw conclusions from the research I had carried out, and from these make recommendations (section 6.2). However, other than my own experience of completing a PGCE, I have no understanding of what is involved. By speaking to the tutor, I was able to gain a good understanding of the implications of my recommendations and not only did it give me another perspective, but it also allowed me to find out if they were feasible. Because I did not know how she would respond to the feedback, it was slightly more difficult to plan an interview schedule. There were some topics that I thought would arise, so I planned for how I thought the interview would go, with the freedom to adapt, should it differ from my expectations. The procedure and ethics were explained to the tutor, as was her right to withdraw at any time. Following this she signed a consent form (Appendix 7). The interview questions are presented in Table 4.4:

Point to address	Questions
Too much was covered 'in theory' with not enough practical examples	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of the key points raised was that there were not enough practical sessions on dealing with different types of SEN; is this something you think could be changed? ▪ What outside agencies/experts do you get in to speak to students? ▪ Is there scope to increase this?
Students who had a placement in a school with an SEN unit were more positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would it be possible for all students to do a placement in a school with an SEN unit? Not necessarily for the entirety of a placement, maybe a supplementary 3-4-week placement? Secondary students spend time in a primary school, so could this work for an SEN unit?
Relationships with school mentors were not always positive/constructive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How are schools assigned to students/students to schools? ▪ Is there any consideration of the mentor-mentee relationship? ▪ Is there scope to do this? ▪ What training is given to mentors? ▪ How could this be improved?
Doing an LSA trail or working as an LSA for a day had been done in a couple of schools and the feedback was extremely positive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is this something that could be built into the course? ▪ What are your thoughts? ▪ What are the potential negatives from doing this?
Reflection seen as a 'tick box exercise' - how could it be made more useful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some said their feedback was filled in "because it had to be", how could it be made more useful? ▪ Could participants set targets they have to follow up on? ▪ Would there be a way of checking this easily, or would it increase workload too much?

Table 4.4: PGCE mentor interview questions (April 2016)

4.9.2 Results

The interview with the university tutor turned into more of a discussion, which was very detailed at times. She listened attentively to my findings and was keen to discuss several the points. She agreed that there may be too much focus on the theory side of SEN, but explained this is “this is due to limited time available to cover everything in college, regrettably” but that what they were taught in university should “prepare them to understand the nature of teaching varying degrees of SEN, to be complimented with actual practice and advice from their SENCO”. Guest speakers from the LEA were invited in assist with this delivery in the university.

She seemed particularly keen on the idea of student teachers spending time in a special school or a school with a dedicated SEN base, suggesting that linking with their partner schools' feeder schools would increase the scope for this.

The tutor explained that the matching of mentors and mentees is based on a number of factors, one of these is if the student teachers request to be in a particular geographical area, which can somewhat limit the ability of the university to match them with the most suitable mentor, although she was keen to stress they "do their best and try to ensure the wellbeing of their students".

The training the school mentors received varied, depending on the school, the tutor explained that "mentors are trained individually, in situ, or collectively according to the centre's mentor training programme". She explained that the quality of this could be improved by the school giving "more free time to their mentors to enable them to attend mentor training sessions".

We discussed the inclusion of an LSA trail for F2 and F4 working as an LSA; this was very well received. However, the tutor explained that "releasing LSAs is costly in time and money but should be an aspect that should be included and catered for". The only way LSAs are currently involved are when they are "included as part of lesson planning".

One thing the tutor appeared to feel very strongly about was the need for student teachers to be reflective; "reflection is always a necessity for becoming a good teacher. I've got no patience with those who don't reflect, it's a reflection of not so good teachers". When discussing the informal targets the participants had mentioned they set themselves, the tutor explained that student teachers should "be actively

monitoring their own development and reaching their targets, as should their mentor and tutor...forget workload, it's part of their job!"

We discussed the practical experience that student teachers gain during their ITT and the impact of paperwork on workload; the tutor explained she was "all for maximising the experience at the chalk-face, lesson plans could be reduced for SE2 in view of experience accrued in SE1". This led to a discussion about the possibility of extending the duration of the PGCE, which she did not feel there was scope for at present, although she made it clear she did not agree with this; "personally, and ideally, it should run for 2 years, given the ground, paperwork and practical experience needed" but acknowledged that "degree 3 years, PGCE 2 years? Fewer takers, and we're already desperately short of teachers entering the profession".

4.10 Conclusion

The empirical research was carried out largely as planned; three rounds of interviews were conducted with the sample and a questionnaire had been administered at two points during the PGCE year. However, there had been some slight changes; rather than getting the participants to complete a weekly diary, which they had been reluctant to do and was, in many cases, merely a repetition of what they were writing on their weekly evaluation forms from university, these university forms were used to assess how reflective they were throughout the year. There was also the addition of follow up interviews from four of the participants and the university tutor.

The results of this empirical research have been presented here, and in the next chapter I offer a detailed discussion of these findings. I suggest explanations for the

results and draw conclusions that allow me to suggest improvements to current practice.

5 CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Within this chapter I discuss the findings presented previously. The discussion draws on relevant literature to help explain the findings, in some cases this is supplementary to that included in the literature review as additional relevant literature has been identified. One such piece of literature is a study that had been going on in Ireland which I became aware of, following the completion of my empirical research. The National Council for Special Education had funded research which was published in 2018. The research involved a longitudinal study, conducted over a three-year period. It was commissioned to “examine the impact of changes introduced in Ireland in 2012 to initial teacher education (ITE) programmes” (Hick et al., 2018, pi). This is discussed alongside my results throughout this chapter.

The chapter begins by presenting the key themes (T1-T6) identified by the empirical research and goes on to summarise and discuss the findings in relation to each of the research questions in turn. As mentioned in section 4.1, these six themes relate to my research questions and broad aims and were identified when analysing the interview transcripts and matrices (Appendices 8-9). The implications the findings have on this research, as well as the wider implications, are then considered and discussed. As previously stated (section 3.12), this is an exploratory study into how well one Welsh PGCE course prepares its students to teach inclusively, so inevitably the results are limited. Limitations are discussed in more depth in section 5.5. The findings do however, point to where further research is needed and allow some initial

conclusions to be drawn. These in turn allowed me to make recommendations to improve practice (section 6.2).

The six key themes I identified from the research were highlighted in the previous chapter but are summarised again here:

- T1: Terminology: ALN and SEN;
- T2: Practical experience;
- T3: The theory side of SEN;
- T4: Successful mentoring;
- T5: Formal reflection;
- T6: Paperwork.

5.2 Themes

The six themes identified in chapter 4 and presented above are now discussed in turn. Within the discussion I make recommendations for improving practice.

5.2.1 T1: Terminology: SEN and ALN

For pupils to be adequately supported in the classroom, teachers must have a clear understanding of what having special or additional needs means, and what the difference is. The Welsh Government's move towards a single classification of ALN may go some way to helping improve understanding, however, it was the wordy definitions of the terms that appeared to cause confusion amongst the participants at the beginning of their PGCE. Throughout the course of this research, the Welsh Government has been promising to bring in their new ALN Bill, within which the terms Additional Learning Needs and Additional Learning Provision will replace Special Educational Needs and Special Educational Provision (SNAP Cymru, 2016). The Welsh Government's proposal is that the definition of ALN will include pupils currently regarded as having SEN; that is those pupils who are identified as School Action,

School Action Plus and those who are statemented. The provision these pupils are entitled to will not change significantly. Merely simplifying the terms, or rather reducing the number of terms, may not be enough. It will not change the fact that pupils who are currently defined as having SEN or ALN often have very different needs. The definitions need to be unambiguous and well-defined; there should be no room for misunderstanding which could lead to pupils not receiving the support they require. The difficulty in trying to set out exactly what this provision is comes when you consider just how different two children with autism, for example, can be. A 'one size fit all' approach will not work. Classroom teachers, particularly new teachers, do not necessarily need to be able to know off-hand what to do for every single child they teach, but they do need to be aware of what having SEN or ALN means, to allow them to find out how to differentiate their lessons, or what support they should provide. Avramidis et al (2000, p280) explain that ensuring teachers have a good knowledge of SEN is an "important factor in improving teachers' attitudes towards the implementation of an inclusive policy" This is particularly true for student teachers; during their PGCE they will be able to seek guidance from their mentors on what approach to take with particular pupils. However, if the PGCE is to adequately prepare them to teach inclusively as an NQT, it should provide them with enough experience to know where to find the required information. Whilst their mentor may be able to offer some assistance, the school's SENCO is better placed to do this.

During the interviews, several participants (M1, M3, F1 and F4) discussed the role of the SENCO and the impact they had had on their understanding and self-efficacy during their school placements. M3 spoke particularly highly of this experience and expressed the opinion that the importance of meeting with the SENCO should be

more prominent on the PGCE. As with the quality of mentoring, the experience the participants had with their placement schools' SENCO was variable. During the follow up interviews, again the experience participants had had with their schools' SENCO was mixed; F1 appeared to have developed a very good relationship with her school's SENCO, discussing the various training opportunities he had arranged for her. However, M3 explained he knew who the SENCO was, but had only had limited contact, although he spoke positively about taking part in training with local school SENCOs. With increased contact with the SENCO, F1 was more confident in being able to identify the pupils with SEN that she was teaching; the SENCO had been able to explain not only where to find pupils' IEPs, but also how to use them when planning and teaching her lessons.

The SENCO is the member of staff in a school who has responsibility for co-ordinating provision for pupils with SEN within that school. The current Code of Practice relating to SEN in Wales makes it clear that "provision for learners with SEN is a matter for everyone in maintained schools", not only the SENCO. A fundamental part of the SENCO role therefore, is working with the teachers "in identifying a pupil's SEN and what form of intervention is required" (National Assembly for Wales, 2016, p5). It was clear from what the participants said about the varying input of the SENCO, just how valuable their input could potentially be, but also how variable it was. Like many parts of the PGCE, this seemed to be something else that was dependant on the school the participants were placed in.

As well as being provided with clear, unambiguous definitions of what SEN and ALN are, taking into account the positive response from those participants who had spent time with their placement schools' SENCOs, I believe there should be a requirement

for PGCE students to spend time with the SENCO in their placement school if they are to gain an understanding early on in their teaching careers about how to adapt their practice to include every pupil they teach. Bandura (1977) noted that the development of self-efficacy occurs more successfully early on in a person's career, so it makes sense for student teachers to gain this experience during their PGCE, rather than waiting until they begin teaching. Organisationally, it also makes sense to do it during the PGCE; student teachers do not have a full timetable during this year, so have more time and flexibility to do this.

During their induction period, NQTs in Wales are expected to receive day-to-day support from several sources. Their school mentor, external mentor and local authority all have responsibility for completing sections of the NQT's 'record of induction period'. To ensure the SENCO plays a role during the NQT's induction year, there should be a section on this that the SENCO is responsible for, ensuring NQTs are aware of what it means for a pupil to have SEN/ALN.

I believe the potential long-term benefits of involving SENCOs to a greater degree in the early stages of a teacher's development are worth the initial increase in workload. In later sections (5.2.3 and 6.2.1) I discuss how placement schools or universities could include more outside agencies or experts in the training of their student teachers, however this recommendation should be easier to implement as all schools are required to have a SENCO.

5.2.2 T2: Practical experience

All participants began their PGCE with a different level of experience, both in terms of working with children generally and more specifically in working with children with

SEN. This varying experience increased the already differing levels of self-efficacy the participants would naturally have had. Their levels of self-efficacy continued to vary throughout the year. However, one thing that all, even the most negative of participants, identified as helping to improve their self-efficacy was the experience they gained whilst on placement.

It was noted in section 4.5.8 that for some participants, at the beginning of the PGCE, a greater level of prior experience resulted a greater understanding of the scope of SEN, so they were able to identify more factors that concerned them going into SE1. However, at that early stage they had not been into a school to teach, so it may simply be the case that they were unable to contextualise their experiences. If we consider F2 for example, she had worked as a Scout leader and at Camp America, but still described her experience as “small”. It may be the case that she was thinking about her experience and trying to relate it to a classroom situation, in which case she was perhaps justified to describe it as small. However, whether the participants were aware beforehand that additional experience was useful or not, they did draw on it throughout the course of their PGCE. Therefore, it shouldn't be assumed that prior experience was a negative factor. In fact, there was no evidence that suggested prior experience slowed the development of participants' self-efficacy. With the time spent in schools limited during the PGCE, and so many aspects of teaching needing to be covered, it should be seen as a positive that participants have gained experience prior to starting their PGCE.

Bandura (1995, p2) explains that self-efficacy "refers to beliefs in one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to manage prospective situations". Snyder and Lopez (2007) put it in slightly more simple terms, explaining

that self-efficacy is what an individual believes they can accomplish using their skills under certain circumstances. In section 2.7 I stated that for this research, self-efficacy was going to be defined as the level of belief a person has in their own ability to complete a task or achieve their goals. Van der Bijl and Shortridge-Baggett (2001) report that when an individual has high self-efficacy for a particular activity, they are more likely to engage in that activity, as opposed to those activities for which they have low self-efficacy. Thus, it is particularly important that student teachers develop a high sense of self-efficacy teaching pupils with SEN during their PGCE year, and early on within that year. Bandura (1997) warns that efficacy belief is a major basis of action because unless people believe they can achieve the desired outcome by their actions, they have little incentive to act. It is important to remember though that self-efficacy is the *belief* a person has in their own ability and does not necessarily match their actual capability. Throughout the research the participants reported differing levels of self-efficacy, but there were no checks made to see how their reported levels of self-efficacy matched up with their actual ability, other than what was reported by the participants; M3 explained that once his mentor in SE2 realised he knew what he was doing, he “just left [him] to it”. He seemed to be confident, and the fact that his mentor had little input in what he did, suggested that he was indeed competent. However, it may also be the case that the mentor saw the opportunity to use him to take on some of his workload. F2 reported that her relationship with her second mentor deteriorated after she heard the mentor “boasting” about her reduced workload due to F2 taking over some of her teaching responsibilities.

It has been acknowledged throughout that this is an initial study, so ‘calibration’ which Stone (2000) describes as a measure of the difference between a student’s

self-efficacy and their actual performance, should be factored in to any future study. Participants had to fill in evaluation forms following the lessons they taught and would talk with their mentors, albeit to a varying degree, so any inconsistencies should have been identified. Participants did not report any instances where they had over-estimated their own ability. However, in the interviews following SE1, F1 and F4 both mentioned their mentors telling them they were more competent than they believed themselves to be. F1 and F4 had been very reserved about their ability initially, in contrast to M1 and F3, who appeared confident from the start.

