

<b>Institution: The University of Derby</b>		
<b>Unit of Assessment: 23</b>		
<b>Title of case study: Ecologies for the enhancement of social and educational inclusion in England; policy and practice for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)</b>		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016–2020</b>		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Claire Shepherd	Researcher in Careers Education and Guidance	April 2017–July 2017
Dr Eleni Dimitrellou	Researcher in SEND and Inclusion	April 2018–present
Dr Geraldene Codina	Senior Lecturer in SEND and Inclusion	September 2016–present
Dr Jill Hanson	Researcher in Careers Education and Guidance	July 2017–present
Nicki Moore	Senior Lecturer in Careers Education and Guidance	July 2009–present
Professor Deborah Robinson	Associate Professor and Professor of SEND and Inclusion	September 2009–30 March 2019 and March 2020–present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2016–2020</b>		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No</b>		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Studies by Derby researchers have demonstrated how policy and practice can be developed to enhance social and educational inclusion for Children and Young People (CYP) with SENDs. Research from the Inclusion and SEND Cluster in the Institute of Education, has filled gaps in knowledge about how the needs of this constituency can be better served by: statutory services (Education, Health and Care planning); effective school improvement and school leadership for SEND and inclusion; and recognising CYP with profound and severe learning difficulties as literate consumers of books.</p> <p><b>Impacts include:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National policy formation including implementation of statutory processes for SEND provision: Education, Health and Care (EHC) planning.</li> <li>2. Improvements in local schools and leadership for inclusion of SEND.</li> <li>3. Policy and practice for SEND and inclusion in an organisation in the charitable sector.</li> </ol> <p><b>Beneficiaries include:</b>  Department for Education (DfE), parents and CYP with SENDs.  Local Schools, Leaders, Students and Local Authority (DfE, Derby City Opportunity Area).  Charitable Organisations (BookTrust).  CYP with SENDs and their families.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>The Inclusion and SEND research cluster pursues more inclusive and socially just outcomes for CYP with SENDs. Its purpose is to offer critical perspectives and new insights into how policy and practice can be developed to improve outcomes through the development of inclusive practice. It</p>		

has delivered 9 funded projects and its members have published 13 peer reviewed articles, 4 books (including 1 research monograph), 6 book chapters and 10 research reports. Studies by researchers in Derby's research cluster for Inclusion and SEND have provided *actionable* accounts of how policy and practice for CYP with SENDs can be developed to enhance the social and educational inclusion of CYP with SENDs. This is urgent in a context where the exclusion of this group continues to prevail. For example, studies focused on the impact of books claimed that CYP with profound and multiple learning difficulties were not included in policy debate about the importance of pleasurable engagement with books, noting that they were unrecognised as literate citizens with socially exclusive consequences. Expertise in SEND policy research in the Inclusion and SEND cluster has also led to a funding award from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Republic of Ireland to investigate the fidelity and impact of social and educational policies for the inclusion for children with disabilities in the early years.

### **1. National Policy for Educational and Social Inclusion for CYP with SEND**

Following major reforms to policy for SEND (2014 Children and Families Act), the DfE commissioned Hanson, Robinson, and Shepherd, with IFF Research, to investigate service users' experiences of the implementation of Education, Health and Care Plans (GBP43,850). A survey with over thirteen thousand responses illustrated varied experiences and levels of satisfaction. To investigate the factors involved, the DfE commissioned further qualitative research from Codina and Robinson (with IFF Research) (GBP5,000). The research activity formed a suite of publications including a large-scale survey, multivariate analysis, qualitative research, and documentary analysis. This research remains the largest scale account of the implementation and impact of SEND reform on service users. Studies offered clear illustrations of service-users experiences [3.1, 3.2] and critical consideration of EHCPs as a route to independent adulthood [3.3] of relevance to over 230,000 CYP with SENDs and their families.

