



An Chomhairle Náisiúnta um Oideachas Speisialta
National Council for Special Education

An Inventory of Research and Policy Related Publications in the Field of Special Education on the Island of Ireland since 2000

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1. INTRODUCTION

It gives us great pleasure to present this inventory of research and policy-related publications in the field of special education on the island of Ireland since January 2000. In 2009 the National Council for Special Education (NCSE) commissioned St Patrick's College to conduct an inventory of publications arising from special educational needs (SEN) research and policy activity on the island of Ireland since 2000; and to construct a user friendly, searchable online research and policy database which could be uploaded onto the NCSE website. This report provides an overview of: how the inventory was undertaken; the range of publications found; and the way in which references to the materials identified are being organised in the construction of the database. This report on the process of conducting the inventory and building the database is structured into the following sections:

- The introduction setting out the context and purpose of the inventory and database;
- The methodology used for the inventory and construction of the database;
- The structure of the entries according to categories of special educational need, themes and authors;
- Exploratory reflections on the range of themes and recommendations.

There are also two supplementary documents, which contain an A-Z list of all the references in the inventory by author, and a document listing all references according to themes and categories of special educational need where appropriate.

The function of the inventory and searchable database is not to assess the evidence found but to describe and categorise relevant research and policy-related activity in the area of special educational needs over a period of time in Ireland. The aim is to provide an important information resource to the NCSE, and to researchers, practitioners, policy makers, students and others working in this area. It is important to note, therefore, that the inventory and database form a practical information tool that is descriptive rather than evaluative in nature. Inclusion in the database is not an endorsement of quality as quality analysis was outside the remit of this exercise.

Special education on the island has undergone unprecedented change in the past decade. Prompted by international commitments to inclusive education, landmark court cases and parental expectations, the education systems responded. In the Republic of Ireland, this was marked by a large increase in resources to support inclusive education with additional resource teachers and special needs assistants; the passing of landmark legislation; the publication of key task force reports; guidelines and circulars; the establishment of the National Council for Special Education on a statutory basis; the creation of the new post of special educational needs organiser (SENO) on a national basis; the expansion of the National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS); the expansion of professional development opportunities for teachers; the establishment of the Special Education Support Service (SESS) and the development of curricular guidelines for teachers of students with general learning disabilities.

This has resulted in many changes in schools with new challenges for teachers, therapists and support staff. Mainstream schools have a much more diverse pupil population and special schools are catering for pupils with more complex needs. There has been a large increase in educational provision for pupils with autistic spectrum disorders and for pupils with severe and profound general learning disabilities. At the same time there are many new challenges and barriers to meeting the needs of all pupils with special educational needs, such as the full implementation of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (2004).

In Northern Ireland special education in the decade has been marked by a period of review and reflection. This has included legislation, reviews of provision for pupils with statements and reports on special schools, transition, special education in initial teacher education, inclusion at preschool level, autism, dyslexia, speech and language provision, behaviour support units and the code of practice. Currently, there is consultation on policy proposals following the reviews. Similar changes to the profile of students with special educational needs in mainstream and special schools have occurred in Northern Ireland as in the Republic.

In this context research activity has also increased and, as we shall see, maps onto many of the key changes outlined above. The status of research in special education in the Republic received a major boost with the establishment of the National Council for Special Education. For the first time a statutory agency had such research as a key component of its role in the system. This report, commissioned by the NCSE, arises out of this development.

The purposes of this inventory are threefold. First, it aims to provide a valuable online searchable research database for the National Council of Special Education and others conducting research or working in the field of special education. Second, it aims to provide for a more efficient use of research resources as it helps to highlight the evidence base on which to build. Third, the inventory has highlighted gaps in the special education research knowledge base.

Based on the premise that a wide range of research evidence can help inform the development of practice and policy in special education, a broad definition of research and policy-related material is used in the inventory. It includes doctoral and masters theses, peer and non-peer reviewed journal articles, articles in professional journals, books, book chapters, reports and guidelines from voluntary, government and statutory agencies, legislation and circulars. Undergraduate dissertations, newspaper articles and unpublished conference papers were excluded. This has resulted in 1,693 database references. The report on the database is descriptive with no comments on the quality of any publication included. Neither is there comment on research findings or a meta-analysis of the research areas. As noted earlier, the purpose is to map the range of research in special education in relation to author, year, theme / content areas, type and source of publication, methodology and to identify key lessons about research in the field which have arisen from the exercise.

2. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the processes through which the database was constructed. It describes the search process, search terms, inclusion and exclusion criteria, the different types of reference in the database, the number of references by year, the variety of journals, the types of theses, universities and organisations which produced reports and the country of relevance for the reference. This is followed by a description of the database, the categories of SEN covered, the themes and additional data included for each reference.

2.1 Conducting searches: The process

A number of different sources of research were identified: research articles in international journals; articles in Irish journals; masters and doctoral theses from educational institutions; books; book chapters and reports commissioned or conducted by relevant government and non-government organisations. Table 1 describes the research and policy sources and search processes used in constructing the database.

Table 1. Research and policy sources and search processes used in constructing the database

Research sources	Search processes
International journals	Internet databases: ERIC, EBSCO, Google Scholar
Irish journals	Hand searches of <i>REACH</i> , <i>Oideas</i> , <i>Learn</i> and <i>Frontline of Learning Disabilities</i>
Theses	Searches of university catalogues, contacting relevant departments
Books, book chapters	Google Scholar, St Patrick's College / DCU library catalogue
Reports by government departments, statutory, non-statutory and voluntary agencies	Searches of relevant websites, contacting relevant organisations

2.2 Search terms

Table 2 below details the search terms used for finding relevant material. These were derived from the purpose of the inventory, the categories of special educational needs used on the island and from terms associated with inclusive education, given the thrust

of the recent policy and legislative context. The list includes a variety of similar terms such as SEN / special needs / special educational needs and learning disabilities / learning difficulties in recognition of the fact that a variety of terms is used to describe the population under consideration. For international databases (for example EBSCO, ERIC and Google Scholar), the terms ‘Ireland’ and / or ‘Northern Ireland’ were added for all searches to ensure that only research relevant to the island of Ireland was isolated. The three databases mentioned above provide a comprehensive access to a wide variety of journals covering all relevant academic disciplines. In addition, a hand search was conducted of Irish journals: *REACH*, *Learn*, *Oideas* and *Frontline of Learning Disabilities* for relevant articles.