During the initial interview M1 and F3 both expressed their willingness to try things in the classroom and scored highest in the first questionnaire, which was completed following SE1. It may be that they were more competent than the others, but whether their confidence was based on real, or perceived ability, their self-efficacy was higher than the other participants following the first interview. Certainly, by the final interview, all participants were speaking with greater confidence and with a much deeper understanding of SEN and inclusive teaching, universally crediting the experience they had gained during their PGCE year. All participants had passed their PGCE, and with a number of standards directly relating to inclusive education, it can be assumed that the reports of feeling confident and competent to teach inclusively must have some grounding in truth.

With self-efficacy affecting an individual's choice of activities, effort, and persistence (Bandura 1977) it is vital that NQTs start their teaching career with high self-efficacy if they are to be effective teachers. The literature review touched upon three of the ways in which Bandura claimed people acquire self-efficacy, that could be related to ITT; (1) performance accomplishments, based on personal mastery experiences, (2)

vicarious learning, involving watching others succeed, and (3) verbal persuasion, when people are told they will succeed. This empirical research supports this, with participants talking positively about the experiences they had and their ensuing success. Conversely, it was clear from the results of the questionnaire that when a participant had no, or limited experience of a given task, they were less confident in attempting it again; the PGCE generally does not offer many chances for student teachers to interact with pupils' parents, so the questions relating to this scored low. During SE1, M1 and F3 had attended a parents' evening, so felt more confident than the other participants in making parents feel comfortable coming to school. The questionnaire was not onerous to complete, it was able to be done fairly quickly, and it matched closely what the participants reported in their interviews. One development from this could be the inclusion of a similar questionnaire on all PGCEs between SE1 and SE2; this would give the student teachers' mentors from SE2 an idea of what they were confident with and what still needed developing. With so many variables on a PGCE, including the student teachers themselves, it's difficult to offer consistency in terms of experience. Whilst this wouldn't help with that, it could help in making sure relevant, new experiences are offered, rather than repeating something that has already been done.

The questionnaires had been used as a discussion point during the subsequent interviews; it allowed me to be more specific when talking to the participants about their developing self-efficacy. Participants had discussed the aspects of their placements which they felt had helped the most, and invariably experience was identified as being fundamental. Participants seemed to build on experience within their placements, and two participants (M1 and F1) talked explicitly about their desire

to put into practice in SE2, what they had learned during SE1. It was positive to hear this; it meant that the practical experiences they were being given during their placements were building their confidence.

It was not just the positive experiences or successes that participants discussed. The literature review had found that negative experience or perceived failures, do not necessarily negatively affect self-efficacy; if they come after a series of successes, their impact can be minimal, and this appeared to be the case with the participants in this research. Research indicated that the timing of any failures was important; if a failure occurred early on it may have a greater effect than a failure that followed a number of successes. Consequently, it is important that any experiences during SE1, and particularly those early in the placement, should provide the participants with successes to draw upon.

F3 talked about her second mentor being supportive and letting her try things, with any failures being used to inform future practice. This worked well, however, had F3's first mentor taken this approach, it may not have yielded such positive results. F3 had enjoyed a successful SE1, with a variety of positive experiences to draw upon, so had the confidence to embrace this during SE2. This is where the use of the questionnaire could guide a mentor's approach; if they know their student is confident with a particular area of inclusive teaching, they could allow them more freedom over their approach and allow them to potentially make mistakes from which they could learn. Having more freedom could also increase their student's self-efficacy as they realise they are capable of performing a task with limited or no mentor guidance; this could alleviate some of the fear the NQTs reported feeling, in their follow up interviews, when they were teaching for the first time on their own.

Despite being a less powerful tool for developing self-efficacy, the PGCE also involved a substantial amount of what Bandura described as vicarious experiences, with participants observing the successes and failures of their mentors. Observation tended to take place early on in the placements and provided the participants with the opportunity to get to know the pupils they would be teaching before they were in charge of the class. This was of particular importance during SE1, where for some, they had a very limited experience of being in a classroom, other than during their own education.

F1 had been very positive about the time she had spent in the ASD base at SE2. She explained how beneficial she had found the time where she had been able to observe the approaches the teachers in there had used with the pupils. Similarly, M1 described as “vital” the time he had spent observing an SEN class during SE1. The significance of observing good practice early on during the PGCE should not be underestimated. M3 talked of a mentor that freely admitted to struggling and not having any good suggestions for teaching a particular SEN class. He said he gained “very little” from her as a result. Having had this poor experience early on in his PGCE meant that he did not benefit in the early stages when participants would have been more malleable (Bandura, 1977). In fact, following this, M3 was negative about the whole mentoring process. It may be that he did in fact have two poor experiences, or it could be that this early failure in terms of support, tainted the way he viewed the mentoring process. If it was indeed the case that M3’s first mentor could not provide examples of good practice for M3 to observe herself, it should have been the mentor’s responsibility to arrange for M3 to have the opportunity to observe a teacher who was experiencing success with the SEN pupils, to allow M3 to develop

his self-efficacy during this crucial early stage of his PGCE. Despite this study being limited in terms of the size of the sample, this failure to provide M3 with this early experience is worrying. Had M3 not had the prior experiences he had, or had he not been proactive in seeking out experiences for himself within his SE1, he may have been left not willing or not competent with certain aspects of inclusive teaching.

During the observation stage of the PGCE, it is vital that students get to observe good practice in terms of inclusive teaching, so this should be as much of a priority as observing the classes they are going to be teaching. If the recommendation of the previous section was to be implemented, and the SENCOs at the placement schools play a greater role in providing SEN training, they may be able to arrange for participants to observe examples of good inclusive teaching.

In terms of confidence to teach pupils with SEN, those participants who had prior experience tended to have a greater sense of self-efficacy going into SE1. The only exception to this being F2, who despite having a wide range of experience working as a Scout leader and at Camp America, described her experience as “small” and explained she was “not very confident at all” during her first interview. She had identified the reason for this as being the fact that she did not know enough about the specifics of SEN and appreciated it could not be limited to dyslexia, dyspraxia and autism, which is what she had experience of. There was a balance between having enough experience to not feel like a complete novice, and therefore the confidence to try things out, and having a little more knowledge and realising just how broad an area SEN is. During her second interview however, F2’s confidence had grown as she was able to apply her experience to the situations she faced in school. In her first interview F2 had revealed that she had worked with children with dyslexia during her

time as a Scout leader and at Camp America. This was something she had been confident about throughout her two placements, so despite saying her prior experience was small, it appears it did help.

All participants gained experience of working with pupils with SEN throughout SE1, and consequently the gap in self-efficacy had narrowed by the time the second round of interviews were conducted. By the end of the PGCE, this gap had narrowed again, as indicated by the results of the two questionnaires. Participants talked more reflectively about their experiences and with increased confidence as the year went on. There are several possible reasons for this change, but with such a small-scale study, it is difficult to give a definitive answer. One explanation could be that the participants who had no prior experience had more opportunities to work with pupils with SEN throughout their PGCE. However, this did not seem to be the case. It is also important to remember that self-efficacy is the *belief* the participants had in their own ability to succeed in a specific situation or to accomplish a particular task and may not accurately reflect their actual ability. M1 talked at length about his experience during SE1 and was extremely positive about it. However, it was noted from the first interview that he came across as positive and expressed his willingness to try new things. He had been proactive in gaining the experience, outside of what was required by the PGCE. It was clear that he had enjoyed SE1 and the challenges it had brought. This contrasted with M2, who had been negative about teaching pupils with SEN from the start, admitting that it was never going to be his vocation to teach the lower ability pupils. M2 started with less experience than M1 and reported gaining less experience during SE1, despite talking about mixed ability classes and pupils with SEN. He admitted to not seeking out those pupils' IEPs as he was

concentrating on developing his confidence teaching the classes he was responsible for. With M2, inclusive teaching was not something he enjoyed, and he definitely did not look for any additional experience. It is important to note the participants' bias when they were answering the questions and despite saying he "hadn't gained much experience with SEN" during SE1, it was clear from M2's responses in the interview, there had been a number of SEN pupils in his lessons. He somewhat contradicted himself on this point when discussing how competent he felt following SE1; he reported an increased level of confidence following SE1 and credited this to the experience he has gained. M2 was an interesting contrast to have and it was important to consider the responses of those participants who were positive about inclusive teaching against those who were not; M2 allowed for this.

F1 had gained experience working with an ASD child who she taught to swim before she started her PGCE. She reported having limited experience with SEN pupils during SE1 and similarly to M2 had worked on developing her confidence generally, rather than specifically with SEN. The difference between F1 and M2 was how they viewed inclusive teaching; M2 had deliberately not sought out any additional experiences as he felt developing the other elements of his teaching were more important. F1 had said there was limited scope during SE1 for her to gain any additional experiences, so concentrated on those elements for which she could gain experience. During SE2 F1 had gained significant experience with SEN pupils and acknowledged much of her increased confidence was due to the experience during SE2.

M2 gained the least experience outside of what was required by the PGCE, but this was mainly because he did not want it. Despite not looking for any additional

experience, M2 gained what he thought he needed, and consequently explained that his confidence had developed. It had been noted though, that M2 was reluctant to admit any potential weaknesses during his first two interviews, so it is possible that he reported a higher level of confidence than he actually had. It was certainly the case with the other participants that they reported the more experience they gained, the more confident they felt. It is important to note that those participants whose self-efficacy showed the greatest increase may not have necessarily had a wider range of opportunities throughout their PGCE; they may just naturally develop their self-efficacy quicker. Equally, other factors such as the quality of mentoring they received could also have impacted on this. These are all points that could be considered further in any future study.

Currently, much of the content delivered during SE1 or SE2 is dependent on which school a student is placed in. Probably one of the most beneficial parts of the PGCE for those participants on placement in a school with a specialist SEN unit was the hands-on experience they gained from it. Participant F1 enthusiastically relayed details of SE2 and the experience she gained, showing a significant improvement from SE1. There should be more of a requirement for students to gain experience of successful practice, either themselves or by observing, in terms of teaching pupils with SEN in mainstream schools. There are 22 LEAs in Wales, and within these LEAs are a number of special schools or mainstream schools with SEN units, so there is definitely scope for this to be explored. An interesting point raised by the university tutor during the follow up interview was that the placement schools' primary feeder schools could also be involved in this, so despite a student teacher completing a secondary PGCE and being on placement in a secondary school, they could spend

time in a primary school with an SEN unit. As part of the PGCE, the participants had spent a week in a primary school, to develop their understanding of the transition from primary to secondary education, so the precedent is already set. Transition is something that affects every pupil, so it is understandable that it is included on the PGCE. However, SEN is something that teachers experience daily, so its importance is arguably equal to, if not greater than, transition. My suggestion would be that student teachers spend time in a special school or a mainstream school with a dedicated SEN base, in addition to this primary placement that concentrates on transition. This could be in a primary setting if needed.

An integral part of a child with SEN's education is the support he or she receives from additional adults in the classroom. Working with an LSA is a skill that participants got to practise to a varying degree over the course of their PGCE. M1 highlighted the informal reflection done with the LSAs he had worked with as being more valuable than any of the formal reflection tasks he was required to complete, so it was clear that LSAs could potentially play a very significant role during the student teachers' placements. It is common practice during a PGCE placement for student teachers to do a 'pupil trail' where they follow a pupil for a day and attend all of their classes. F4 talked about the experience she gained and the changes she made to her own practice having completed an 'LSA trail', where she followed one of the school's LSAs for the day to gain an understanding of just what they do. F3 was given the opportunity by her mentor to work as an LSA for a day, and again was extremely positive about the experience, claiming it was of such a benefit it is something that should "definitely" be a feature of the PGCE. Both F3 and F4 talked about seeing the methods the LSA used to support the different pupils, they also

talked about how the teachers' instructions to the class were not always easy for the LSA to understand and relay to the pupil(s) they were supporting. They explained the impact this had had on their planning, and how it made them far more conscious of ensuring they provided detailed instructions for the LSAs in their classrooms. Looking past the PGCE year, F3 said her experience as working as an LSA for a day during her PGCE gave her the confidence when she was an NQT to approach the LSAs in her school and draw on their knowledge of their SEN pupils. Working with additional adults is referred to in two of the standards required to gain QTS in Wales (S3.1.4 and S3.3.13), so is something participants must be competent in doing.

Following the positive comments from F3 and F4, an LSA trail is something I have implemented in my own school with the student teachers we have. This has again been met with a positive response, not only from the student teachers, but also from the LSAs involved. When their role is considered, and resources or activities are provided, they are better equipped to support their pupils. This can be likened to the positive mentor mentee relationships discussed in section 2.6; when a relationship is successful it brings benefits to both mentor and mentee. The recommendations from my research are starting to build to show that the SEN-related training provided during a PGCE should be holistic; it shouldn't just come from one source. Involving schools' SENCO and LSAs would provide student teachers with a more diverse range of experiences. It could also help in situations like M3's, where the mentor mentee relationship was poor.

5.2.3 T3: The theory side of SEN

PGCE courses are designed to educate their students about the pedagogy associated with teaching, rather than subject knowledge. Part of this is done through

lectures and seminars in university, and part of it is done through school placements (University X, 2016). From the interviews it was clear that the university in this case, generally, had taught the theory side of it and the school placements gave participants the opportunity of putting that theory into practice. During the interviews, overwhelmingly, participants expressed the view that there was too much focus on the theory side of SEN, and not enough hands-on experience. The importance of the student teachers developing a high sense of self-efficacy during their PGCE has already been established. Bandura (1977) believed it was not enough for a person to possess the necessary knowledge and skills to perform a task. In addition, they must also have the belief that they can succeed. It was clear from the response in the interviews that the participants placed far greater value in the practical element of their PGCE, and that it was this hands-on experience that had increased their belief that they could succeed.