### **2. School improvement for SEND and Inclusion**

Drawing on the expertise of the Inclusion and SEND research cluster in teacher development for SEND and Inclusion, Robinson [3.4] Codina, Hanson and Dimitrellou were commissioned by the Derby Opportunities Area Board to implement a 30-month research and development project for SEND and Inclusion in the city (GBP66,000). The work is based on an innovative combination of activities (action research, peer review, Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) network, SENCo training, annual conference) designed through the collaboration of stakeholders and academics in the Inclusion and SEND research cluster. The aim was to improve the capacity of 66 mainstream schools (16 secondary, 50 primary) to include learners with SENDs. Findings have already contributed to new theorisations of effective leadership for school improvement in inclusion [3.5] as well as impacts on local schools and increases in funding for the project.

### **3. Literate citizenship and social inclusion**

Robinson and Moore were commissioned to investigate the modus and impact of a book-gifting programme for CYP with severe and profound learning difficulties for the UK's largest reading charity, BookTrust. The findings showed that books had profound importance to this group. Studies contributed illustrative and theoretically rigorous accounts of how books support social inclusion, development, and wellbeing for a group of learners who may never read or write for themselves [3.6]. Research produced original accounts of how pleasurable engagement with books contributes to development, wellbeing, and social inclusion for this constituency to demand that policymakers recognise this group, as relevant, literate citizens. This work, published in the *British Journal of Learning Disabilities (BJLD)* garnered attention from the academy and led to Robinson, Dimitrellou and Codina being commissioned as editors for a special issue of the *BJLD* with the title, 'Education as a catalyst for the social inclusion of people with learning disabilities' due for publication in 2021. Robinson was further commissioned to design and deliver training for BookTrust staff and Early Years practitioners based on the findings and was appointed as a member of the book selection panel for SEND gifting programmes.

### **3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)**

University of Derby researchers are indicated by black, underlined text:

**3.1** DfE *Education, health and care plan* reports, with Robinson/Codina as contributing authors:  
**3.1a** Adams, L., Tindle, A., Basran, S., Dobie, S., Thomson, D., Robinson, D. and Shepherd, C. (2017) *Education, health and care plans: A survey of parents and young people. Technical Report*. London: DfE.

**3.1b** Adams, L., Tindle, A., Basran, S., Dobie, S., Thomson, D., Robinson, D. and Codina, G. (2018) *Education, health, and care plans: A qualitative investigation into service user experiences of the planning process*. London: DfE.

**3.2** Shepherd, C. and Hanson, J. (2018) *Experiences of education, health, and care plans: a multivariate analysis*. London: DfE.

**3.3** Robinson, D., Moore, N. and Hooley, T. (2018). 'Ensuring an independent future for young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The impact of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs)'. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 46(4), 479-491. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03069885.2017.1413706>

**3.4** Robinson, D. (2017) 'Effective inclusive teacher education for special educational needs and disabilities: some more thoughts on the way forward'. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 61, 164-178. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2016.09.007>

**3.5** Robinson, D., Codina, G., Hanson, J., Dimitrellou, E. and Qureshi, S. (2020). 'Careers coaching for social justice: the case of school leadership and inclusive education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities', *ICeGS Occasional Paper Series on careers, special educational needs, and disability*. University of Derby: International Centre for Guidance Studies [online]. Available at: [https://www.derby.ac.uk/media/derbyacuk/assets/departments/icegs/documents/Occasional-Paper-Series\\_Careers-coaching-for-Social-Justice.pdf](https://www.derby.ac.uk/media/derbyacuk/assets/departments/icegs/documents/Occasional-Paper-Series_Careers-coaching-for-Social-Justice.pdf) (Accessed: 10-01-2021).

**3.6** Robinson, D., Moore, N. and Harris, C. (2019) 'The impact of books on social, emotional, and cognitive development: recognising the unrecognised cohort'. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities*, 47(2), 91-104. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/bld.12262>

All outputs were peer reviewed journal articles or conference papers with the exception of 3.1 and 3.2 which were expert-reviewed research reports published online by the funders.