Table 2. Key search terms

Key Search Terms
Special education
Special educational needs /SEN /special needs
Learning support
Learning disability / difficulty
Intellectual disability
Cognitive disability
Searches for each category of special need (borderline mild general learning disability, mild, moderate, severe and profound general learning disability / difficulty, emotional and behavioural disability, severe emotional and behavioural disability, dyslexia, dyspraxia, autism / Aspergers, specific learning disability, specific speech and language learning disability, hearing impairment, visual impairment, physical disability, multiple disabilities)
Inclusion, inclusive education, integration, access to education, diversity in education
Therapies
Educational provision

2.3 Government and non-government organisations

A search was conducted for research and policy-related activity conducted by government and non-government bodies via their websites, both in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. A list of relevant bodies, North and South, was arrived at following a discussion with other members of the Special Education Department at St Patrick’s College. The list was in turn supplemented by an online search for relevant bodies using a similar set of research terms indicated in Table 2 for the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, as well as umbrella groups in the United Kingdom which

included Northern Ireland. Where possible, websites were searched for relevant publications from the year 2000 onwards. This was followed by contacting each organisation formally by letter and through follow-up phone calls. Finally, letters were also sent to relevant university departments and organisations to ensure that all staff and student research, at masters level and higher, was included in the database (see Appendices I and II for a full list of relevant universities and organisations, respectively).

2.4 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Following the initial search, all references were analysed before inclusion in the database. Following the use of the exclusion criteria, detailed in Table 3, Table 4 shows the number and type of references included.

Table 3. Exclusion criteria

Research and policy material published before 2000
Research not conducted in Ireland or where the country is given little prominence (for example UK references which touch briefly on Northern Ireland but where no research is carried out there)
Research conducted where special educational needs or disability are not central to the research
Genetic / neuroscientific studies
Newspaper articles
Guidebooks for parents which are not reporting on research

Table 4. Number and type of references in the database

Type of reference	Number
Acts	7
Articles	710
Books	43
Book chapters	45
Circulars	18
Judgements	7
Reports	309
Theses	554
Total	1693

Table 5 provides a view of the number of references per year. A large increase can be seen from 2005-07. The lower number for 2009 may be partly explained by the fact that

many 2009 publications may not actually be published or, in the case of theses, uploaded to library databases until later in 2010. In terms of chronology, 27 of the references lack dates.

Table 5. Number of references by year

Year	Number of references
2000	130
2001	124
2002	124
2003	147
2004	178
2005	210
2006	194
2007	238
2008	189
2009	132
Unknown year	27
Total	1693

2.5 Reference sources from journal articles

Table 6 shows the different journals in which relevant articles were sourced with the number of references in brackets for each journal. Research in the field of special education on the island is represented in 116 national and international journals from a variety of disciplines, with the largest number of references coming from the Irish-based journals of *REACH*, *Learn* and the *Frontline of Learning Disability*. It is important to note, however, that relevant Irish research has appeared in international journals as well as in journals devoted to specific fields.

Table 6. Journals included in the database

Adoption & Fostering (1)	Aggressive Behavior (1)	Archives of Disease in Childhood (2)	Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice (1)
Behavioural Interventions (1)	British Journal of Clinical Psychology (1)	British Journal of Learning Disabilities (8)	British Journal of Nursing (2)
British Journal of Occupational Therapy (1)	British Journal of Social Work (3)	British Journal of Special Education (10)	British Journal of Visual Impairment (1)
British Medical Journal (1)	Cabhair (17)	Canadian Journal of Urban Research (1)	Child and Adolescent Mental Health (1)
Child and Youth Services (1)	Child Care in Practice (9)	Child Language Teaching & Therapy (1)	Child Psychology and Psychiatry Review (1)
Child: Care, Health and Development (6)	Children & Society (2)	Current Opinion in Psychiatry (1)	Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology (1)
Disability & Society (3)	Disability & Rehabilitation (2)	Down Syndrome Research and Practice (1)	Dyslexia: An International Journal of Research & Practice (2)
Early Child Development and Care (4)	Education Law Journal (1)	Educational Management and Administration & Leadership (1)	Educational Psychology in Practice (4)
Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (3)	European Journal of Social Security (1)	European Journal of Special Needs Education (14)	European Journal of Teacher Education (3)
European Journal of Oncology Nursing (1)	European Physical Education Review (1)	Folia Phoniatica et Logopaedica (1)	...Frontline (162)
Good Autism Practice (3)	Health and Social Care in the Community (2)	Higher Education (1)	International Journal of Early Years Education (1)
International Journal of Inclusive Education (12)	International Journal of Language and Communication Disorders (3)	International Journal of Nursing Studies (4)	International Journal of Nursing Terminologies and Classifications (2)
International Journal of Paediatric Otorhinolaryngology (1)	International Journal of Social Research Methodology: Theory and Practice (1)	International Journal of Special Education (1)	International Journal of Speech Language Pathology (1)
Irish Educational Studies (13)	Irish Journal of Psychological Medicine (9)	Irish Journal of Psychology (8)	Irish Journal of Sociology (1)
Irish Medical Journal (3)	Irish Political Studies (1)	Irish Psychologist (2)	Journal of Adolescence (1)
Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy (1)	Journal of Advanced Nursing (5)	Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis (2)	Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities (13)
Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (3)	Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry (1)	Journal of Child and Family Studies (1)	Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry (1)
Journal of Clinical Nursing (2)	Journal of Education for Teaching (2)	Journal of European Social Policy (1)	Journal of Family Therapy (1)
Journal of Gerontological Social Work (1)	Journal of Human Development (1)	Journal of In-Service Education (2)	Journal of Intellectual and Developmental Disability (2)
Journal of Intellectual Disabilities (14)	Journal of Intellectual Disability Research (16)	Journal of Learning Disabilities (13)	Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities (2)
Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions (1)	Journal of Precision Teaching and Celeration (1)	Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing (2)	Journal of Research in Nursing (1)
Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs (6)	Journal of Social Policy (1)	Journal of Social Work (2)	Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Applied Behavior Analysis (1)
Journal of Substance Use (1)	Learn (104)	Learning Disability Practice (6)	Neuropsychologia (1)
Nursing Standard (3)	Oideas (3)	Ophthalmic and Physiological Optics (3)	Ophthalmic Epidemiology (1)
Oxford Review of Education (1)	Pedagogy, Culture & Society (1)	Physical Review (1)	Physical Therapy Reviews (1)
Physiotherapy (1)	Psychiatric Bulletin (1)	Psychological Record (3)	REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland (109)
Reading News (1)	Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders (1)	Research in Developmental Disabilities (2)	Research Report Series (1)
Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy (1)	Social Science and Medicine (1)	Support for Learning (10)	Teacher Development (1)
The Psychologist (1)	The SLD Experience (1)	Visual Impairment Research (1)	World of Irish Nursing and Midwifery (2)