Participants discussed the university lectures that focused solely on SEN, explaining that within these lectures they were just given information about the various conditions. They commented that they would have preferred to receive training from experts or the outside agencies that are involved in working with the pupils with SEN; rather than just being given a description of what SPLd meant for example, they wanted to be given strategies for helping these pupils. The (draft) revised ALN policy for Wales advocates a much closer working relationship between schools and outside agencies when working with pupils with ALN. If professionals from external agencies are to be involved here, it makes sense to also involve them to a greater extent with PGCE courses and the training student teachers receive. In the self-efficacy questionnaire, the question 'I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g.,

speech and language therapists) in designing educational plans for pupils with additional learning needs' scored fairly low. Involving external agencies in the training on the PGCE would not only improve the student teachers' understanding of applying theory to practice, but it would expose them to other professionals early on in their career, and hopefully improve their self-efficacy in terms of working with them. Again, this recommendation shows just how diverse the training on PGCE courses needs to be, to fully prepare student teachers to teach inclusively.

It was a reoccurring theme in my research, that participants felt there was not enough practical experience gained in the university side of their ITT and that there should be more involvement from what they described as 'experts'. Student teachers in Ireland who were involved in the National Council for Special Education's research also reported the same, explaining "they would value more opportunities for practical advice, collaborative critical reflection and support for problem solving in relation to experiences of inclusive practices in schools" (Hicks et al, 2018, p6). In the Irish study, student teachers reported feeling "relatively under-prepared in terms of confidence in their knowledge and skills to implement inclusive practices in school contexts" (Hick et al., 2018, p5). Hicks et al (2018, p5) report that "student teachers' perceptions of a gap between university tuition and practice in schools is a phenomenon that has been recognised in research internationally".

5.2.4 T4: Successful mentoring

The university tutor may, understandably, be more concerned about teaching their students the knowledge and theory side of SEN, while the school mentors will concentrate more on the skills required to implement this knowledge. However, research into self-efficacy has found that a person may possess the knowledge and

skills, but this does not guarantee they will be motivated to apply them (Schunk,1991). Pintrich and De Groot (1990) explain that a person needs both the skill and the will to successfully apply their knowledge in a variety of circumstances; this is where the mentors come in. During ITT, the university tutor takes on a mentoring role for certain aspects of the PGCE. It is important that both school and university mentors provide experiences that not only develop knowledge and skills, but also the confidence to implement them (Multon et. Al, 1991; Pajares, 1996; Bandura, 1997).

Schunk (1991, p215) explained that “observing others succeed can convey to observers that they too are capable and can motivate them to attempt the task”, it seems obvious therefore, that PGCE students should be paired with mentors who can demonstrate successes in the classroom. This was not always the case with the participants in this research, with M3 explaining that his mentor freely admitted to struggling herself and not being able to make any suggestions that may help him, while F2 described a complete breakdown in mentor, mentee relationship when she heard her mentor boasting about her reduced workload because of having F2 there to teach some of her lessons.

Schools receive a payment from the universities that place their students with them, so it is easy to see the appeal to a head teacher. However, it is clear that school mentors need to be carefully selected and that those who take on the responsibility of mentoring do so for the correct reasons, not just to lighten their workload. The literature review (section 2.6) established that mentoring, when done correctly, can be a benefit to both mentor and mentee, so it really is important the process is carried out effectively. This was discussed during the follow up interview with the

university tutor. She explained that the process had to consider any requests from student teachers to be in a particular location because of family commitments for example. She also explained that the universities have knowledge of the mentors they use and are concerned with their students' well-being, so try to match them accordingly. The university must work with the mentors available, so it is important that those mentors can provide their students with a positive experience. During the interview with the university tutor, it was mentioned that the training given to school mentors varied, so inevitably the outcome, in this case the quality of mentoring, would also vary. The time available for the training of school mentors is often limited, so this is something that needs to be addressed to allow them to attend mentor training sessions delivered by the universities who provide ITT.

When discussing the role of the mentor generally on the PGCE, the responses were very mixed. Some participants had very supportive mentors and gained a huge amount from the experience, others did not. The participants who had a less positive experience, for example M3, explained that they were often just left to get on with it. However, this was during SE2, so it may be that the mentor had confidence in his ability. If a student is capable and does not require the same level of mentor support as perhaps they did at the beginning of the PGCE, a mentor should recognise this and reduce the support they offer. F3 had experienced this and liked that her mentor let her take a 'trial and error' approach to a certain degree. The difference between M3 and F3's experience was the communication from the mentor; M3's mentor just left him to it, and it was his assumption that this was because the mentor had seen him succeed. Had the mentor explained he felt M3 was confident, this could have helped increase his self-efficacy, as verbal persuasion was one of the ways Bandura

claimed people acquire self-efficacy. Also, F3's mentor was there to offer support, should things have not worked, M3 did not have this support. Rather interestingly, M3's SE2 had been in the school where M1 had spent SE1. M1 had been extremely positive about the experience and talked of a supportive mentor who gave him a great deal of his time. M3 explained that the mentor was busy and left him to it once he knew what he was doing. As previously discussed (section 4.6.5), M3 had a poor experience with his first mentor, and from early on in his PGCE had been left with little support. This could be one reason he expressed negative views about the mentoring process. However, mentoring can be intensive, and this will especially be the case during SE1 where students' experience may be very low; they may require constant reassurance and support. The payoff for the mentor could be that during SE2, they should have a student teacher, who has more experience, so will require less support. Another possibility for M3's negativity could be that this was the case here, that the mentor in question provided more of his time to M1 as it was SE1 and surmised that M3 would require less of his time. M3 was not entirely negative though, explaining that despite having been "thrown in at the deep end with some of the challenging classes" it did force him to "try things out" and learn from his mistakes, so it was clear he was being given the opportunity to gain experience.

Student teachers fill in a weekly evaluation form, but there is no option to comment on the support from their mentor. In the case of M3 who was "just left to get on with it", it may well be that his mentor had confidence in him and did not think he needed any support. For a student teacher with low self-efficacy, this may not be the best approach. The mentor may not realise extra reassurance is needed, but it is a difficult subject to broach; the mentor may not be able, or may not want, to give any more of

their time, and by requesting it, it could cause animosity which would adversely affect the rest of the placement. However, with mentoring playing such a significant role in a student teacher's development, it is important that there is some way of feeding back during the process when changes can be made, rather than at the end when nothing can be done.

The role of the mentor was discussed during the follow up interviews. Going into a classroom without the support of a mentor had been a shock to some of the participants, even M3, who hadn't had a particularly positive relationship with his mentors, commented that it was "a little scary not having someone there for backup". Where F1 had appeared nervous at the beginning of her PGCE and took some time to develop her self-efficacy, the good relationship with her school's SENCO, and the support she felt this gave her, meant she approached inclusive teaching positively as an NQT.

There were two real issues here; the selection of appropriate mentors and the facility to feedback about the mentor support during the placement.

At present, it is usually the head of the department the student teacher is placed in who is their school mentor, with a member of the school's senior leadership team (SLT) being their senior school mentor. The monetary incentive has already been mentioned, but this is not the only reason schools take on student teachers; a good student teacher can bring enthusiasm and new ideas to a department, they also plan lessons and share their resources. However, before the department can enjoy the advantages of an extra pair of hands, their new recruits need training, and this is sometimes where the problem lies. Mentors should be selected on their ability to

support, coach and mentor PGCE students, not just because of seniority within a department. Teachers from within the department, or even from other departments within the placement school, could be involved in the mentoring process if they can demonstrate a particular skill to the student teachers. Whilst this case study is focusing on developing teachers who are able to teach inclusively, some of the recommendations have far wider reaching implications; this approach to mentoring could benefit the development of a whole range of skills.

5.2.5 T5: Formal reflection

When discussing the opportunities participants had to reflect on their practice, and the formal requirements of this, participants were generally fairly negative about the whole experience. They universally disliked the tick boxes they had to complete following each of their lessons and saw very little value in them in terms of helping improve their practice. Participants discussed how they would informally reflect and set themselves targets. However, with no formal requirement to do this, there was no check on the effectiveness of these targets or how well, if at all, they had been implemented. Research has shown that if students are set a goal by their teacher, or they set themselves a specific goal, their motivation to perform will be higher than those with no goal to aim for (Locke and Latham, 1990). Bandura (1997) noted that if a student has set themselves a goal which they achieve, their self-efficacy will increase, and they are more likely to be persistent in trying to achieve future goals. Locke and Latham (2002) noted an individual with high self-efficacy tends to set themselves more ambitious goals and is more inclined to commit to achieving those goals. They will also respond better to negative feedback than an individual with lower self-efficacy. We can see therefore, that target setting, and self-efficacy are

mutually beneficial; setting specific, realistic and more importantly, achievable targets, helps to grow self-efficacy, while increased self-efficacy means an individual will set a more ambitious target in the future. Whilst goals should be ambitious and help student teachers to improve their practice, they should not be so ambitious that the student teachers are setting themselves up for failure. If a student teacher or their mentor sets a goal that is beyond their skill level or knowledge, it may lead to them becoming frustrated and a decrease in their self-efficacy (Schunk, 2008). A tick-box approach, in its current form, has no real scope for this, but that is not to say there is not a place for it. Used as a quick tool, for instant reflection, it could be the basis of more in-depth reflection or reflective discussion between student teacher and mentor. Another use for the tick-box reflection could be to check any student teacher or mentor-set targets have been addressed.

Currently, student teachers receive feedback from their mentors following the lessons they teach. This feedback should be honest and provide student teachers with an understanding of their performance as well as encouraging them to work to meet their targets. Praise should be given only when it is deserved (Hattie and Timperley, 2007; van de Ridder et.al. 2008). If praise is given when it is not deserved, however good the intention may be for giving it (to encourage, to motivate etc.), the result can be detrimental, as student teachers are not getting useful feedback on their performance, with the danger being that they think they are doing the right thing, when in fact they are not (Schunk, 2008). A tick-box would allow for feedback to be given quickly and provide a discussion point for setting future targets.

The reliance on paperwork for paperwork's sake came up repeatedly from the participants; the overwhelming feeling was that the reflection they were required to

do was there for the sake of it, rather than being useful to them. Reducing the number of reflections required could increase the effectiveness of those that are completed. Likewise, using reflections to set realistic, achievable targets could increase the value student teachers place in the process.

5.2.6 T6: Paperwork

During the discussion about the required formal reflection, participants stressed that they felt there was too much paperwork generally on the PGCE. M2 explained that by the end, he was not even filling in the lesson plan forms, rather he was ensuring he knew what he wanted to do in the lesson and making sure he had the required resources. When student teachers begin SE1, some will not have been in a classroom since they were themselves at school, so it is vital they arrive for their lessons fully prepared. The lesson planning form is an effective tool for this, but it is not something that an experienced teacher will fill out on a daily basis. Even for a formal lesson observation during an Estyn inspection, there is no requirement for a teacher to provide a lesson plan for the inspector observing their lesson. While it would be irresponsible for me to recommend that lesson plans were not needed at the end of the PGCE, the forms could be adapted to remove some of the repetition, particularly given the revelation from M2 and F2 that nobody looked at their forms by the end. Reducing the number of lessons plans required, or the depth that they must be completed in, could reduce workload for both the student teacher and their mentor and make the whole process more meaningful. The university tutor seemed to agree during the follow up interview, explaining that the number of lesson plans required during SE2 could be reduced in view of the experience student teachers accrue during SE1. With 42 standards that must be met before a student teacher can be

awarded QTS, there is an obvious need for paperwork; it is not enough to simply say a student teacher has met these standards, evidence is needed. However, Hobson et al (2009) found that student teachers in England also reported having too much paperwork to complete on their PGCEs, so this is not an issue unique to Wales. Chambers et al (2002) reported that a high proportion of student teachers who withdrew from their ITT cited workload as the reason, as did Cole (2001). In a later paper, Chambers et al. (2010, p125) again make mention of the workload exceeding the expectations of participants and suggest the possibility of extending the PGCE from nine months to spread the workload over an increased period of time and that this “might help obviate the very negative experience of not being able to cope with its associated implications”. Increasing the length of the PGCE would reduce the intensity of some of the work. It could also allow additional time for one of the earlier recommendations, that participants spend time in a special school or a school with a dedicated SEN unit, observing good practice. The university mentor agreed in principle, although she did not think there was scope for this at present. Ideally, she said the PGCE should last for two years given the content that needed to be covered. However, with student teachers being required to hold a degree before starting their PGCE, she felt the prospect of the three-year undergraduate study, followed by two years for the PGCE, would discourage prospective teachers. There are incentives available for teachers of certain subjects; in 2017, physics, chemistry, mathematics, Welsh and modern foreign languages teachers were entitled to a £3,000-£20,000 “incentive” (Welsh Government, 2017a), but this does not help with shortages in other subjects. An additional year of training and not earning would require more financial incentives if they were to be successful.

Having addressed the six themes identified from the empirical research, and discussed the implications of these, the next section compares some of the findings to the Irish study previously discussed. The chapter then moves onto a discussion which relates the recommendations made to the three research questions.

5.3 Comparison to Irish study

The National Council for Special Education's study that had been conducted in Ireland and published in 2018 was commissioned to "examine the impact of changes introduced in Ireland in 2012 to initial teacher education (ITE) programmes" (Hick et al., 2018, pi). The changes introduced in Ireland reflect the findings of this research:

The extension of the length of programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and the mandatory addition of inclusive education and differentiation content in them. The changes also introduced a minimum of two placement settings for student teachers, which ideally should incorporate a variety of teaching, class and school contexts, and educational needs.

(Hick et al., 2018, pi).

Due to the similarities with my own work, it seemed reasonable to consider the findings of this research, alongside my own. My study has been acknowledged throughout as being small-scale, however the Irish study was on a much larger scale; 30 programmes from 13 ITE providers were involved. Despite the different scales of the two research projects, the outcomes were similar.

It was noted that ITE courses in Ireland cover all aspects of what they consider necessary to be an inclusive teacher. However, the depth in which this is done is variable across providers, with concerns that "ITE programmes may not yet have fully developed a wholly consistent and coherent approach to inclusive teaching for all

learners” (Hick et al., 2018, p4). With my study only involving one provider, it cannot be known if this is also the case in Wales. However, the school placements were certainly inconsistent in the experiences they provided.

In Ireland, student teachers who had gained experience of specialist provision whilst on their placements “often described this as having a substantial impact on their understanding of inclusive practice” (Hick et al., 2018, p6), echoing the reports from the participants of my study.