3.1 and 3.2 comprises a suite of research reports published on the DfE website between March 2017 and January 2018. They include technical reports and multivariate analyses on the theme of EHCPs. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-health-and-care-plans-parents-and-young-people-survey> (Accessed: 14-12-2020).

#### External Funding

Underpinning research	Funder	Amount (GBP)
National Policy for Educational and Social Inclusion for CYP with SEND	DfE	43,850 Survey 5000 Qualitative Review
School improvement for SEND and Inclusion	DfE and the Derby Opportunities Area Board	66,000
Literate Citizenship and Social Inclusion	BookTrust	22,600

#### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

The research projects listed above have had significant, multi-level impact:

Code	Area	Direct Beneficiaries
e	Policy	DfE, LA commissioners and service deliverers, practitioners, CYPs with SENDs and their families.
f	Professional practice	Derby City Council, Derby City School Leaders for SEND and inclusion, CYP with SENDs and their families.
i	Understanding, learning and participation	BookTrust staff, Early Years Practitioners, Derby City pupils with SENDs.

### 1. National Policy for Educational and Social Inclusion for CYP with SEND

Codina, Hanson, Robinson and Shepherd's work on service users' experience of EHC plans and processes was published by the DfE between March 2017 and January 2018 achieving 6,597 page views between 2017 and 2020 [5.1]. The work was cited by Brian Lamb OBE during the House of Commons Education Select Committee's Inquiry into SEND [5.2, p. 3] and the research has been included in evidence briefings to the committee [5.3, House of Commons Research Briefing, p. 30]. Brian Lamb led the enquiry into parental experience of the SEND system and his work was a major influence on legislative reform (2014 Children and Families Act). He has testified that: "*This research remains the most comprehensive and detailed review of how well the EHC plans were implemented, what is successful in their implementation, how parents and children and young people felt about the plans and how well they addressed their needs*" [5.4, p. 4]. The research was widely used by Brian Lamb and by DfE lead advisors in SEND when briefing Local Authorities and other agencies on good practice [5.4, p. 3]. As a witness to policy makers' use of the research findings, Brian Lamb has testified that the studies impacted significantly on the DfE's decision to continue with their policy commitments. This included the 20-week timescale for EHC completion [5.4, p. 5].

### 2. School Improvement and School Leadership for SEND and Inclusion

Robinson, Dimitrellou, Codina and Hanson's implementation of the action research project, 'Whole School SEND and Inclusion' has had direct and indirect impact on schools, leaders, teachers, and pupils in the city of Derby at the end of its first phase (June 2020). Studies indicated schools that had participated were more likely to exhibit reductions in the number of fixed and permanent exclusions [5.5, p. 34]. School staff who were SEND Peer Challengers or received a SEND Peer Challenge were able to describe several benefits including improved assessment practice, teaching, learning, and leadership, including examples of immediate beneficent action. For example, a local leader commented that the SEND Peer Challenge had triggered awareness and development, "*[there was a] correlation between exclusion and special needs. The proportion of students here in exclusions is something we are starting to look more closely at to meet the needs of those students*" [5.5, p. 25]. The findings led to further grant funding of GBP52,000 from the Opportunity Area Board for Teaching Schools to deliver training for SENCOs [5.7a]. Local Authority officials also testify that the research had impact on the city and was of value to school improvement for SEND and Inclusion. Derby City Council's Director of Learning and Skills has testified that: "*Schools have seen the benefit of the work of the University of Derby. Such was the interest in SEND generated across the city by the University of Derby, that schools came together to successfully bid to the Opportunity Area Board for further £52,000 of investment in to SEND on top of the £245,000 already invested.*" On quoting positive moves in attainment levels in the city, the Director of Learning and Skills also testified to indirect positive impact on rising attainment levels. For example, a 21% rise in year 1 pupils meeting the Year 1 phonics. The percentage of pupils achieving the government's expected standards in reading, writing and maths had also risen to be 1% higher than the comparator average. The Director of Learning and Skills commented that: "*It is an interesting debate as to whether the University of Derby's work impacted directly on these outcomes, but it would be true to say that their work made a positive impact on school culture and which in turn delivered these outcomes*" [5.7, p. 1; 5.6, pp. 1-2]. The research underpinned practitioner publications by Codina, commissioned by the DfE and the National Association for SEN (NASEN) which had very wide, national reach with at least 18,729 page views since April 2019 [5.1]. This reflects the expertise and insight gained by members of the Inclusion and SEND cluster through this research.