2.6 Reference sources from theses / dissertations

Tables 7 and 8 outline the types of postgraduate degree programmes contributing to research in special education and the names of the accrediting institutions. Most salient in Table 7 is the large number of masters theses as well as PhDs and a small but growing number of doctor of education theses. Table 8 outlines the wide range of institutions supporting this research activity with a few contributing substantially to research in this area.

Table 7. Number of theses by type

Thesis type	Number
Details not available	1
Doctor of Clinical Psychology (D Clin Psych)	23
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	43
Doctor of Education (EdD)	17
Masters in Arts (MA)	100
Masters in Business Administration (MBA)	4
Masters in Business Studies (MBS)	4
Masters in Education (M Ed)	196
Masters in Equality Studies (M Eq St)	4
Masters in Learning Support (MLS)	5
Masters in Literature (M Litt)	1
Masters in Philosophy (M Phil)	4
Masters in Science (M Sc)	81
Masters in Special Educational Needs (MSEN)	62
Master of Studies (M St)	10

Table 8. Number of theses by institution

Institution	Number of Theses
Cardiff University	1
Church of Ireland College of Education	5
Dublin City University	3
Dublin Institute of Technology	1
Froebel College of Education	15
Institute of Technology Blanchardstown	1
Limerick Institute of Technology	1
Mary Immaculate College of Education	18
National University of Ireland, Galway	15
National University of Ireland, Maynooth	20
Open University	7
Queen's University Belfast	40
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	5
St Angela's College	53
St Mary's University College Belfast	18
St Patrick's College	91
Stranmillis University College, Belfast	23
Trinity College Dublin	98
University College Cork	11
University College Dublin	75
University of Birmingham	1
University of Cape Town	1
University of Hull	1
University of Limerick	18
University of Ulster	31
Unknown Institution	2

2.7 Reference sources from reports

Table 9 gives an overview of the different organisations that have produced relevant reports over the past decade. Many publications come from the Departments of Education, both North and South. Beyond this, the National Disability Authority (NDA) in the Republic has produced a range of reports looking at different aspects of disability, as has the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), whose main focus has been the production of curriculum guidelines at primary and post-primary level. Irish data also appears in a number of publications from the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE).

Table 9. Organisations from which reports were sourced

Alliant International University	Archways	Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD)
Autism Northern Ireland (ANI)	Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB)	Barnardos, Northern Ireland
Bray Area Partnership	Centre for Disability Studies	Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE)
Centre for Studies of Developmental Disabilities Comhairle	Centre for Independent Living (CIL)	Children's Research Centre
COPE Foundation	Contact a Family (CAF)	Co-Operation and Working Together (CAWT)
Department of Education and Science (DES)	Curriculum Development Unit, MICE	Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety	Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI)	Department of Health and Children
Disability Federation of Ireland	Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform	Department of Social and Family Affairs
Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)	Dyspraxia Association of Ireland	Eastern Regional Health Authority
Equality Commission for Northern Ireland	Educational Research Centre	Equality Authority
Foras na Gaeilge	European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE)	European Network on Independent Living
Higher Education Authority (HEA)	Health Research Board	Health Service Executive (HSE)
Institute of Public Administration (IPA)	Inclusion Ireland	Institute of Nursing Research, University of Ulster
Irish Primary Principals' Network	Inter Board Numeracy Group	Irish National Teacher's Organisation (INTO)
Mental Health Services	Irish Wheelchair Association	Kerry Network of People with Disabilities
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education (NABMSE)	National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)
National Educational Psychology Service (NEPS)	National Council of Special Education (NCSE)	National Disability Authority (NDA)
North Eastern Health Board (NEHB)	National Federation of Voluntary Bodies	National Parents Council Post Primary (NPCpp)
Northern Ireland Department of Health, Social Services and Public Services	Northern Ireland Audit Office	Northern Ireland Department of Education and Training Inspectorate
Positive Futures	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)	People with Disabilities in Ireland (PwDI)
Regional Disability Services Unit	Praxis Care Group	Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)
South West Regional Authority, Cork	Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)	SENSE
Special Education Support Services (SESS)	Southern Area Children and Young People's Committee	Southern Education and Library Board (SELB)
Task Group on Autism	St. Michael's House	Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)
	Wexford Area Partnership	

While every effort was made to contact relevant organisations and university / college departments a small number did not reply. Of those who did reply, a few were unable to furnish details for every year of the audit. In this context, it is acknowledged that the details in this report may be incomplete. The online database, however, provides a facility whereby additional references can be added and linked to the search fields as appropriate.

2.8 Geographical focus of research

Table 10 shows the number of references specific to the Republic of Ireland, to Northern Ireland, which covered both and which were international. There were a small number of cross-border studies and some international pieces of research for which publications from the OECD and EADSNE are perhaps the most comprehensive in providing large-scale bases for comparison.