In section 2.4.4 I discussed a paper by The European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, and their profile for inclusive teachers. I noted the four qualities they identified matched closely with three of the Welsh QTS standards. It is interesting to note that during the Irish study a group electing to focus on SEN highlighted “their additional focus on classroom practice as of benefit for their development as teachers of all children” (Hick et al., 2018, p6). So it poses the question, are these qualities really specific to teaching inclusively, or does a trainee teacher who embraces all aspects of their ITT become a better inclusive teacher? I certainly believe that additional experience of teaching inclusively is a positive on an ITT course and should be included to as greater extent as possible.

As the Irish system has implemented some of the changes that this research recommends, this report was of particular interest. Despite the report finding that trainee teachers in Ireland reported mixed results in terms of how prepared they felt to teach inclusively, it is important to note that ITE in Ireland is described as “being in a transitional phase in relation to inclusive education, in which a process of significant

change is taking place.... [a process that] is not yet completed” (Hick et al., 2018, p5).

5.4 Research questions

In this section I consider the findings I have presented and discussed so far and relate them to my three research questions.

5.4.1 Research question 1

What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?

To answer RQ1, I needed to find out how the participants’ view of their own competency, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, changed throughout their PGCE. This question was addressed by interviewing the participants at three points during their PGCE and asking them to fill in a questionnaire after each school placement. With just seven participants, the results were always going to be limited. Nevertheless, I heard stories of seven very different journeys from student teacher to NQT. Each one of the participants started their PGCE with a different amount of experience. Greater experience gave the participants a greater appreciation for the extent of the challenges they could face teaching pupils with SEN in mainstream classrooms; this did not always translate to a greater belief in their own competency. However, the initial reservations expressed by those participants with greater prior experience, F2 in particular, subsided throughout the course of the PGCE as more relevant, school-based experience was gained.

The empirical research carried out backs up, to a large extent, the findings of the literature review. There are two main factors that are fundamental to the development

of student teachers' self-efficacy whilst they complete their ITT courses; gaining practical, hands-on experience and developing a positive relationship with their mentors. In terms of gaining experience, the early experiences need to be with the support of a mentor and the outcomes need to be positive for the student teachers to develop their self-efficacy.

The literature review had been far more general, with my empirical research probing deeper into the specifics related to PGCE courses. Student teachers begin their PGCE year, coming from a wide variety of backgrounds; some come straight from their university undergraduate degrees, some have had alternative careers, some have no experience of working with children where others have a vast range of experiences. Universities have limited control over this, other than the selection process at interview, however they can help level the playing field in terms of the experience their students have by the end of their course. Quantity is by no means the most important factor, so while those students starting a PGCE with no experience will never be able to catch up in terms of time spent working with pupils with SEN, they can be provided with a variety of experiences on which they can draw in their future careers. To help the school mentors in SE2 know what areas of inclusive teaching need to be addressed, student teachers should complete the TEIP questionnaire following SE1; this would allow mentors to tailor their support individually to their student. One of the most important recommendations from this research is that PGCE students should spend time in a school with an SEN unit, or in a special school. There are a variety of ways of doing this; it could be a prerequisite of the course that students must have spent a minimum of one week in a special school or a school SEN unit before they begin their PGCE. It could be part of the

PGCE in a similar way to the current requirement that students must spend time in a primary school; how and when this is done varies with ITT providers and within providers, course by course. It was mentioned briefly in section 4.5.8 that those students who had a greater level of experience before beginning their PGCE were more aware of the scope of SEN and that this did not always translate to a greater sense of self-efficacy. This is possibly because the experience was not school based, so they were not able to relate it to what they thought they would be doing in school. Spending time in a school setting with pupils with SEN could help alleviate some of the anxiety surrounding inclusive teaching. A further possibility would be that rather than spending the whole six weeks in university in between their two placements, they could spend a week in a special school or SEN unit. Doing this in between placements would mean that all trainee teachers would have some experience of being in a school and teaching, so should be able to relate any extra experience they gained to improve their practice during SE2. It may also provide the foundation for one of the assignments that trainee teachers are required to write as part of their PGCE, allowing student teachers to develop their use of reflection to inform practice (discussed in section 6.2.3). Allowing universities a degree of flexibility as to when they include this additional experience could make it more viable.

5.4.2 Research question 2

- a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher?*
- b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?*

The literature review had found that coaching and mentoring, if done effectively, played a substantial role in developing self-efficacy. Along with the practical, hands-on experience the PGCE gave them, most participants identified their mentors as being central to their development. The difference was that not every participant had a positive experience with their mentor, whereas every participant was able to draw upon positive experiences they had had. The participants who had a good experience with their school mentors talked with enthusiasm and positivity about the role their support played.

There were many examples of positive relationships between mentor and mentee. The most successful relationships seemed to be based on the mentor taking the time to listen and offer advice to the mentee. Obviously, this is dependent on the time available to the mentor and the type of person they are.

When the mentor, mentee relationship was not positive, students would compensate; F2 talked to another teacher within the department and M3 found several ways to overcome the problems he encountered. He explained that he spoke to the other PGCE students on his course or on placement at his school, or to his university tutor. While this may be adequate in terms of getting through the course, it may not offer the student teachers the support they need in school, and with regards to speaking to other student teachers, they may not have received the correct advice themselves to pass on. The university tutor is a good back up to the school mentor, but they are not there in school to fully understand the situation, a point highlighted by M1 who said he preferred talking to his school mentor as they were there and knew “what was going on day-to-day”.

When participants discussed the role of their school mentors and university tutor during the interviews, the role the university tutor played was not regarded to be as significant as the school mentors, although her contribution was noted by F3 as “invaluable”. F3 commented that she had emailed the university tutor on several occasions to seek advice over “small things”. It became clear however, that as the participants progressed through their PGCE course, the majority became less reliant on their mentors for support. Student teachers are supposed to meet with the senior mentor in school once every week and with their mentors on a regular basis. Setting rigid guidance for the precise number of hours contact time may not work, as a ‘one size fit all’ approach does not allow for the differing ways individuals progress. However, a recommendation that support should taper off to allow PGCE students to increase their independence, could be included. By the last interview participants all displayed a greater sense of self-efficacy than during the previous two interviews, they talked at length about their experience and all were able to provide examples to reinforce their answers. Many talked about wanting to put into practice the following year what they had learned during their PGCE.

One interesting point to note, in terms of the desire of the participants to teach pupils with SEN, comes from the two participants who were the least positive about it. M2 had been very negative about the prospect throughout all of his interviews and was firm in his assertion that it was not his vocation to teach pupils with SEN, although he believed he had the experience to do so. M2 had been relatively positive about his two mentors, so this was not a factor in his negativity towards inclusive teaching. It is the case that sometimes, no amount of additional experience can make someone *want* to do something, although it should prepare them. M3 had started the year

positively, and with a good level of experience, having worked as a literacy intervention officer in a school for six months. He had a negative first experience with his mentor, which seemed to set the tone for the duration of his PGCE. He was “left to get on with it” with no good examples of inclusive teaching to observe. He had to find pupils’ IEPs for himself and work out what strategies to employ during his lessons. During SE2, he again reported a poor mentoring experience, despite M1 having been in the same school during SE1 and reported the opposite. Some explanations have already discussed for this, but a further explanation could be that the experience was not entirely negative, but M3’s first poor experience of mentoring had tainted how he viewed the process. During the third interview, M3 revealed that teaching inclusively was not something he particularly enjoyed. The change from being relatively positive about it at the beginning of the PGCE could be down to the fact that over time people change and that in reality, he enjoyed other aspects of teaching more. However, it is entirely possible that his poor experience with his mentors affected his desire to teach pupils with SEN, having had very limited support and not been shown many examples of good practice early on in his PGCE. If this is the case, it is worrying; this may only be a small-scale study, but it is entirely possible that other student teachers may have similar experiences, which could affect the way they teach for years to come.

It is clear that mentoring plays a significant role in developing a student teacher’s self-efficacy as they transform from student to teacher. Even those participants who had a poor experience recognised the significance of their mentor, even if this was just by acknowledging the omission of support. The view that the mentors were fundamental changed very little throughout the year. In the case of F3, she had two

mentors who had two very different styles; her first mentor was much more structured in his approach, and her second mentor took a far more hands-off approach, allowing her to make mistakes and learn from them.

From the analysis of the research I carried out, I would agree with Hobson's (2002) recommendation that mentors and mentees should be carefully matched. In addition to this, considering F1's argument that two very supportive mentors meant she felt slightly out of her depth when she began teaching as an NQT, with no support in the classroom, I would also recommend that the support offered by mentors is phased out to a certain degree during SE2.

5.4.3 Research question 3

a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice?

b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?

The literature review had highlighted the lesson evaluation forms that PGCE students are required to fill in are, in many cases, viewed as a 'tick box exercise'; a view shared by the participants in this research. They were seen as something that needed to be done to pass the course, rather than a tool to improve practice. F1 commented that she filled in several of hers towards the end of the course when she knew her progress folder was going to be reviewed. At university X, participants must complete 10 lessons plans per week, all of which must be evaluated using the university's tick box evaluation form. Three of the lessons per week must be evaluated using the longer evaluation form. There is an obvious need for reflection to be part of the PGCE, so I do not wish to suggest that these forms should not be

included as part of the requirements of the course. However, they should be made more relevant, and more importantly should be viewed by the students as being worthwhile. One or two weekly targets, based on an evaluation of the previous week's lessons, should be set and should be monitored. Reducing the quantity should increase the quality.

The ability of the participants to be reflective appeared to grow throughout the PGCE, with the progression being noted following the interviews. This appeared to be the case even more so when they were interviewed as NQTs, when they were able to look back on the PGCE and acknowledge that some of the things that, at the time, they hadn't thought were that useful, in reality were, once they became NQTs.

The current setup on the PGCE did not appear to give the participants much scope for reflecting on the theory they learned in relation to teaching pupils with SEN and linking this to their classroom practice during their placements. If reflection is to be used to inform practice, it needs to be effective during the PGCE, not only once student teachers become NQTs. Participants discussed the informal reflection that would take place after a lesson; talking with their mentor, an LSAs, thinking about what had gone well or not so well in a lesson and setting themselves informal targets to address in the future. These informal reflections were definitely used to a greater extent to inform future practice. Following on from the suggestion that PGCE students could spend a week in a special school or SEN unit, possibly between SE1 and SE2, this experience would provide the opportunity for SEN-specific reflection, which could be used effectively to inform practice during SE2.

5.5 Limitations

Throughout the research, various limitations have been highlighted, and are discussed in more depth in this section.

5.5.1 Literature review

Despite its limitations, I did my utmost to ensure the literature search was systematic. I began by searching, independently and in combination, a set of words and phrases I had identified as being relevant to my research (Section 2.2). They were terms such as 'reflective practice', 'self-efficacy', 'SEN' etc., all of which had clear links to my initial research questions. This allowed me to identify current literature, its limitations, quality and potential in relation to my initial research questions. Siddaway (2014, p1) describes a systematic review as "a piece of research in its own right and, by its nature, is able to address much broader questions than single empirical studies ever can e.g. uncovering connections among many empirical findings". A systematic review must follow "a strict methodology which means it's 'transparent, rigorous and replicable'" (Bodleian Libraries, 2015). It was important therefore that I not only found studies which addressed my particular research questions, but that the criteria for inclusion and exclusion were objective and consistently implemented; I initially searched for literature relating directly to Wales, but due to too few results being returned, I had to expand this to include English studies, and as a result included a comparison of the two countries (Section 2.5). In terms of key literature (section 2.4), I restricted the search to studies that had taken place post-2002 as I felt education policies had changed significantly in the 11 years between Hobson's 2002 review of mentoring in ITT and the beginning of my research in 2013, so to include research that was carried out prior to this may not be relevant.

To begin my literature search I used Google Scholar. However, whilst this provided me with a wide range of sources, it is not comprehensive, so other sources had to be used in addition. Furthermore, it was difficult to filter results on Google Scholar, whereas when I used the University of Birmingham's online catalogue I was able filter by resource type, topic, year of publication, author, language and even the journal of publication. Google Scholar only allowed me to filter by the year of publication. If I were to repeat my study, I would rely on the University of Birmingham's database to a greater extent as it would allow me to narrow my search early on. By using Google Scholar, I had to make the decision about whether I believed the documents provided by a search result to be worthy of further investigation. This obviously opens up the possibility that I discarded some research that may have been useful, or that I wasted time by pursuing research that was not. Had I exclusively used the University of Birmingham's catalogue, I could have decided upon inappropriately strict search parameters which would have limited the research I obtained by excluding valid search results. Having strict parameters however does not stop time being wasted with research that turns out not to be useful. This approach did somewhat compromise the rigor of the search as someone else trying to replicate my research may not make the same decisions as I did in terms of what was relevant.

5.5.2 Interview schedule

Initially, I had only planned to interview the trainee teachers who agreed to be part of my study. I had planned to do this at three points during their ITT; before SE1, after SE1 and before SE2, and after SE2. However, my study evolved, and I conducted interviews with four of the participants after their first term as NQTs. I also included an interview with the PGCE tutor. In any future study, the sample and interview

schedule would need to be more carefully considered, before any empirical research commenced. Ensuring the participants know what is required will allow them to make a better-informed decision about whether they are able to commit for the duration of the research. As my schedule developed during the research stage, it meant some participants did not take part in the follow-up interviews.

Involving a greater number of participants from a greater number of ITT courses, and the tutors from these courses would allow for greater triangulation of results, and therefore produce results that are more reliable.

5.5.3 Sample selection

Another point to consider is the university tutor's involvement in the selection of participants. As she had been involved with this, it meant she knew which of her students were participating in the study. Even though all data is reported anonymously, and the results of the interviews were not discussed with her until the completion of the PGCE, there is potential for this knowledge to affect the way she interacted with these students over the year. In any the future study, the possibility of keeping this information from the PGCE tutor should be considered.

5.5.4 Data analysis

Finally, with this being a small-scale study, all data analysis was done by myself. I knew the research well; I had made notes throughout the interviews when themes were starting to emerge and had ensured I addressed relevant points during subsequent interviews. I felt that identifying themes and analysing the interview transcripts myself was appropriate in this instance. However, to make the results more robust, another person could have been used to verify my findings. This is

certainly something that should be considered for a larger scale study. Similarly, the use of NVivo, which was discussed in section 4.2, is something that could aid with the analysis of a larger scale study.