**3. Literate citizenship and social inclusion**

Robinson and Moore's work on the impact of pleasurable engagement with books and reading was published by BookTrust prior to publication in *BJLD* and Harris, a researcher at the charity contributed as a co-writer. Research demonstrated the exclusion of CYP with severe and profound learning difficulties from policy debate on the value of pleasurable engagement with books. The findings had a direct impact on practice, awareness and understanding at BookTrust. The Head of Research at BookTrust at the time of the commission, has testified to developments. She noted that: *"practical changes were made to the BookTrust School Library Pack allowing schools to choose a combination of mainstream and additional needs packs, rather than having to choose one or the other. This better meets the needs of young people in mainstream schools"* [5.8, p. 2]. BookTrust Cymru commissioned Robinson to design and deliver a keynote and training workshop based on the findings at the Annual Early Practitioner Conference in North and South Wales. Typical delegate feedback included, *"Improved my awareness of how to include children with additional learning needs in story time"* and there was evidence of impact on understanding. Robinson was also commissioned to provide inclusive literacy training for lead staff at BookTrust Cymru. The Head of Country – Cymru at BookTrust [5.9, p. 2] testified that, *"This broader perspective has fed into our work for children in Nursery (not ALN-specific), looking at how a reading programme can stimulate different kinds of talk, especially through resources that are parent/carer-focused and do not include opportunities for significant practitioner input."*

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)**1. National Policy for Educational and Social Inclusion for CYP with SEND**

**5.1** Reach data showing web traffic and/or download counts for 'SENCO Induction Guide' and 'Mini-Guide to Inclusion' published in October 2019 and May 2020 respectively.

**5.2** Group of items relating to Brian Lamb's Select Committee statement and UoD's research:

- Witness statement used by Brian Lamb to House of Commons Education Select Committee SEND Inquiry citing research findings. Published: 06-2018. Available at:

<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/education-committee/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/written/86522.html> (Accessed: 14-12-20).

- First report on 2019 session referencing Lamb's witness statement. Published 16-10-2019.

Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201919/cmselect/cmeduc/20/20.pdf> (Accessed: 14-12-2020).

**5.3** Research Briefing for House of Commons Education Select Committee SEND Inquiry showing reference to findings from research to report issues arising. Published: 04-03-2019.

Available at: <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/32907/1/SN07020.pdf> (Accessed: 14-12-2020).

**5.4** Testimonial from Brian Lamb, a policy activist and advisor, on the application of the research findings to agency briefings and professional training (date of testimonial: 14-07-2020).

**2. School improvement and school leadership for SEND and Inclusion**

**5.5** Interim impact report indicating stakeholder perceptions of impact. Produced 06-2019 and published 09-2020. Available at:

<https://www.derby.ac.uk/media/derbyacuk/assets/departments/icegs/documents/Interim-Evaluation-Year-1.pdf> (Accessed: 14-12-2020).

**5.6** Quantitative analysis of impact data drawn from public sources. Produced: 07-2019.

**5.7** Testimonial from Derby City Council's Director of Learning and Skills and Opportunities Area Manager for Derby City (date of testimonial: 8-12-2020) and accompanying Appendix (**5.7a**).

**3. Literate Citizenship and Social Inclusion**

**5.8** Testimonial from Former Head of Research at BookTrust showing organisational impact (date of testimonial: 11-12-2020).

**5.9** Testimonial from Head of Country – Cymru BookTrust indicating professional learning impact and organisational impact (date of testimonial: 22-07-2020).