Table 10. Geographical focus of research

Geographical focus of research	Number of references
Cross-border	27
International	76
Not available	21
Northern Ireland	311
Republic of Ireland	1,258

2.9 Designing the database and reference information

Having collected references, the next step was to design a database to extract the maximum amount of useful information from them. Three sections of the database were designed to this end:

1. Basic reference information;
2. Research themes;
3. Information on how the research was conducted.

2.9.1 Basic reference information

This particular section was designed to accommodate the different types of reference, for example articles, books, theses and reports. Table 11 outlines the issues for compiling a database, which included different types of reference. For articles, books, reports and theses, unique fields were required. For example, for journals unique fields were required for the journal names, issue and page numbers. For books, unique fields for publishers were needed. For book chapters, unique fields for book editors were needed. For reports, unique fields were required for the commissioning body of the reports. Finally, for theses, unique fields were required for thesis type.

Table 11. Basic format of the database

Data column in the database	Type of reference
Reference type	Article, book, book chapter, report, thesis
Author(s)	Article, book, book chapter, report, thesis
Institution	Article, thesis, book, book chapter
Year	Article, book, book chapter, report, thesis
Title	Article, book, book chapter, report, thesis
Journal title	Article
Journal volume / issue	Article
Book editor	Book chapter
Book title	Book chapter
Book publisher	Book, book chapter, report
Report commissioning body	Report

2.9.2 Research themes

The next section of the database focuses on key themes of the research. The themes were devised as follows: First, any research focusing on specific categories of special educational needs, disabilities or syndromes was categorised according to these. This was relatively straightforward as the reference had to refer directly and explicitly to the area of special educational need to be included. Second, a content analysis of all research titles and, in the case of articles and doctoral theses, abstracts and key words led to the creation of content-focused themes. All references were analysed separately by the three researchers who each derived themes. These themes were compared to those used by the Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE) in its audit on research in early childhood in relation to SEN. Common themes agreed by all three researchers were then discussed and accepted. Additional themes were deliberated on until consensus was reached on all. In some cases this involved merging similar themes or creating new ones to capture different aspects of the research area.

Table 12 illustrates that the most studied categories of special educational needs / disabilities relates to autistic spectrum disorders, dyslexia and general learning disabilities from mild to severe and profound. For a majority of references (1,182 of 1,639), it was not possible to assign a piece of research to one single category of special educational needs, largely due to the general nature of the research being carried out, which did not necessarily focus on a single category of need. Table 13 outlines the

variety of themes that arose in the content analysis of titles, key words and abstracts. A commentary on these themes is provided in Chapter 3.

Table 12. Categories of SEN covered in the audit

Category	Number of References
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	20
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	142
Down Syndrome	23
Dyscalculia	1
Dyslexia	63
Dyspraxia	10
Emotional Behavioural Disorder	18
Exceptionally able	5
Hearing Impairment	15
Mild GLD	33
Moderate GLD	27
Multiple Disabilities	2
Other	33
Physical Disability	12
Severe and Profound GLD	44
Specific Speech and Language	12
Visual Impairment	19

Table 13. Themes and number of references per theme

Theme	Number of References
Act	7
Adolescents	4
Adult Employment	29
Adult Independent Living	6
Adults	53
Advocacy	13
Assessment	74
Attitudes	47
Audit	4
Bereavement	3
Bullying	4
Challenging Behaviour	47
Children	15
Circular	20
Cognitive Abilities	21
Collaboration	30
Communication	46
Community	5

Comparative	54
Curriculum	37
Disadvantage	33
Drama	3
Drugs	4
Dual Enrolment	1
Early Intervention	20
Educability	1
Educational Provision	93
Educational Psychology	6
Emotional	41
Ethnic Minority	3
Evaluation	61
Funding	1
Healthcare	54
Healthcare Nurses	29
ICT	40
IEPs	13
Inclusion	239
Intervention	41
Irish Language	7
Judgement	7
Language	5
Leadership	3
Learning Support & Resource Teaching	43
Legal (includes Acts and Judgements)	77
Lifestyle	7
Links	11
Literacy	81
Literature Review	17
Mathematics	30
Mental Health	23
Methodological	28
Motivation	1
Music Therapy	7
Outcomes	14
P.E.	3
Parents, Caregivers, Siblings & Families	133
Personality	2
Perspectives	96
Perspectives of Children	33
Perspectives of Parents	19
Perspectives of Teachers	14
Policy (Includes Circulars)	172
Policy Guidelines	22
Post-Primary	85
Preschool	23
Prevalence	24
Principals	14
Quality of Life	10

Religion	2
Resources	3
Review	13
Self-esteem	7
SENCO	4
Services	130
Sexuality	7
SNA	34
Social	63
Special Class	15
Special Olympics	1
Special Schools	72
Statistics	16
Stress	10
Teacher Collaboration	21
Teacher Education	40
Teaching	77
Teaching Interventions	98
Teaching Strategies	5
Theory	11
Therapy	12
Third Level and Further Education	52
Transition	20

2.9.3 Research details

The final part of the database provides more in-depth information of the research carried out where details were accessible (Table 14). For articles and doctoral theses, the type of research, more specific research methods, sample type, sample sizes, gender of sample, age range, educational setting and country are included.

Table 14. Additional detail on articles and doctoral theses in the database

Information	Further details
Type of research	Qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods, NA
Research methods	Intervention, interviews, case study, focus groups, questionnaire, baseline study etc
Sample type	Pupils, parents, teachers etc
Sample size	From 1 to 2050
Gender	Male, female, both
Age range	0 to 59
Educational setting	Mainstream primary school, secondary school, special school, special class,
Country	Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, cross-border, international

2.10 Future updating of the database

In conjunction with One Productions¹ the front end (user visible part) of the database will be integrated into the NCSE site and will be searchable by users. To update the database, there will be a separate, password-protected area where those responsible can add / edit / delete records and other content in the database. With the import / export option, the entire database can be exported and backed up offline (either in Excel or Access) at regular intervals.

Records can be added and entered on an individual, one-by-one basis, or with the import / export module they can be batch imported from another source (Access or Excel, or any appropriately formatted data source). The methodology section of this report provides a guideline for updating the database. Once a new record is created, operators will have an input page, which will be a defined mixture of free text and dropdown menus where they can enter the data. Existing records can be edited using the same input page.