5.6 Conclusion

In this chapter the results of the empirical research have been discussed and analysed and are supported by relevant literature. Limitations to the study have also been addressed. It has been noted throughout that this was, at the time the research began, believed to be a first study in Wales, which is somewhat limited by the sample size and the fact that it was conducted at one institution and within that institution, student teachers from just one PGCE course were involved. However, six themes were identified in the previous chapter, following the completion of empirical research. In this chapter I considered those themes and put forward some recommendations. These recommendations were then presented in relation to the three research questions and are discussed further in the next chapter, where final conclusions about the research are drawn.

6 CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

The empirical research presented here was carried out over an 18-month period. It started with an initial literature search to discover what research existed and highlight any gaps in knowledge. The research available on some of the key themes, coaching and mentoring, self-efficacy, initial teacher training and SEN, was vast. However, it soon became evident that I would struggle to find research that focused on the experiences of student teachers in Wales, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN in mainstream education, during their ITT. This obvious gap showed there was a need for further research. I decided early on that a longitudinal study over the course of a one-year PGCE course would be the most appropriate method for data collection. The study subsequently evolved to include follow up interviews with four of the original participants and the university tutor from the university involved in this study.

The initial literature search had shown clear links between coaching and mentoring and self-efficacy, so it was apparent early on that they would form the basis of the research questions.

Within this final chapter, I present the recommendations discussed in the previous chapter, talk about the implications of the findings of this case study and make suggestions for further work.

6.2 Recommendations for practice

Throughout this research I have made several recommendations, which have come about through a combination of reviewing current literature and carrying out empirical

research. They are summarised and presented in this chapter, with a consideration of the potential benefits they could bring. The recommendations fall into three main categories, which can be linked to the research questions:

Research question		Recommendation
1	What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?	Allow student teachers to gain greater practical experience during their PGCE
2	a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher? b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?	Improve the quality of mentoring
3	a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice? b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?	Improve the relevance of reflection

6.2.1 Increasing practical experience

One thing that all participants agreed on was that the practical experience they gained during their PGCE helped develop their self-efficacy in relation to teaching pupils with SEN inclusively. The practical experience they gained during their school placements was identified as being more valuable than the theory they learned at university, and there were calls for some of the theory sessions in university to include a more practical element, possibly by involving outside agencies to deliver the lectures. With proposals in the new ALNET Act advocating a closer working relationship between schools, LEAs and outside agencies, it seems logical to also encourage a closer working relationship between these parties and ITT providers.

When considering the development of a person's self-efficacy, Bandura (1977) discussed how people are more malleable in the early stages, so to allow student teachers the chance to gain experience of this kind early on in their teaching careers, should allow them to develop into teachers with a higher sense of self-efficacy in relation to inclusive teaching. With higher self-efficacy, teachers are likely to be more engaged in their lessons, providing a more favourable learning environment for all of their pupils. To enhance teacher efficacy further, I also recommend that the school SENCO should play a greater role in the training provided during ITT placements, particularly concerning the training student teachers receive in interpreting and applying the contents of a pupil's IEP, or IDP as they will soon become. As with many of the recommendations of this study, for a SENCO to play a greater role during the PGCE will require them to invest more of their time and resources than they do at present. However, this early investment should create teachers who are more confident; not only to teach inclusively, but also to locate and develop the resources required to do so, so the benefits will be seen in the long term. Currently, an NQT's head teacher, induction mentor and external verifier from the LA are responsible for ensuring the induction period is completed successfully and they are also required to complete the relevant paperwork for the NQT's record of induction. A supplementary section that focuses on working with the school's SENCO would allow this to be monitored.

During the PGCE, two of the participants were involved to a greater degree with the LSAs in their placement school; one worked and an LSA for the day and another completed an LSA trail. Both participants spoke highly of the experience and believed it should be a feature of the PGCE. In my own school I have implemented

an LSA trail for all student teachers who complete a placement with us. This has been met with a positive response from all involved; the student teachers like the insight it gives them and the LSAs feel valued and are able to offer the student teachers a different perspective when they are planning their lessons and developing their resources. Unlike some of the other recommendations, this should be relatively simple to implement and should not require too much extra investment in terms of time and resources.

A slightly different aspect to increasing the practical experience was the suggestion that the duration of the PGCE should be extended. Currently, at University X the PGCE runs for 36 weeks, with student teachers spending 24 weeks on placement and 12 weeks in university. An academic year in a secondary school lasts for 190 days, or 38 weeks, with teachers being required to spend an additional 5 days in school, so it is clear there is scope to extend the PGCE. There is also the possibility that the 12 weeks currently spent in university could be completed outside of the school academic year. This additional time would have several benefits; even at the most basic level, student teachers would have more time in school so would have more time to gain experience. It would also allow all student teachers to spend time in a special school or a school with a dedicated SEN base. There was discussion in the previous chapter about the timing of this additional experience. Some of the participants with greater experience prior to starting their PGCE had reported feeling anxious about the prospect of teaching pupils with SEN, having gained enough experience to know just how broad an area inclusive teaching could potentially be. The concern was that having additional experience early on, before their first school placement may increase this level of anxiety, so one proposal was for time to be

spent in a special school or SEN unit in the time between the two school placements. However, the prior experience had not always been in a school setting, and those participants who had been on placement in a school with an SEN base had generally been very positive about the extra experience, expressing their desire to put into practice what they had learned. Considering this, I feel that to give student teachers the opportunity to go into a special school or SEN unit before they start the first of their two placements would be the most beneficial to them in terms of timing.

The recommendations made here will, in many cases, require an increase in commitment, both of time and resources initially, but the benefits should mean that long-term, teaching children with SEN in mainstream schools is something that is more positive for everyone, including the pupils. It is clear a holistic approach needs to be taken in providing student teachers with a broad range of experiences during their ITT. Training should not only be the responsibility of the school mentors and university tutors; to allow student teachers to develop into teachers who can adapt to a wide variety of situations, input is needed from various other sources. These 'sources' should be experts in their field.

These recommendations are made considering the results of the empirical research alongside the review of literature that was on-going throughout the study. If they are implemented, it is anticipated that there will not only be an improvement to ITT, but also the standard of teachers and inclusive teaching.

6.2.2 Improving the quality of mentoring

Mentors are one of the most effective tools for developing student teachers into confident NQTs (Hobson, 2002). However, for this to happen, the whole mentoring

process needs to be applied correctly. This means starting right at the beginning with the selection of mentors that are going to provide the best possible experience for their mentees. Having a school-based mentor that is in the position because of seniority within the department may not be the best approach. They could have the greatest amount of experience, although this is not always the case, but they may not possess the qualities that make them a good mentor. In addition to this, a head of department will already have an increased workload associated with running a department. Data collected in the participant interviews highlighted this fact, with participants describing mentors who were unable to make time for them and relationships that were not always supportive.

Training should be given to mentors, and the approach taken needs to be consistent across Wales. Mentors and mentees must be matched effectively to avoid any potential conflict or clash in personality. Some student teachers will inevitably require more support, so mentors must be willing to provide this, particularly during SE1 when the student teachers are more malleable in terms of their ability to develop their self-efficacy.

Having a mentor that is supportive is a great benefit for a student teacher, however if mentor support is full-on throughout the duration of a PGCE, it can leave the student teacher as an NQT who is not fully prepared to teach without support. This was highlighted during the NQT interviews, where participants who had supportive mentors during their PGCE said they struggled initially when teaching on their own. The support a mentor gives should taper-off towards the end of the PGCE, allowing student teachers to gain experience of teaching inclusively, without constant reassurance from their mentor.

For a mentor to be successful they may be required, and should be able, to adjust their approach, depending on the qualities of their mentee; the mentor should be able to identify a student teacher who may be struggling and tailor their support as required. The TEIP questionnaire should be completed in university following SE1 and before SE2 to allow the mentor during SE2 to tailor their support as necessary.

6.2.3 Reflection should improve future practice

Participants were overall, rather negative about the formal reflection they had to complete during their PGCE; very little value was placed in the tick-box reflection that was required following every lesson they taught, with only slightly more significance being apportioned to the longer evaluation forms that were required for three of their lessons per week.

Participants had talked about reflection on the PGCE as a whole, but when discussing that which had been SEN-specific, the responses were disappointing; very little of the formal reflection they had completed had been directly related to SEN and inclusive teaching. When making recommendations here, it is important to firstly consider the participants' responses to reflection as a whole; they felt there was simply too much of it, that the quantity was diluting the quality. This sentiment also carries for the quantity of paperwork on the PGCE. If one of the earlier recommendations is implemented, and the duration of the PGCE is extended, student teachers would have longer to complete the required paperwork, so may not experience the same stresses in attempting to accomplish this. A step on from this would be to reduce the amount of paperwork required. In a similar vein to my recommendation that mentor support should be decreased towards the end of the

PGCE, I would suggest that the number of lesson feedback forms could also be reduced. Likewise, the detail required on lesson planning forms should be simplified.

To allow reflection to be used as a tool to improve inclusive teaching, there must be an element of reflection dedicated to SEN and inclusive teaching. Participants had acknowledged that they did this informally throughout their PGCE, by discussing their performance with their mentors or the LSAs that had been in their lessons, but with this being informal, there was no requirement for checks to be carried out to establish how successfully, if at all, they had implemented any potential improvements.

Looking slightly broader than this study, I would recommend that there should be different focuses for reflection throughout the ITT, with a possibility of linking this to the written assignments the student teachers are required to write. The benefits of this are twofold; it will focus the students' attention in terms of what they are reflecting on, allowing them to go into greater depth, and it will make reflection more relevant and increase the value with which the student teachers hold it.

6.2.4 Summary

The three areas I identified as being important in improving practice are discussed above, and within these areas I made several suggestions about how these recommendations could be implemented. These recommendations are summarised in table 6.1:

Recommendation	Implementation of recommendation
Increase the practical experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LEAs and outside agencies should be involved in delivering training during ITT courses; ▪ School SENCOs should be involved to a greater extent in training during SE1 and SE2, particularly in use of IEPs; ▪ Student teachers should spend a week in a special school or an SEN unit within a school prior to commencing their PGCE; ▪ Student teachers should be required to complete an LSA trail or work as an LSA for a day; ▪ Increase the length of the PGCE or the duration of time spent in school on placements.
Improve the quality of mentoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Mentors should be carefully selected to ensure they have the right qualities, not necessarily seniority within a department; ▪ The training offered to mentors should be consistent across Wales; ▪ The TEIP questionnaire should be completed in university following SE1 and before SE2 to allow the SE2 mentor to tailor their support as necessary; ▪ The amount of support offered by mentors should taper throughout SE2.
Reflection should be effective in improving practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reduce the number of lesson feedback forms required, especially towards the end of SE2; ▪ Reduce the number of lesson plans required, especially towards the end of SE2; ▪ Have different focuses for the formal reflection throughout the PGCE year, which should be linked to the written assignments student teachers are required to complete; ▪ Include a SEN-specific section on the required formal reflection forms.

Table 6.1 Summary of recommendations

6.3 Implications

The empirical research largely reinforced the findings of the literature review. However, the literature review had been of a more general nature and looked at coaching and mentoring and self-efficacy almost in isolation. The ‘case’ in this study was the PGCE course, with the analytical frame through which it was viewed being the reasons behind *why* mentoring, experience or reflection had been successful and *how* it had improved practice, or otherwise.

It became apparent following the analysis and discussion of the findings that ITT courses should train their students to be adaptable. Obviously, it is important to have a variety of experiences, for the mentor mentee relationship to be positive and for reflection to be worthwhile, but essentially these are means to developing student teachers into NQTs who can go into their first classroom (and beyond), confident that they can cope with, and adapt to, the situations they will face. If a teacher starts their career with a high level of self-efficacy, they are more likely to be adaptable.

With the number of recommendations presented in the previous section, one could assume that the PGCE needs drastic improvement. However, that is not the case; all the participants were positive about some, if not many, aspects of their PGCE. The PGCE in its current form provides student teachers with a wide variety of experiences which help them grow their self-efficacy. By the very nature of the PGCE, there are going to be inconsistencies in the experiences available to student teachers; every school has different staff, different pupils from different backgrounds, different catchment areas, different resources and facilities...the list goes on. The recommendations in the previous section build towards making the PGCE more consistent and meaningful in the areas it can be.

Whilst the focus of this research was specifically on the impact various elements had on the development of student teachers in relation to teaching pupils with SEN inclusively, the findings have far-reaching implications for ITT in general. In section 5.3 I posed the question 'are the qualities the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education identified in their profile for inclusive teachers really specific to teaching inclusively, or does a trainee teacher who embraces all aspects of their ITT become a better inclusive teacher?' The overlap between what makes a 'good

teacher' and what makes a 'good *inclusive* teacher' were already clear. The research suggests that strengthening the elements relating to developing a teacher's efficacy as well as their self-efficacy in relation to inclusive teaching, can only have a positive effect on their teaching in general.

Successful mentoring has indisputable links to the development of student teachers' self-efficacy. In the case of this study, it was shown to improve the participants' self-efficacy in relation to teaching pupils with SEN. However, there is no reason to suspect that this cannot be applied across other areas of the PGCE; behaviour management, teaching the more able etc. With improvements to the quality of mentoring, by making it more consistent in terms of quality and the support offered, more tailored to the individual needs of the student teachers, an improvement in student teachers' self-efficacy across all areas of their PGCE could be seen. Likewise, a reduction in the quantity of paperwork, or a more focused approach, would allow student teachers' the time to develop their pedagogy.

6.4 Suggestions for further work

I have acknowledged throughout this study that the research presented is limited to a certain extent; one PGCE course at one Welsh institution is involved. The sample was kept deliberately small for this study, having considered the constraints of time and resources. However, if the study were repeated, more participants could be included. Whilst this may increase the amount of data collected, there is the risk that the constraints of time and resources would be too great, and the quality would not be sufficient. Another option, and something I would favour, would be to include

further PGCE courses to establish if the subject the participants are training to teach has any impact on the results presented.

Research could include further institutions and investigate the different approaches to the delivery of the PGCE content, and what impact this has. This will involve a greater number of variants to consider; the different geographical location, the variation in demographics, different levels of resources etc. However, the scale would need to be carefully considered against the time and resources available.

