

Issue 5: February 2023

Welcome to the PGCE Programme's research bulletin. Thank you for your feedback on these research bulletins. Please continue to send your suggestions on topics that are of particular interest to you and your setting and we will include relevant items in future bulletins.

Also, if there is any research you and/or your setting are involved in we would welcome the opportunity to share your research activity and findings across the Partnership. If you wish to know more about any of the items included in these bulletins please contact Alison Glover (alison.glover@open.ac.uk).

In this issue

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Welsh as a second language: Secondary school students' perceptions and experiences. Focus group data found students report a disconnect between school Welsh lessons and experience of Welsh in everyday life.



Intervention programmes: to support young quiet, shy and/or anxious primary school children. Benefits to children's personal and social development in improving confidence and self-esteem both within and outside the classroom environment were reported.



Perceptions of inclusive education: Findings from surveying teachers in Wales suggests that without a change in teacher attitudes, the vision of an inclusive education system may be compromised.



Teacher recruitment and retention: Research investigating recruitment into Initial Teacher Education provides insight into the unique experiences of teachers of colour within a predominantly white school system in Wales, and suggests what needs to change.



Video technology and reflection on lessons: The OU ITE Partnership is currently investigating the use of video technology for reflection on lessons.



The Open University's Children's Research Centre: research with, about and led by children and young people, that aims to empower children and young people as active researchers.

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Welsh as a second language

'Part of being Welsh is having our own language, so we learn Welsh at school because it's part of Welsh culture.'

The Welsh education system is an important feature of the strategy to increase the number of Welsh speakers to one million by 2050. However there is a lack of resources, competent staff and skills to support this, and an overemphasis on assessment which impacts pedagogy. This paper used data from the WISERD Education Multicohort Study launched in 2012; 13 secondary and 16 primary schools were visited; quantitative data from 1500 self-completion surveys and qualitative data from 36 students (6 focus groups) informed the findings. Students believed that motivation and behaviour would improve if Welsh was optional instead of being compulsory. Some commented that the lack of Welsh language provision undermined confidence in speaking Welsh. Lesson content concentrating on 'conversational Welsh' as opposed to emphasising qualifications was reported to be preferred.

Rhys, M. and Smith, K. (2022) "Everything we do revolves around the exam': What are secondary school students' perceptions and experiences of learning Welsh as a second language in Wales?' *Wales Journal of Education*, 24(1), doi.org/10.16922/wje.24.1.1.



Intervention programmes *'While acknowledging that being quiet and shy is not a negative attribute, some children need more time to develop confidence within a busy classroom environment.'*

Quiet, shy and/or anxious children who present as shy, or socially awkward, and display anxious behaviours are likely to be perceived by peers as less attractive playmates. This research examined two targeted programmes, Special Me Time for children aged three to seven (nursery to year 2) and Quality Me Time, for children aged seven to nine (school years 3–4) recognised as being, quiet, shy and/or anxious by their class teachers. The sessions were delivered for an hour a week over a six-week period, 11 schools participated in the study (87 children in total). Practitioners reported positive impact on a range of behaviours including consideration of others, engagement, self-confidence and trust. There was also a call for the programme to be extended to children transitioning from primary to secondary school.

Davis, S., Packer, R. and Pierce, A. (2022) 'Evaluating the effectiveness of supporting young quiet, shy and/or anxious primary school children in Wales, using two targeted intervention programmes', *Education 3-13*. doi.org/10.1080/03004279.2022.2131455.



Perceptions of inclusive education *'All students, regardless of their ability or needs, are able to access the curriculum in ways which best suit their needs.'*

Although there is commitment to inclusion in policy, research shows the importance of teacher attitudes as a driver for shaping inclusive education practice. A survey of 253 teachers working in Wales provided the sample. The main themes for analysis included; inclusion for all, beneath the ideal: the 'othering' of ALN, and limits to inclusion (behavioural, training and preparedness, and physical and financial constraints). Disruptive or aggressive behaviour were perceived as significant challenges to inclusion. Many reported that the complexities of additional learning needs were difficult to meet alongside mainstream pupils. It is suggested that equitable practices can be constructed by teachers as segregated and exclusionary in nature. Without a change in teachers' attitudes, the aspiration to an inclusive education system may be futile. Teachers in Wales appear to have an understanding of inclusion in its ideal form, but their perceptions of the practicalities of inclusive education act as barriers to this ideal.

Knight, C., Clegg, Z., Conn, C., Hutt, M. and Crick, T. (2022) 'Aspiring to include versus implicit 'othering': teachers' perceptions of inclusive education in Wales', *British Journal of Special Education*, doi.org/10.1111/1467-8578.12394.



Teacher recruitment and retention *'There's nothing more wonderful than children seeing somebody who looks like them.'*

Sixty-eight semi-structured interviews with a mixture of 14+ learners and serving teachers/leaders, all from diverse backgrounds informed this study. Findings suggest that generally participants demonstrated a common solidarity or shared experiences of being 'othered', by using narrative research participants' stories were unravelled. Interviews were renamed 'research-conversations' and lasted up to two hours. There is a need for conversations around race to be a more central discourse across the board in schools, universities and in teacher education. This needs to be a top-down approach with robust engagement taking place amongst senior leaders and in classrooms. Teacher training programmes in universities should ensure that application and interview processes support students from minority ethnic backgrounds, and targeted careers guidance must be available in schools. In addition, an explicit recruitment approach to find school governors from minority ethnic backgrounds should be in place. Robust mechanisms should be put in place to mentor teachers of colour and support career progression. Awareness of the consequences of 'racial trauma' and emotional toll as the result of racism needs further investigation.

Davis, S., Haughton, C., Chapman, S., Okeke, R., Yafele, A., Yu, K. and Smith, M. (2022) 'The recruitment and retention of teachers of colour in Wales. An ongoing conundrum?', *The Curriculum Journal*, doi.org/10.1002/curj.175.



Video technology and reflection on lessons

Members of the OU ITE Partnership are currently completing a research study supported by Open University Praxis funding to investigate the use of video technology for reflection on lessons. The first phase involved a literature review and an online survey to gather experiences of using the video technology, including the benefits and challenges. This term short interviews and focus groups are taking place to gain deeper insight from the different perspectives of the learner and practitioner/ student teacher. The research findings will be shared in later Research Bulletins. If you wish to contribute to this research please contact Alison Glover: alison.glover@open.ac.uk.



The Open University's Children's Research Centre

The centre recognises that children and young people are experts on their own lives.



Resources are available to support children and young people to design their own research.



Some examples of original research by children and young people on topics such as what children think about iPads and their learning, and children's rights can be found [here](#).



The Education Policy Institute is an independent research institute that aims to promote high quality education outcomes for all children and young people.



A blog also looks at a range of education issues.

Following on from the successful inaugural Partnership Research conference last summer, the PGCE Partnership is looking forward to this year's event – Friday 23rd June. Please look out for more information and the call to present at the conference which will be circulated soon.