¹ One Productions is an integrated communications agency which will assist in the development of the NCSE website to support the searchable database.

3. OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH BY THEME AND CATEGORY OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEED

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview and commentary on the range of material found. The material is organised in two different ways: by theme and by category of special educational need. Sections 3.20 to 3.5 focus on the material under a number of themes generated by the exercise. Given the large number generated, themes are grouped alphabetically into four sub-sets (articles, books/book chapters, reports and theses) with the themes in each listed separately in a table. Acts, circulars and legislation are recorded separately in the tables.

Section 3.6 comments on the range of material found by category of special educational need, drawing on the categories used by the Department of Education and Skills (Republic of Ireland) for resource allocation purposes.

In describing aspects of research and policy-related publications in the various categories and themes in this report, references given in text are examples of randomly chosen research and policy in the area and are not to be interpreted as being of more or less significance than those not referenced. Their purpose is to indicate the range of research and policy within the area. In addition, it is not the purpose of the inventory to evaluate the quality or significance of any of the studies.

Table 15. Themes from ‘Acts’ to ‘educational provision’

Theme	Articles	Books / book chapters	Reports	Theses	Total references
Acts					7
Adolescents	4				4
Adult	16	4	10	23	53
Adult employment	8	1	13	7	29
Adult independent living			6		6
Advocacy	11		1	1	13
Assessment	29	2	12	31	74
Attitudes	19		6	22	47
Audit			4		4
Bereavement	1			2	3
Bullying	4				4
Challenging behaviour	29	2	2	14	47
Children	10		1	4	15
Circular				2	2
Cognitive abilities	12	2		7	21
Collaboration	7	1	3	19	30
Communication	13	1		32	46
Community	4		1		5
Comparative	27		9	18	54
Curriculum	15	1	11	10	37
Disadvantage	6	9	8	10	33
Drama				3	3
Drugs	3		1		4
Dual enrolment				1	1
Early intervention	5	1	9	5	20
Educability				1	1
Educational provision	19	1	30	43	93

3.2 Commentary on themes from ‘Acts’ to ‘educational provision’

Table 15 above captures the themes from Acts through to educational provision. Seven relevant Acts have been passed in the past decade, six in the Republic of Ireland and one in Northern Ireland. The Acts cover equality issues for people with disabilities and rights to assessment and an appropriate education. A large number of references are made to adults in the literature, covering a variety of topics ranging from continuing education to social inclusion. Hammett (2004) examines the concept of educability in relation to adults with disabilities. One specific adult theme identified relates to adult employment. Two National Disability Authority reports (NDA, 2005a, 2004h) provide

an insight into the current status of employment for adults with disabilities in Ireland. The Council for Independent Living (date unknown) also provide a survey outlining the role of their centres, which offer accommodation for adults with disabilities. Assessment is another large theme. Two Northern Ireland institutes provide reports on initiating assessment procedures (SELB, date unknown) and the code of practice around identifying SEN (DENI, 2005a). The NCCA (2007a) looks at assessment in the primary school. O'Connor, Hartop and McConkey (2005, 2003) provide a number of references under this theme, focusing on parents' experiences and attitudes towards the process of assessment for their children. There are also references to assessment leading to the labelling of children, which may have negative connotations as well as positive outcomes (O'Shaughnessy, 2008; Barry, 2006; Kirby, 2003).

Much research has been undertaken in relation to attitudes towards SEN and disability, with a number of different perspectives taken, including attitudes of the police (Bailey *et al*, 2001), teachers and peers (Clarke, 2002) and more general views (de Paor, 2002). Lambe (2007) looks in detail at how pre-service education and experience affect teachers' attitude towards inclusion. The NDA (2007b) focuses on people's attitudes to disability.

Four other audits touch on SEN in Ireland in this decade: one in relation to research on early childhood, care and education (Walsh, 2003); an audit of learning disability in Northern Ireland (McConkey, Slevin and Barr, 2004); an audit on the provision of services focused at disadvantage and special needs in the early years (Duignan and Fallon, 2004); and an NDA (2001) audit on disability-related research which spanned the years 1996-2001.

Challenging behaviour is a theme touched on in a number of articles. Kelly, Carey and McCarthy (2004) focus on the occurrence of challenging behaviours in special schools, though there is also work on challenging behaviour within mainstream settings (Visser, 2007). Another focus is on how to alleviate challenging behaviours (McLean, Dench, Grey *et al*, 2005) and challenging behaviours in relation to a number of types of SEN

such as moderate GLD (Byrne, 2006) and autism (Lacey, O'Reilly, Lancioni and Sigafoos, 2002).

Department of Education and Skills (Republic of Ireland) circulars to schools, a key mechanism of communication, inform policy and practice at various levels of importance. Some may be short one-page documents highlighting procedural issues while others can be substantial publications such as Circular 02 / 05 (DES, 2005b) which provides the basis for the General Allocation Model and outlines the guidelines for provision of resource and learning support for pupils with high and low incidence special educational needs in Irish mainstream primary schools. Circular 01 / 05 (DES, 2005a) formalises the establishment of the National Council for Special Education.

The theme of cognitive abilities touches on pupil skills – such as problem-solving (Hayes, 2003), memory (Atkins and Tierney, 2004) and issues around developmental reading delay (McPhillips, 2000). The theme of collaboration covers a number of different forms such as within schools (Corcoran, 2006; O'Driscoll, 2005; Bracken, 2005) or with parents (Vaughan, 2003) or between education and health professionals (O'Toole and Kirkpatrick, 2007). Collaboration between special and mainstream schools is also touched upon (de Paor, 2007; Buckley, 2000).

The next theme of communication focuses on enabling pupils to communicate, particularly if they have language-based difficulties (deMontfort Supple, 2000) or severe levels of special educational needs (Deasy and Lyddy, 2009, Higgins, 2009; Duffy, 2008). It also touches on communicative systems such as the Picture Exchange Communication System, (McAlpine, 2003).