One interesting discussion point from this study was the very different experience that M1 and M3 had at the same school. These were the only two participants in this study to have a placement in common. It could be possible in future studies, in collaboration with the university tutor, to select participants that would have placement schools in common, to investigate the effect that other variants have on their experience. This would allow for an interesting investigation and discussion into how different student teachers view the same placement school. Having a better understanding of how different PGCE students develop their self-efficacy when this variant remains constant, could lead to further suggestions for improving practice.

In section 5.2.2 I mentioned the work of Stone (2000) who discussed 'calibration' as a means of measuring the difference between a person's self-efficacy and their actual ability; looking at this aspect could provide an interesting dynamic to any future research. This would involve the school mentors being part of the research, as they would be able to provide feedback on the ability of the PGCE students. However, this would need to be managed carefully to avoid any negative feedback having a detrimental effect on the participants' self-efficacy.

During the literature review, some comparisons were made between ITT courses in England and Wales. If the scope of the study was to be increased further, the research could also be conducted in English institutions, allowing comparisons to be drawn, with best practice from either country being implemented in the other. The Welsh Government claimed that the ALN system in England is very different from what is proposed in Wales, and therefore not comparable. This may be true to a certain extent, however, I do not believe that the two ITT systems are that different that comparisons cannot be made and lessons cannot be learned.

6.5 Summary

The conclusions mentioned so far have related to the research I carried as part of this study, but there is more to the story than just the data. The research began in 2013 and the process has been a long, and at times arduous, one for me personally. I chose a topic that interested me both personally and professionally; during my own PGCE I was lucky enough to spend one of my placements in a school with a dedicated SEN and ASD base. Much like some of the participants of this study, I spent as much of my 'free time' in the ASD base as I could and relished the experience I gained from it. I got the opportunity to watch some wonderful staff work superbly with a number of pupils with Autism and Asperger Syndrome, which sparked my own interest in SEN. At my current a school we also have a dedicated SEN and ASD base, so have a higher than average number of pupils with SEN. During my time at the school I have run several interventions for SEN pupils and see daily the importance of inclusive teaching.

The starting point for this research was an initial consultation by the Welsh Government in 2012 titled 'Forward in partnership for children and young people with additional needs'. Following this, in 2014 the Welsh Government released a White Paper setting out their legislative proposals for ALN and in 2015 they released a draft ALN Bill which called for changes to how these terms were used. The Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill gained Royal Assent, becoming an Act on January 24th 2018. The Welsh Government claims this new Act will offer a unified system for supporting pupils throughout their school lives, up to the age of 25. As well as improvements to how children with SEN are catered for on a daily basis, the ALN Transformation Programme will also focus on developing the skills for the education workforce, to allow them to provide effective support to children and young people with ALN, as well as "easier access to specialist support, information and advice" (Welsh Government, 2018a). The results of my research are timely to coincide with this and offer some recommendations that should allow ITT to develop and improve the training provided for student teachers to turn them into successful inclusive practitioners.

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8 APPENDICIES

8.1 Appendix 1: 2009 QTS Standards for Wales

EDUCATION, WALES

2009 No. [25]

QUALIFIED TEACHER STATUS STANDARDS WALES 2009

QTS STANDARDS

S1: Professional values and practice

To gain QTS, trainees must show that they understand and uphold the principles of the General Teaching Council for Wales's 'Statement of Professional Values and Practice' by demonstrating all of the following:

S1.1 They understand the diverse learning needs of learners and endeavour to provide the best possible education for them to maximise their potential, whatever their individual aspirations, personal circumstances or cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds.

S1.2 They demonstrate the professionalism to ensure that relationships with learners are built on mutual trust and respect and to recognise that this will help maximise their learning potential.

S1.3 They demonstrate combinations of professional characteristics which aim to motivate and inspire learners and secure their intellectual and personal development.

S1.4 They recognise the importance of communicating information and expectations clearly and sensitively to parents and guardians and of fostering positive relationships between home and school.

S1.5 They endeavour to promote the place of the school within the wider community.

S1.6 They recognise and understand the contribution provided by and needed from support staff and other professionals in the learning process.

S1.7 They are able to contribute to the wider development of the school and profession and are aware of the importance of maintaining up-to-date professional knowledge, understanding and skills and are able to reflect on their own practice. They recognise their own needs and take responsibility for their continuing professional development.

S1.8 They are aware of, and work within, the statutory frameworks relating to teachers' responsibilities.

S2: Knowledge and understanding

To gain QTS, trainees must demonstrate all of the following:

S2.1 They have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject(s)¹ they are trained to teach. For those qualifying to teach at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and post-16 levels this knowledge and understanding should be at a standard equivalent to degree level. In relation to specific phases, this includes:

(a) for the Foundation Phase, that they:

- (i) know and understand the *Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*;
- (ii) know and understand the seven areas of learning that form the Foundation Phase curriculum, which are: Personal and Social Development, Well Being and Cultural Diversity; Language, Literacy and Communication Skills; Mathematical Development; Welsh Language Development; Knowledge and Understanding of the World; Physical Development; Creative Development;
- (iii) make good use of any guidance produced or approved by the Welsh Assembly Government to support the development of the seven areas of learning and the child development profile; and
- (iv) know and understand the most recent national guidance on developing thinking, communication, ICT and number skills, for example that set out in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*;

(b) for Key Stage 2, that they:

- (i) know and understand the National Curriculum for mathematics, science, and English, and, for those on ITT courses run through the medium of Welsh, Welsh (as a first language);
- (ii) have sufficient understanding of a range of work across the following subjects
 - history
 - geography
 - information and communication technology (ICT)
 - art and design
 - design and technology
 - music
 - physical education
 - Welsh as a second language
 - personal and social education (PSE)
 - religious education

to be able to teach them in the age range for which they are trained, with advice from an experienced colleague where necessary;

¹ The Foundation Phase is organised into seven areas of learning rather than into subjects. Throughout Annex A, references to 'subjects' include these areas of learning.

- (iii) know and understand the most recent national guidance on developing thinking, communication, ICT and number skills, for example that set out in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*; and
- (iv) are familiar with the principles of the guidance material in *Raising Standards: Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3*;

(c) for Key Stage 3, that:

- (i) they know and understand the relevant National Curriculum Programme(s) of Study and the most recent national guidance on developing thinking, communication, ICT and number skills, for example that set out in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*; and
- (ii) if they are qualifying to teach one or more of the core subjects, they are familiar with the principles of *Aiming for Excellence in Key Stage 3* and with the subsequent guidance materials *Raising Standards in Literacy and Numeracy*; *Raising Standards in Information and Communication Technology*; and *Raising Standards: Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3*;

(d) for Key Stage 4 and post-16, that:

- (i) if their courses cover Key Stage 4, they know and understand the relevant National Curriculum Programme(s) of Study;
- (ii) they are aware of the collaborative local curriculum providing choice and progression through the 14-19 phase in school, college and work-based settings;
- (iii) they are aware that Learning Pathways include programmes from the local curriculum, the statutory National Curriculum requirements at Key Stage 4, the Learning Core and wider experiences;
- (iv) they know and understand the most recent national guidance on developing thinking, communication, ICT and number skills, for example that set out in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*;
- (v) they are familiar with the National Qualifications Frameworks;
- (vi) they know the progression within and from their own subject and the range of qualifications to which their subject contributes; and
- (vii) they understand how courses are combined in learners' curricula.

S2.2 They know and understand the National Curriculum aims and guidelines; in particular:

- (i) they know and understand the requirements and entitlements set out in the *Including all Learners* statement that appears at the beginning of each National Curriculum subject order and framework;
- (ii) they know and understand the values, aims and purposes and the general teaching requirements set out in *Making the most of learning – implementing the revised curriculum*, the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* and *Skills across the curriculum*;
- (iii) as relevant to the age range they are trained to teach, they understand that, in Wales, learners aged 7-14 should be given opportunities, where appropriate, to develop and apply their knowledge and understanding of the cultural, economic, environmental, historical and linguistic characteristics of Wales (the Curriculum

Cymreig) and learners aged 14-19 should have opportunities for active engagement in understanding the political, social, economic and cultural aspects of Wales as part of the world as a whole (*Wales, Europe and the World*);

- (iv) as relevant to the age range they are trained to teach they are familiar with the *Personal and Social Education Framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, *Careers and the world of work: a framework for 11 to 19-year-olds in Wales* and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education;
- (v) they are familiar with the most recent national guidance on education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

S2.3 They are aware of expectations, typical curricula and teaching arrangements in the Key Stages or phases before and after the ones they are trained to teach.

S2.4 They understand how learners' physical, intellectual, linguistic, social, cultural and emotional development can affect their learning.

S2.5 They know how to use ICT effectively, both to teach their subject and to support their wider professional role.

S2.6 They understand their responsibilities under the *SEN Code of Practice for Wales* and know how to seek advice from specialists on less common types of special educational needs.

S2.7 They know a range of strategies to promote good behaviour and establish a purposeful learning environment.

S3: Teaching

S3.1 Planning, expectations and targets

To gain QTS, trainees must demonstrate all of the following:

S3.1.1 They set challenging teaching and learning objectives which are relevant to all learners in their classes. They base these on their knowledge of:

- (a) the learners;
- (b) evidence of their past and current achievement;
- (c) the expected standards for learners of the relevant age range; and
- (d) the range and content of work relevant to learners in that age range.

S3.1.2 They use these teaching and learning objectives to plan lessons, and sequences of lessons, showing how they will assess learners' knowledge, skills and understanding. They take account of and support learners' varying needs so that all those they teach can make good progress.

S3.1.3 They select and prepare resources, and plan for their safe and effective organisation, taking account of learners' interests and their language and cultural backgrounds, with the help of support staff where appropriate.

S3.1.4 They take part in, and contribute to, teaching teams, as appropriate to the school. Where applicable, they plan for the deployment of additional adults who support learning in children and young people.

S3.1.5 As relevant to the age range they are trained to teach, they are able to plan opportunities for those they teach to learn in out-of-school contexts, such as school visits, museums, theatres, field-work and employment-based settings, with the help of other staff where appropriate.

S3.2 Monitoring and assessment

To gain QTS, trainees must demonstrate all of the following:

S3.2.1 They make appropriate use of a range of monitoring and assessment strategies to evaluate learners' progress towards planned learning objectives, and use this information to improve their own planning and teaching.

S3.2.2 They monitor and assess as they teach, giving immediate and constructive feedback to support learners as they progress. They involve learners in reflecting on, evaluating and improving their own performance.

S3.2.3 They are able to assess learners' progress accurately using, as relevant, the Foundation Phase Outcomes, National Curriculum level descriptions, National Curriculum outcomes, criteria from national qualifications, the requirements of awarding bodies or objectives from the relevant guidance. They may have guidance from an experienced teacher where appropriate.

S3.2.4 They identify and support more able and talented learners, those who are working below age-related expectations, those who are failing to achieve their potential in learning, and those who experience behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. They may have guidance from an experienced teacher where appropriate.

S3.2.5 With the help of an experienced teacher, they can identify the levels of attainment of those learning English or Welsh where this is the language in which they are being taught and is different from the language or form of language of their home. They begin to analyse the language demands and learning activities in order to provide cognitive challenge as well as language support.

S3.2.6 They record learners' progress and achievements systematically to provide evidence of the range of their work, progress and attainment over time. They use this to help learners review their own progress and to inform planning.

S3.2.7 They are able to use records as a basis for reporting on learners' attainment and progress orally and in writing, concisely, informatively and accurately for parents, carers, other professionals and learners.

S3.3 Teaching and class management

To gain QTS, trainees must demonstrate all of the following:

S3.3.1 They have high expectations of learners and build successful relationships, centred on teaching and learning. They establish a purposeful learning environment where diversity is valued and where learners feel secure and confident.

S3.3.2 They can teach the required or expected skills, knowledge, and understanding relevant to the curriculum for learners in the age range for which they are trained, and as relevant to the age range they are trained to teach make appropriate use of the Curriculum Cymreig for learners aged 7-14 and Wales, Europe and the World for learners aged 14-19. In relation to specific phases:

- (a) those qualifying to teach Foundation Phase children teach competently and independently the seven areas of learning that form the Foundation Phase curriculum and which are covered in the *Framework for Children's Learning for 3 to 7-year-olds in Wales*;
- (b) those qualifying to teach learners in Key Stage 2 teach the core subjects – mathematics, science, English, and, for those on ITT courses run through the medium of Welsh, Welsh (as a first language) – competently and independently. They also teach a range of work across the following subjects:
- history
 - geography
 - information and communication technology (ICT)
 - art and design
 - design and technology
 - music
 - physical education
 - Welsh as a second language

independently, with advice from an experienced colleague where appropriate. All those qualifying to teach a subject at Key Stage 2 must be able to use the skills and learning covered in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* in their teaching, as appropriate;

- (c) those qualifying to teach Key Stage 3 learners teach their specialist subject(s) competently and independently using the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 3 and the relevant guidance. Those qualifying to teach the core subjects or ICT at Key Stage 3 use the relevant frameworks, methods and expectations set out in the *Aiming for Excellence in Key Stage 3* guidance. All those qualifying to teach a subject at Key Stage 3 must be able to use the skills and learning covered in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* in their teaching, as appropriate to their specialist subject;
- (d) those qualifying to teach Key Stage 4 and post-16 learners teach their specialist subject(s) competently and independently using, as relevant to the subject and age range, the National Curriculum programmes of study and related schemes of work, or programmes specified for national qualifications (this could include work-related learning). They also provide opportunities for learners to develop the skills and learning

covered in the *Skills Framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* in their teaching, as appropriate to their specialist subject.

S3.3.3 They teach clearly structured lessons or sequences of work which interest and motivate learners and which:

- (a) make learning objectives clear to learners;
- (b) employ interactive teaching methods and collaborative group work; and
- (c) promote active and independent learning that enables learners to think for themselves, and to plan and manage their own learning.

S3.3.4 They differentiate their teaching to meet the needs of learners, including the more able and talented, and those with special educational needs. They may have guidance from an experienced teacher where appropriate.

S3.3.5 They are able to support those learning English or Welsh where this is the language in which they are being taught and is different from the language or form of language of their home, with the help of an experienced teacher where appropriate.

S3.3.6 They take account of the varying interests, experiences and achievements of all those they teach to help learners make good progress.

S3.3.7 They organise and manage teaching and learning time effectively.