Comparative studies focus on either international comparisons (McCausland, 2005; Barry, 2003) or comparisons between pupils with and without SEN (Gorham, Barnes-Holmes, Barnes-Holmes and Nicholas, 2009; Butler, 2003), or comparisons between special and mainstream settings (Butler, 2003). Nugent (2007) also compares parents' views in relation to mainstream and separate educational settings for students with dyslexia.

The theme of curriculum includes policy documents provided by the NCCA (2009, 2008, 2007a, 2007b, 2005, 2004, 2002a, 2002b) as well as issues on access to the curriculum for particular categories of need (Walsh, 2005; Julian, 2002).

Under the theme of disadvantage, there is a focus on children with SEN who also live within a context of social and / or educational disadvantage. Many contributors to Downes and Gilligan (2007) provide perspectives on this topic. The Combat Poverty Agency also reports on child poverty in Ireland (Nolan, 2000) while Hanlon and Hayes (2006) look at the effects of early interventions in the context of educational disadvantage.

Several references focus on early intervention, with research covering parental views on early intervention (Lyons, O'Malley, O'Connor and Monaghan, 2008; Kenny, 2005), reports on specific interventions (McConkey, Milligan and Truesdale-Kennedy, 2007) as well as overviews of the type of early years provision available (Kelly, Craig and Kelly, 2008; McGough and Ware, 2007).

The focus of the final theme in Table 15 is educational provision. It covers a range of references focusing on different types of provision for pupils with SEN. The most salient references in this theme are reports on specific categories of SEN (DES 2006a, 2001; INTO, 2002) and how they are catered for educationally. There are also a large number of references under this theme, which relate to issues such as educational provision in specific geographical areas (Collins, 2002) or specific settings or types of need (Hally, 2007; Heduan, 2004; Linehan, 2004; Julian, 2002a, 2002b).

Table 16. Themes from ‘educational psychology’ to ‘perspectives of teachers’

Theme	Articles	Books / book chapters	Reports	Theses	Total reference s
Educational Psychology	2			4	6
Emotional	19	3	4	15	41
Ethnic Minorities	1			2	3
Evaluation	14		20	27	61
Funding	1				1
Healthcare	30	3	10	11	54
Healthcare – Nurses	20	1	1	7	29
ICT	13	4	3	20	40
IEPs	7		1	5	13
Inclusion	92	12	44	91	239
Intervention	8	3	1	29	41
Language		1		4	5
Irish Language			1	6	7
Judgements					7
Leadership	2		1		3
Learning Support and Resource Teaching	12	1	1	29	43
Legal (includes Acts and Judgements)	24	5	24	10	77
Lifestyle	4		3		7
Links	4		1	6	11
Literacy	33	1	4	43	81
Literature Review	8	2	7		17
Mathematics	9	3	5	13	30
Mental Health	7	2	11	3	23
Methodological	14		10	4	28
Motivation				1	1
Music Therapy	5			2	7
Outcomes	9		2	3	14
PE			1	2	3
Parents, Caregivers, Siblings and Family	70	4	23	36	133
Personality	1			1	2
Perspectives	26	4	4	62	96
Perspectives of Children	12		7	14	33
Perspectives of Parents	10		1	8	19
Perspectives of Teachers				14	14

3.3 Commentary on themes from ‘educational psychology’ to ‘perspectives of teachers’

Table 16 above covers major themes arising from educational psychology through to perspectives of teachers containing the most substantial theme – inclusion.

Six references explicitly touch on educational psychology. The theme of ‘emotional’ rises relatively frequently, particularly in articles. Some of these references relate directly to emotional and behavioural difficulties (Foster, 2006; McKiernan, 2005; Fleming and Gallagher, 2002), but the emotional needs of teachers (Flood, 2007), young people in public care (Gilligan, 2007) and children with other conditions, such as autism (Honan, 2005), are also referred to.

Evaluation is also an important theme for a number of references, including national reports (DES, 2006, 2005) and theses, which evaluate specific programmes or interventions (Doyle, 2008; O’Dea, 2008; Harney, 2005; Fahey, 2003).

A major theme arising relates to healthcare. Issues covered include access to healthcare (D’Eath *et al.*, 2005; Sowney and Barr, 2004; Pillinger, 2004; Yazbeck, 2003) and issues around mental health (Devine and Taggart, 2008; Clarke and Houlihan, 2005; Coughlan, 2003). A number of references focus specifically on the role of nurses, particularly learning disability nurses (Barr, 2006).

Research in ICT and special education includes information on provision in Ireland (NCTE, 2002). A majority of the references focus on the role of ICT in schools and classrooms (Austin and Anderson, 2007; Enright, 2006; Brennan, 2005) and how these technologies may motivate students (Casey, 2008). A small number of references focus on IEPs. Corcoran (2006) focuses on IEPs and collaboration between mainstream and resource teachers. Butterly and McCafferty (2004) focus on IEPs at post-primary level, while IEPs for children with autistic spectrum disorders are also focused on (Prunty, 2007; Lordan, 2002). Byrne (2008) also provides a commentary on IEPs in light of the implementation report of the National Council for Special Education (NCSE, 2006).

Understandably, given the legislative and socio-political context, there are 239 references to 'inclusion' across articles, books, theses and reports. Areas focused on within inclusion include attitudes (Abbott, 2007), issues around social inclusion (Fennell, 2008, 2006; McConkey, 2007; Abbott and McConkey, 2006; Devine and Kelly, 2006), teaching for inclusion (Keane, 2007; Brennan, 2005), case studies of inclusion (Callaghan, 2006; Brophy, 2003; Coffey, 2003 and research focusing on specific categories of SEN (Gray, 2009; Coyle, 2006, Henry and Shevlin, 2006). Reports on inclusion include work by the Department of Education Northern Ireland and Training Inspectorate (2002), the INTO (2004) and the NDA (2005). There are also theoretical issues about the nature of inclusion, its boundaries and how it can be implemented (Monaghan, 2005; Jerlinder, 2003; Shevlin, Kenny and McNeela, 2001).

Seven references focus on the Irish language and how children with SEN are catered for in Gaelscoileanna or Gaeltacht schools (Ní Chiaruáin, 2009; Ní Fhoighil, 2008; Ní Chonail, 2002). Seven specific judgements relating to SEN are included in the inventory.

In relation to learning support and resource teaching there is a focus on how learning support and / or resource teachers support pupils in mainstream primary schools (Long, 2005; Shevlin, Kenny and McNeela, 2002). Travers (2006) looks at perceptions of learning support and resource teachers of each others' role. Legal issues arise as another theme where Ware (2001) looks at the implications arising from the Sinnott judgement while O'Neill (2001) provides an international perspective on mental disability law in Ireland. Other legal commentaries include publications from the Equality Commission of Northern Ireland (2006a) and DES (2003). De Wispelaere and Walsh (2007), meanwhile, provide a critique of the current legal statutes with regard to disabilities.

Lifestyle issues such as diet (Collins *et al*, 2004; Collins *et al*, 2003) also feature. The links between mainstream and special schools (de Paor, 2007; Bracken, 2005; Buckley, 2000; Shevlin and O'Moore, 2000a) at organisational and pupil level receives some attention.

In terms of areas of the curriculum the largest focus is in relation to literacy. This includes literacy in schools designated as disadvantaged (DES, 2005) and improving literacy levels in schools (DES, 2006). Others focus on the literacy needs of students with dyslexia (Ní Chiaruáin, 2009; Phayer, 2008; Tansey and Ní Dhomhnaill, 2002; Jones, 2000). There is also a focus on reading recovery (Connolly, 2001) and general strategies for literacy (Browne, 2007; Cranks, 2004).

A number of literature reviews was identified, for example O'Regan and Drummond (2008), Fleming (2006) and Níxon (2001). The NCSE has recently published international reviews on autism (Parsons *et al*, 2009), visual impairment (Douglas *et al*, 2009) and hearing impairment (Marschark, 2009). The report on the future role of special schools and classes (Ware *et al*, 2009) also includes an international literature review. Bamford (2007) provides a review of mental health and learning disability in Northern Ireland.

Special educational needs in mathematics are beginning to receive attention. There is a focus on mathematics for students with dyslexia (Hayden, 2006; Flanagan, 2005; de Buitléar, 2003). Travers (2009, 2007) examines learning support policy and practice for mathematics.

The interaction of mental health issues and special educational needs / disability is emerging as a theme. Bamford (2005a) provides an audit of mental health and learning disabilities. The NDA (2003) also provides a review of access to mental health services for people with intellectual disabilities.

Methodological considerations are touched on by a number of references. Issues include how to carry out research in the area of intellectual disability (Boland, Daly and Staines, 2008), how to interview people with disabilities (D'Eath *et al*, 2005) and ethical considerations (NDA, 2009; Gray and Carville, 2008).

Literature on outcomes for children with SEN is relatively scarce. Research under this theme has focused on qualitative, personal views (Fahey, 2007, 2005; Callaghan, 2005).

The themes of parents, caregivers, siblings and family touch on issues arising for those surrounding children or adults with SEN and attempts to document their experiences. The views and experiences of parents are described by Carrig (2007), CAWT (2007) and Meyler (2009). Informing parents of their child's needs and providing them with appropriate information and support is also covered (Fitzpatrick and Dowling, 2007; DENI, 2004; National Federation of Voluntary Bodies, 2003; O'Neill, 2000). There is also research focusing on parental involvement in education (Koller, 2008; Dillenberger Keenan, Gallagher and Mc Elhinney, 2004; Vaughan, 2003). The interaction between parents and inclusive education is the subject of a number of studies (Watson, 2005; Kenny, Shevlin, Noonan Walsh and Mc Neela, 2005; Breen, 2004). Caregivers are touched on by Finnegan, Dooley and Noonan Walsh, (2004), while the impact of SEN on siblings is also focused on (Ryan 2009; O'Connor, 2007; Traynor, 2005).

The final major theme in Table 16 focuses on perspectives. Some perspectives are historical (McGee, 2004) and general (Barragry, 2002). Most research on this theme is included in theses. A number of references detail the perspectives of children (O'Keefe, 2009; Byrne, 2008; Daly, Keogh and Whyte, 2007; INTO, 2001; O'Donnell, 2000), the perspectives of parents (McConkey, Truesdale-Kennedy and Cassidy, 2009) and the perspectives of teachers (Keenan, 2008; Kilbride, 2004).

Table 17. Themes from ‘policy’ to ‘stress’

Theme	Articles	Books / book chapters	Reports	Theses	Total references
Policy (includes Circulars)	44	15	57	20	136
Policy Guidelines			22		22
Post-Primary	20	2	11	52	85
Preschool	8	1	9	5	23
Prevalence	8		11	5	24
Principals	4		2	8	14
Quality of Life	2		2	6	10
Religion				2	2
Resources	1		1	1	3
Reviews	5	4	4		13
Self-esteem	1			6	7
SENCO	1			3	4
Services	84	2	22	22	130
Sexuality	3			4	7
SNA	12			22	34
Social	20	8	4	31	63
Special Class	2	1	4	8	15
Special Olympics	1				1
Special Schools	28	1	10	33	72
Statistics	1	11	4		16
Stress	5		1	4	10

3.4 Commentary on themes from ‘policy’ to ‘stress’

Table 17 above covers the themes from policy to stress. Many policy documents in the field have been published in the past decade. While legislation passed is covered under the themes of Acts and legal, two specific references focus on issues around the implementation of the Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act (EPSEN, 2004) (Morgensen, 2005; Phibbs, 2005). Included under the theme are policy reports from both the Republic and Northern Ireland on autism (DES, 2006a; DENI, 2001) and dyslexia (DENI, 2002; DES, 2001).

There is also a range of policy guidelines from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Disability Authority, the National Educational Psychology Service and the Department of Education and Science with regard to curriculum,

learning support and inclusion at primary and post-primary level. The NCCA, NDA, NEPS, NCSE and other statutory bodies have published policy documents relating to their aims and objectives. Beyond this, Quin and Redmond (2006) and Quin (2003) provide a general overview on disability and social policy in the Republic of Ireland, with Kearns (2003) providing a similar overview for Northern Ireland. There are also references focusing on school policies, such as behaviour and discipline (Kingston, 2009).