S3.3.8 They organise and manage the physical teaching space, tools, materials, texts and other resources safely and effectively with the help of support staff where appropriate.

S3.3.9 They set high expectations for learners' behaviour and establish a clear framework for classroom discipline to anticipate and manage learners' behaviour constructively, and promote self-control and independence.

S3.3.10 They use ICT effectively in their teaching.

S3.3.11 They can take responsibility for teaching a class or classes over a sustained and substantial period of time. They are able to teach across the age and ability range for which they are trained.

S3.3.12 They can provide homework and other out-of-class work which consolidates and extends work carried out in the class and encourages learners to progress independently.

S3.3.13 They work collaboratively with specialist teachers and other colleagues and, with the help of an experienced teacher as appropriate, manage the work of teaching assistants or other adults to enhance the learning of those they teach.

S3.3.14 They recognise and respond effectively to social inclusion and equal opportunities issues as they arise in the classroom, including by challenging stereotyped views, and by challenging bullying or harassment, following relevant policies and procedures.

S3.3.15 They take appropriate opportunities to teach education for sustainable development and global citizenship in all relevant aspects of their teaching.

8.2 Appendix 2: Lesson self-evaluation form - short

LESSON SELF-EVALUATION

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Topic / Content: _____

Target/s for this lesson:

HOW SATISFIED AM I:	VS	S	NVS	DS
1. that I effectively revisited work from the last lesson?				
2. that I had a good introduction?				
3. that I shared learning objectives?				
4. that the lesson was well planned & prepared?				
5. that I made useful references to Y Cwricwlwm Cymreig?				
6. that I made good use of incidental Welsh?				
7. that I appropriately referenced the Skills Framework?				
8. that the lesson was well resourced?				
9. with my knowledge of the subject?				
10. with my communication skills: voice quality, explaining, questioning?				
11. with my timing and pace?				
12. that I monitored pupils' understanding & progress?				
13. with my control & behaviour management?				
14. with the quality of pupils' question/answers?				
15. with the quality of pupils' learning?				
16. with my enthusiasm and response to pupils?				
17. that I matched/stretched all pupils' capabilities?				
18. that I had an effective ending/plenary?				
19. that learning outcomes were achieved?				
20. with the assessment/evaluation/AfL strategies?				
VS = very satisfied S = satisfied NVS = not very satisfied DS = dissatisfied				

What aspects of the lesson were particularly good or need to be developed? Why?

Key targets for the next lesson (linked to Mentor / Tutor) comments:

8.3 Appendix 3: Short term evaluation form

PGCE SECONDARY	
Short - term Assessment and Evaluation: Questions to Consider	
Evaluation of Pupils' Learning:-	Evaluation of my Teaching:-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were the pupils interested and involved? • What indications were there of this? • Did the pupils remain on task and behave appropriately throughout? • Did the pupils understand what was expected of them, why they were doing the task and what they were expected to learn? • Did the pupils perform as you expected? • Did they complete the task? If not why not? • Did the task match the pupils' capabilities? • Did the pupils respond differently? Did you differentiate the work? • Were the pupils able to handle any equipment used (including ICT) safely and purposefully? • What questions did the pupils ask? Were these related to the learning? How could you reduce unnecessary questions? • Were the pupils pleased with what they achieved? • Were the learning outcomes achieved? What evidence is there? • What strengths and weaknesses did you note? • Did you see the kind of outcome or product anticipated? • Did you challenge the pupils' thinking? • How did the standard of work achieved relate to expected standards and NC levels where appropriate? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did you motivate the pupils and keep their attention throughout? • Did the resources used contribute to the learning? • Were the resources ready and well organised in advance? • Did any part of the lesson present any potential safety hazards? • Were the learning outcomes you identified appropriate (Too many? Too few? Too difficult? Too easy? Too structured? Too vague?) • Did the session build on pupils' previous learning? • Was the content presented in manageable learning steps, in the appropriate sequence? • Did you outline the content at the beginning? • Was your explanation clear? • Did you organise the pupils in the best possible way? • Were you able to observe and interact with the pupils? • Were you able to monitor pupils' behaviour and progress satisfactorily? • Did you intervene at appropriate times to challenge and extend pupils' thinking? • Did you give the pupils feedback on their learning which told them how to improve? • Did you note any particular errors or misconceptions? • Did you use your voice effectively and ask a mixture of open and closed questions? • Did you seize on opportunities to develop pupils' communication skills? • Were you able to make use of and build upon pupils' own contributions? • Was the timing and pace of the session satisfactory? • Did you have sufficiently high expectations of all pupils? • Did you summarise the key ideas and help pupils to consolidate their learning?
Implications for future teaching and learning:-	
<p>1. <u>Progression in pupils' learning.</u> eg How will you amend your future plans for the pupils' learning experiences? What are the next steps that will need to be provided in the future to ensure progression in learning? Will you need to differentiate the learning to suit the variety of pupils' needs?</p>	<p>2. <u>Your teaching capability.</u> What have you learned this session? Are there any general principles that will be important to remember in the future? What aspects of your teaching do you need to focus upon to ensure progress in <u>your</u> learning?</p>

PGCE Secondary

Short-Term Assessment and Evaluation

Lesson:

Date:

Evaluation of Pupils' Learning:-	Evaluation of my Teaching:-
Implications for future teaching and learning:-	
* If observed, please refer to targets agreed with Mentor/Tutor.	

8.4 Appendix 4: Weekly mentor meeting record

MENTOR MEETING RECORD SHEET

Date

Keep this record brief!! Full details of your training activities, plans, exercises, evaluations etc. are kept in your Teaching Files. This is intended to build into an ongoing record of informal lesson observations and the mentoring process.

1. **Review of existing targets** (include reference to QTS Standards – see PGCE Handbook)

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2. **New Targets**

--	--

3. **Outline of next week's training activities designed to achieve targets**

--	--

Trainee Professional Development record checked?

Teaching File checked for up-to-date and satisfactory plans and evaluations?

Note of ideas /issues discussed as a basis for Assignments.

Signed by Student teacher:

Subject Mentor:

8.5 Appendix 5: Recruitment letter to PGCE mentor

Recruitment letter

Dear xxxxx,

I am a doctoral student from the University of Birmingham, soon to be starting the research for my thesis. As part of the study, I hope to interview PGCE students to find out their views about the provision provided for teaching pupils with SEN, with the title of my thesis being: "How well do Initial Teacher Training courses in Wales prepare their students to teach in an inclusive classroom?"

I intend to look at the training provided for student teachers on a one-year PGCE course. The research will focus specifically on the training relating to issues surrounding pupils who have SEN and whether that training adequately prepares the student teachers to teach in an inclusive classroom.

There are many elements that the study will cover; university lecturers are the first people a student teacher meets when they start their PGCE course, they play an important role in helping the student develop into a teacher during their one-year course. There are the school based mentors who provide weekly 'training' for the students whilst they are on placement. The student teachers themselves are responsible for their own learning and for becoming reflective practitioners. Self-efficacy plays a big part in this, and so this is an area that will be researched in some depth.

It is anticipated that this study will answer the research questions (below), and provide a deeper understanding of a subject that seems to be under-researched; there is plenty of literature available on teacher education and ITT courses, but there are very few which concentrate on SEN and have a Welsh focus.

Research questions:

- 1 What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?
- 2 a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher
b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?
- 3 a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice?
b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?

To collect this information, I plan to interview 8 PGCE students at the beginning, middle and end of their course. The format will be taped interviews lasting approximately 30-60 minutes each and it is aimed that these will be completed at a time which is mutually agreeable for yourself, your students and I. The proposed interview questions have been attached for your reference.

The tape of the interviews will be transcribed and analysed. The data gathered will then be used in my thesis. A transcription of the taped interviews can be made available to you prior to the final analysis of the data.

All research will be conducted in accordance with British Ethics Research Association (BERA, 2011) principles and the University of Birmingham guidelines, to ensure confidentiality, anonymity and privacy for participants. The analysis of the data will also be anonymous to others. Data will be identified using coding, with participants' names and any identifying characteristics being removed. Participants will have the right to withdraw up to one week after the data collection.

Should you have any questions, or wish to discuss the matter further, please feel free to contact me; exp145@student.bham.ac.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Palfrey

8.6 Appendix 6: Participant information sheet

Thesis Summary for Participants

The purpose of this research is to explore how well your ITT course will prepare you to teach in an inclusive classroom.

I intend to look at the training provided for student teachers on a one year PGCE course. The research will focus specifically on the training relating to issues surrounding pupils who have SEN and whether that training adequately prepares you as a teacher to teach in an inclusive classroom.

The study will cover various elements; university lecturers are the first people you as a student teacher will meet when you start your PGCE course. They play an important role in helping you develop into a teacher during the year. There are the school based mentors who provide weekly training whilst you are on placement. And finally, you are responsible for your own learning and for becoming reflective practitioners.

It is anticipated that this study will answer the research questions (below), and provide a deeper understanding of a subject that seems to be under-researched; there is plenty of literature available on teacher education and ITT courses, but there are very few which concentrate on SEN and have a Welsh focus.

Research questions:

- 1 What causes the perception student teachers have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one-year ITT?
- 2 a) To what extent does coaching and mentoring play a role in developing self-efficacy, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, amongst student teachers as they transform from student to teacher
- 2 b) How do the student teachers' views on mentoring change throughout the year?
- 3 a) How useful are the opportunities the student teachers have to reflect critically upon their experiences of linking the theory of teaching pupils with SEN to practice?
- b) To what extent were these reflections used to inform future practice?

The expected outcomes include gaining a deeper understanding of the provision for teaching pupils with SEN in Wales. It is hoped that the study can be used to help develop the provision provided on ITT courses across the country and inform change. Following the completion of the research, an anonymous 50, 000-word thesis (submitted to Birmingham University as part of my study for an Educational Doctoral Award) will be available.

The academic supervisor for the research is Michael McLinden, Co- Director of Education, Programme Lead (Visual Impairment) at the School of Education, University of Birmingham. His contact details are: 0121 414 4837 / M.T.MCLINDEN@bham.ac.uk.

8.7 Appendix 7: Interview consent form

Research Interview Consent Form

Interviewer: _____

Interviewee: _____

Date of interview: _____

Purpose of interview

This interview is part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which the data may be put. The data from the interview will only be available to the staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis. Excerpts from the interview may be included as part of the final thesis, but your name will be excluded, and any identifying characteristics will be removed. The interview may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Acknowledgement: Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content

Signed (Interviewee): _____

Signed (Interviewer): _____

Date: _____

Research Consent Form: Weekly diaries and evaluation forms

Purpose of research

The weekly diary I am asking you to complete will be used as part of my research for the award of EdD at the University of Birmingham. I would also like to see copies of the weekly evaluation forms that you fill in as part of your PGCE. Both of these documents will be used to answer the research questions in the thesis.

Confidentiality

Research ethics will be observed at all times in the analysis and use to which the data may be put. The data from these documents will only be available to the staff tutoring on the EdD programme at the University of Birmingham and, possibly, to the External Examiner for my thesis. Quotes from the documents may be included as part of the final thesis, but your name will be excluded, and any identifying characteristics will be removed. The research may also be used as part of written papers or books, but without your name and excluding any identifying characteristics, and subject to research ethics.

Acknowledgement: Please sign this form to show that we have agreed its content

I give permission for the use of:

- Weekly evaluation forms**

- Weekly diary**

Signed (Researcher): _____

Signed (Participant): _____

Date: _____

8.8 Appendix 8a: Matrix for interview summary; RQ1

RQ	Theme	Interview questions	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4
RQ1 - What causes the perception PGCE students have of their own competency to change, in relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one year ITT?	Previous experience in schools	<p>What experience have you had in school in relation to pupils with SEN?</p> <p>How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?</p>							
	Previous experience with SEN	<p>What experience have you had of children with SEN?</p> <p>How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?</p>							
	Perception of competency	<p>How competent do you think you are to teach in an inclusive classroom?</p> <p>What do you feel you are most competent at in relation to pupils with SEN?</p> <p>What do you feel you are least competent at in relation to pupils with SEN?</p>							

8.9 Appendix 8b: Example of completed matrix for interview summary; RQ1

RQ	Theme	Interview questions	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4
relation to teaching pupils with SEN, throughout their one year ITT?	Previous experience in schools	<p>What experience have you had in school in relation to pupils with SEN?</p> <p>How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?</p>	<p>Small one week primary experience</p> <p>In the classroom there was one child with an LSA, interesting to watch interaction, how the child was controlled, the resources used to maintain order in the class, but once he was engaged, he really enjoyed the class. He was quite bright actually.</p>	<p>Helped out with kids who had trouble engaging in class, so I think they must have had ADHD or something</p> <p>Helped by enabling me to understand them better because I've actually had the experience, I think it's a big challenge though to actually get anything out of them. To be honest, it doesn't really matter how much time you give them, you'll still get very little productivity despite of it.</p> <p>I'll know what to do if I have a child who can't engage, I guess it'll help more with my lesson planning really. I'll be able to cater for that, but I do see it as quite a challenge.</p>	<p>Worked for 6 months as a numeracy intervention officer</p> <p>No training, but worked with a few of autistic children, a couple had statements</p> <p>Aware of IEPs and strategies on there</p> <p>Experience will help because when I started I just thought pupils were lazy, but experience shows they're not and they need help; doing things one small step at a time. This might just be specific, but I think I will be able to adapt this.</p>	<p>Spent some time at local secondary school in the Science department, observing lesson.</p> <p>Not much experience of SEN</p> <p>1 week primary placement as part of PGCE</p> <p>One pupil had ASD</p>	<p>Helped out in a chemistry class for 6 months, 1-2 lessons per week</p> <p>At school not much as I was with the top set.</p>	<p>3 week teaching stint with A Level class</p> <p>1 week placement with year 5 primary class as part of PGCE</p> <p>A level class won't help, primary gives an initial starting point.</p> <p>Won't learn until I get to secondary class</p>	<p>Worked with young people who have dropped out of school in alt. curriculum – the ones who need more support than normal classroom.</p> <p>Will have experience of worst issues that can come up, not necessarily SEN</p>

	<p>Previous experience with SEN</p>	<p>What experience have you had of children with SEN?</p> <p>How do you think this experience helps you teach in an inclusive classroom?</p>	No experience outside of school	No experience outside of school	No experience outside of school setting	<p>Worked as a swimming teacher during university.</p> <p>Taught one boy with ASD</p>	<p>Worked as a scout leader and camp America</p> <p>Couple of scouts had dyslexia and things like that. One would get really frustrated as he hadn't come to terms with it and when he couldn't write things he'd get really angry and it'd lead to all sorts of other problems so I'd end up spending a lot of time with him, but it's a limited experience.</p> <p>Know triggers, can see that other problems are down to SEN</p>	No experience outside of school	No experience out of school
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			<p>To teach?! (hesitant) mildly confident, looking forward to seeing what it'll be like</p> <p>Being able to engage with them and get on with them, relating to them.</p> <p>Least – controlling them, maintaining order knowing the trick of the trade to maintain order</p>	<p>(starts to relax) I think it'll be difficult to be honest, but I'll do my best. With the inclusive thing you have to include everybody for SEN up to MAT and it's hard.</p> <p>(discussion about mixed ability/set classes. Worried about mixed ability)</p> <p>Worried about tailoring the lesson to suit everybody – seems like a bit of a tall order, whilst maintaining the other things, the numeracy, literacy, curriculum cymraeg etc.</p>	<p>I wouldn't say I'm confident. I don't think you can be taught before you go in, I think it's just something you learn as you go. Pointers may help, but it's just something you've got to deal with .</p> <p>Most confident talking to kids, more just about their everyday lives and getting to know them</p> <p>Least confident – time management – how do you stop yourself just spending all of your time with just one pupil and neglecting the rest.</p>	<p>(hesitant) Not very. It's going to be a challenge, I'm not really sure what to expect.</p> <p>I think if there are any pupils with ASD, I'll cope with that, but I don't really know about anything else.</p> <p>Least confident – making sure I include everyone, I guess that you just get to know the classes, but it'll be hard until I do.</p>	<p>Scout experience will help more, variety of ages, different maturity and ability. Deaf scout, autistic scout, so know how to do activities for all</p> <p>Not very confident at all, don't know enough about specific things. Can't limit SEN to dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism. Don't know much about any of them. Everyone will need different things, so managing it and setting things out so you're doing something for everyone seems overwhelming.</p> <p>Feels like you have to do 30 different things at once</p> <p>Hoping classes will be set to make it easier.</p> <p>Most confident – dyslexia more knowledge/experience.</p> <p>Least confident – don't know what data (IEPs) means to individuals</p>	<p>"I can have a go, I don't think I'll be perfect, but I'll give it a go"</p> <p>Most confident – planning more so than the execution.</p> <p>Not necessarily recognising a pupil is having difficult at the time, better at planning the lesson to include them</p> <p>Least – spotting when someone is having difficulty</p>	<p>Start of difficult, "an idea of what to expect, but no idea what's going to happen"</p> <p>Unknown is the worst bit</p>
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8.10 Appendix 8c: Matrix for interview summary; RQ2

	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4
Positive mentor/mentee relationship							
Negative mentor/mentee relationship							
Self-efficacy developing in a positive way/increasing							
Self-efficacy developing in a negative way/decreasing							
Positive causes of change							
Negative causes of change							

8.11 Appendix 8d: Matrix for interview summary; RQ3

	M1	M2	M3	F1	F2	F3	F4
Reflection used in a positive way							
Reflection used in a negative way							
Changes made because of reflection							
Reflection referred to in a positive way							
Reflection referred to in a negative way							
Reflection used in a positive way							

8.12 Appendix 9: Highlighted interview transcript

I : Interviewer, P: Participant

- I: What do you understand inclusive education to be?
- P: [pause] erm...making sure that you include [nervous laugh] everyone in the classroom in what you're doing so that you so you make it accessible to everyone, to different abilities and needs.
- I: Right, just for the purposes of this interview and to make you aware of what I will be using in my thesis, the definition from the Welsh Government is: [definition read out]
- I: What do you understand the term Additional Learning needs to mean?
- P: Erm.... [long pause, followed by nervous laugh] erm, additional learning needs I would say things like sort of, erm, dyslexia, dyspraxia, things like that that have specific statements written maybe, things like that? *Very cautious in giving her answer, sounded unsure of herself*
- I: Okay, so again, just for the purposes of this interview and to make you aware of what I will be using in my thesis, the definition from the Welsh Government is: [definition read out]
- I: What do you understand Special Educational Needs to be?
- P: I'll be honest, I don't really know that much about the difference between the, erm, so I would say it's probably similar sorts of thing maybe?
- I: Yeah, that's fine. I'd rather you be honest and say that. I didn't know the difference.
- P: A lot of time people seem to use them interchangeably I think. I've heard people use both when talking about one particular pupil, although I haven't had that much experience really yet.
- I: Yeah, I agree. So for the purposes of this interview and to make you aware of what I will be using in my thesis, the definition from the Welsh Government is: [definition read out]
- P: [nervous laugh and a look of confusion]
A lot of the problem sometimes is wordy descriptions like that, there doesn't seem to be a clear example. And even

hearing that, I still think it's quite difficult to explain what it means.

- I: So for the purposes of this research, we will mainly be talking about SEN rather than ALN; conditions such as dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.
With the first lot of questions I'm looking at your perception of how competent you think you are in relation to a number of point. As I said to you before the interview, I don't know you so I can't judge you on that, so you don't need to worry about appearing too confident or not confident enough. Your tutor won't hear this, so it won't have any impact on your university course. So, my first question then; have you had any experience in schools before you started the PGCE?
- P: Erm, yeah. Erm in schools I've, I have helped out in a chemistry class for like six months, but it was only for like one or two lessons a week. Erm I've done a lot of work with kids as a scout leader and erm worked with some kids in America.
- I: So what experience have you had in relation to pupils with SEN?
- P: Erm, when I was at the school there wasn't very much because I was with the top set, the top group. But when I was with the scout group, erm, there was a couple of our cub scouts that erm had er dyslexia and things like that. I do remember going through some of the things, the activities we did there and spending a bit more time helping them. There was one boy who got really frustrated as he still hadn't quite come to terms with it, and when he couldn't write things he'd get really angry and then it'd lead to all sorts of other things, problems. So I'd end up sort of spending a lot of time with him, but it's very limited my experience to be honest.
- I: It's okay, that's fine. How do you think that experience, even if it is limited, will help you to teach in an inclusive classroom?
- P: Erm, [pause] I think it gives me an idea, the idea that I know that he used to get really frustrated, and that's when he'd start you know, like hitting people and stuff and that that would lead to other behaviour problems. So being able to realise that if there were behaviour problems it might be because of something like that or you know, making sure that I spend the time with them or give them the support they need so it doesn't erm [short pause] lead to other things.

- I: Yeah, there can be a lot of behaviour problems which stem from SEN, so I think that's something that might come up for you during your placements. It's not always picked up and it's not always accounted for.
- P: It's just seen as behaviour problems I guess? That they're just naughty children?
- I: Yeah it can be.
So what experience have you had outside of the classroom? You'd mentioned the Scouts?
- P: Yeah, **that's it really.**
- I: So do you think that will help you to teach in an inclusive classroom? Or do you think the school experience, your time in the Chemistry classroom, will help you more?
- P: Erm, I think the Scouts experience has helped me more because they're all different ages. So it's a different age group that I'm dealing with, erm sort or 14-18 or 7-11, so **there's a big maturity difference as well.** Erm, and they're all of completely different abilities. Erm, you know, we had an autistic scout, we had a deaf scout, we've had all sorts of things, **so I think I know how to do some of those activities that I've done with different people. I think that even though it's not that much experience, it's still going to help me.**
- I: How competent do you think you are, right now, to go into an inclusive classroom and teach?
- P: **Ha, erm...[pause and nervous laugh] not very [laughs].**
- I: Why do you not feel you are competent?
- P: Erm, I feel that **I don't know enough about the specific things.** Like erm, obviously the spe.. er... [struggles for words] like you can't just limit it down to say specifically like dyspraxia for instance, because **I don't know really know that much about any of them,** erm, and also everyone has different things and I think **the idea of managing it and setting it out so you're doing things for everyone, it seems a bit overwhelming at the beginning, when it feels like you've got to do thirty different things at once.** So, I mean once you get into it, I'm sure it'll be okay.
- I: Yeah, I think it does depend on your classes. If you have mixed ability it will be more of a challenge, but that depends on the school.
- P: Yeah, they said the one I'm going to, they've got Year 7 and 8 is mixed and then 9, 10 and 11 are in sets, but

Talking with more confidence, but still sounding unsure/nervous at times; appreciate the scale of challenge

Pauses, as if unsure of terms she is using

- P: they've got, they have a specific group which is for pupils with additional [pause] needs, so they're always in those classes and they're always kept together. So, I **don't think it will be as much of a challenge**, but hopefully I'll be able to go to some of those lessons as well.
- I: Yeah, I think it'd be great experience for you if you do get to do that. We've talk a lot about what you say you're worried about, but what do you feel you're most competent with at the moment in relation to SEN?
- P: [long pause, looks confused]
- I: Would it be the dyslexia as you mentioned that's what you'd seen at the scouts, or would it be autistic pupils
- P: [interrupts] Oh yeah, I think it'd probably be dyslexia because **I feel I know more about that one**, erm, like my ex-boyfriend was dyslexic **so I know a lot of the traits** [laughs] and that kind of thing. **I do know a lot more about that one than the others.**
- I: What do you think you're least competent to do; what worries you the most about going into a classroom?
- P: Erm, I think a big part of it is like, **because you don't know them** and if someone give you, **you get the data on them** and it says this group or child is this, this one is that, but **you still don't know what that means to them, you still don't know**, because obviously they're all on scales, **so you don't know how much it is and exactly what they need** until you get in and work with them.
- I: It can appear scary, and not only that you have to actually teach and doing the teaching part well too. But it's not as bad as it sounds!
- P: [laughs] Yeah I guess.
- I: Do you know what schools you'll be at?
- P: Yeah, I'm in [rural school] for my first placement and then [city school] for my second, so I think they'll be quite different.
- I: Yeah, they can be. Sometimes it can be difficult if you have a difficult class, but it's all good experience.
- P: Yeah, I think also because I'm so used to the, **like I've done scouts for years**, and because they're 14-18 you can kind of talk to them in a different way, and I'm used to like, if I want them to shut up, I'll be like "oi, shut up" or just rabble you know. Whereas with this, **I feel like I've got to**

More confident when talking about previous experience

P: Watch what I do because it'll be a lot more formal, you know? With this I think it's going to be different changing because I'm observed, being conscious of how I am, that kind of thing.

I: Yeah, I much preferred my NQT year to the PGCE as you were able to be yourself more.

P: Yeah, I just think I'm going to find it hard having someone watch me, so thinking about that as well as the teaching. I'm sure it'll be okay once I get used to it. It's just not really knowing what it will be like that's the scary part. As the SEN pupils are just another part that I don't think I know enough about. I definitely don't feel confident about that part!

*Sounded
apprehensive
when talking about
teaching*

8.13 Appendix 10: Welsh Government definitions

Inclusive Education - Definition (From the Welsh Government) used for the purposes of this research: Inclusive education is an ongoing process concerned with ensuring equality of educational opportunity by accounting for and addressing the diversity present in schools. It requires the commitment of schools and LEAs to develop policies and practices that ensure equality of educational opportunity and access; safeguard vulnerable pupils; and focus on raising the achievement of all learners and increasing their participation in their schools and local communities.

In reality, that means: Classes where teachers have minimised any obstacles to effective learning and planned for all children to participate in the curriculum and achieve the best that they can.

Additional Learning Needs - Definition (From the Welsh Government) used for the purposes of this research: A person has 'Additional Learning Needs' if they receive education and training and:

- (a) have a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age as those persons;
- (b) have, or have had -
 - (i) a physical or mental impairment, or
 - (ii) a progressive health condition (such as cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection) where it is at a stage involving no physical or mental impairment.

This applies to persons of any age in receipt of Education or Training who have for 'whatever reason', a greater difficulty in learning than the majority of persons of the same age as those persons, or a disability.

Special Educational Needs - Definition (From the Welsh Government) used for the purposes of this research: The term 'Special Educational Needs' is a sub category of additional learning needs and continues to be used for those learners who have a learning difficulty which calls for special educational provision to be made for them.

Under the Education Act 1996 (section 312) and the SEN Code of Practice for Wales (2002), a child has a learning difficulty if:

- (a) he has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of his age; or
- (b) he has a disability which either prevents or hinders him from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of his age in schools within the area of the local education authority; or
- (c) he is under compulsory school age and is, or would be if special educational provision were not made for him, likely to fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above.

8.14 Appendix 11: Lesson planning form

LESSON PLAN

NAME OF TRAINEE TEACHER:		YEAR/GROUP:	THEME:
DATE:	NO OF LEARNERS:	FEMALE:	MALE :
ABILITY/ADDITIONAL NEEDS:			
ROLE OF LSA/OTHER PROFESSIONALS:			
CONTENT OF PREVIOUS LESSON:			
PERSONAL/QTS TARGETS FROM PREVIOUS LESSON:			
HOMEWORK DUE IN:			
AIMS OF THE LESSON (INTENTIONS – what will learners learn?):			
LEARNING OBJECTIVES (OUTCOMES – what will learners know/ be able to do at the end of the session?): The learner should be able to (TLSBAT):-			
SUCCESS CRITERIA:			
DIFFERENTIATION: (What are the main differentiation methods in use –outcomes, tasks, time, support?)			
LINKS WITH Y CWRICWLWM CYMREIG/OTHER CULTURES:			
USE OF INCIDENTAL WELSH:			
ESDGC:			
RESOURCES / EXAMPLES REQUIRED:			

HEALTH & SAFETY:	
<u>THE SKILLS FRAMEWORK & OTHER LINKS</u> <u>Note where and how they are developed:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing Thinking Skills • Developing ICT Skills: • Personal & Social Education: • Careers and the World of Work: 	<u>NATIONAL LITERACY & NUMERACY FRAMEWORK</u> <u>Note where and how these areas are promoted:</u> <u>LITERACY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oracy • Reading • Writing
<u>KEY WORDS:</u>	<u>NUMERACY:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerical Reasoning • Number Skills • Measuring Skills • Data Skills
NEXT HOMEWORK:	
CONTENT OF NEXT LESSON:	