A variety of issues at post-primary level are touched on, particularly in these. In addition relevant publications from the NCCA (2009, 2005) and the DES (2007) focus on the inclusion of students with SEN at post-primary level. The EADSNE (2006, 2005) provides a European overview of current post-primary provision for children with special educational needs.

Moving to the other end of the educational spectrum, there are also references to preschool issues for children with SEN. Two studies focus on children with autistic spectrum disorders at preschool level (Cassidy, McConkey, Truesdale-Kennedy and Slevin, 2008; McKerr and Gallagher, 2006) and a Northern Irish report on effective preschool provision for children (Quinn *et al*, 2004). Duignan and Fallon (2004) also provide an overview of the provision of services for children experiencing educational disadvantage up to age six. The prevalence of certain conditions is the subject of 23 references. These mostly refer to prevalence of types of behaviour within a condition (for example Brosnan, 2000). Murphy, Harrold, Carey and Mulrooney (2000) look at the prevalence of learning disability among the prison population in Ireland.

Principals are the focus of 14 references. These include their views on inclusion (White, 2007; Abbott, 2006) and the views of principals of special schools (O'Mahony, 2009; Kelly, Carey, Mc Carthy and Coyle, 2007). Quality of life is covered as an issue for children and adults with SEN, with the National Federation of Voluntary Bodies (2003) looking at the quality of life of young people. Andrews and Holran (2005) tackle whether it is possible to measure the quality of life of people with severe and profound intellectual disabilities.

Self-esteem is touched on by a number of studies, including for children with moderate general learning disabilities (Hardiman, 2008) transition from post-primary school (Craddock, 2003) and more generally within special education settings (Cooney, 2002). The role of the SENCO in Northern Ireland is raised in a small number of studies (McKay, 2007; Milner, 2003).

A major theme is the focus on services. The National Federation of Voluntary Bodies (2008a, 2008b) provides an overview of the service needs of people with SEN, as well as looking at the importance of volunteers within this sector. Other references touch on varied types of services, from mental health services (NDA, 2003), educational services (Day, 2005; INTO, 2001), to family support services (McConkey and McCullough, 2006; Truesdale, 2004). These services focus on either children (Gray, 2008; Duignan and Fallon, 2004) or adults (McGlade, 2007; Holt et al, 2000). There are also references to services for specific categories of need such as autism (Honan, 2005; Doherty, Fitzgerald and Matthews, 2000), dyslexia (Nugent, 2008) and severe and profound intellectual disabilities (Treacy, 2002).

A number of themes are touched on in only one or two references. Sexuality is touched on briefly, as are SNAs. Logan (2001) looks at collaboration between mainstream class teachers and SNAs, while Sheridan (2008) looks at the role of the SNA in a mainstream community school.

A large number of references centre on a social theme, which has a number of different aspects. These include books and articles on social inclusion (McConkey, 2007; O'Brien and Ó Fathaigh, 2007; Abbot and McConkey, 2006; Duffy, 2005; McConkey *et al*, 2005; Gannon and Nolan, 2005; Whyte, 2002). Comparisons between the social development of children in mainstream and special school settings have been the focus of work by Hardiman, Guerine and Fitzsimons (2009), Butler (2003) and McMahan (2003). Social skills training have been examined by Irwin (2008), Brennan (2007), Casserly (2007), Brinkley (2003) and Duffy and Fuller (2000). Issues relating to the social dimension of Aspergers syndrome and autism have featured in Cullen (2009),

Brennan (2007) and Kilroy (2008). The social aspects of behaviour are referred to by O'Mahony (2005) and Kerr and Lacey (2006).

There are a low number of references focusing on special classes, with Travers's (2009) commentary on the changes in special classes for pupils with mild general learning disabilities and the report by Ware *et al* (2009) on the current and future role of special schools and classes. Most references to special classes emerge from theses (for example Kelly, 2005; Breathnach, 2005; Heduan, 2004).

Seventy-four references focus on the special school. McElwee (2007) provides a case study of one specific special school, as does Neil, McEwen, Carlisle and Knipe (2001), while McPhillips and Shevlin (2009) look at comparing special and mainstream settings for children with dyslexia. O'Keeffe (2004) looks at the role of the special school in an age of inclusion. The INTO (2002) focuses on the challenges for special schools and classes while the report by Ware *et al* (2009) provides an overview of the current and future role of special schools.

Sixteen references, most coming from the OECD, provide statistical information providing an international perspective on the provision for children with special educational needs, both in mainstream and separate settings. The EADSNE (2008, 2003) also provides statistical information within the European context. The Health Research Board publishes annual reports on its national intellectual disability database as well as reports, for example on trends in demand for services for children with intellectual disabilities under age five (Kelly *et al*, 2008). The last theme in this table is stress, focusing on teachers (McCarthy, 2003, 2002) and parents (Tehee *et al*, 2009; Gormley, 2004).

Table 18. Themes from ‘teacher collaboration’ to ‘transition’

Theme	Articles	Books /book chapters	Reports	Theses	Total references
Teacher Collaboration	8		1	12	21
Teacher Education	26		3	11	40
Teaching	29	3	6	39	77
Teaching Interventions	49	1	6	42	98
Teaching Strategies				5	5
Theory	7			4	11
Therapy	6			6	12
Third Level and Further Education	13	2	22	15	52
Transition	3			17	20

3.5 Commentary on themes from ‘teacher collaboration’ to ‘transition’

The final set of themes range from teacher collaboration to transition. With regard to teacher collaboration, the Department of Education Northern Ireland (2006) provides standards and guidance for promoting collaborative work to support children with special needs, while co-operative teaching is also covered (McNamara, 2009; Keane, 2007; King, 2007; McKeown, 2005). Glackin (2007) examines collaboration between resource and subject teachers in post-primary schools, while Long (2005) also looks at the potential for resource teachers to collaborate with other teachers. Teacher education at preservice level and CPD are addressed in a number of references. Kearns and Shevlin (2006) compare initial teacher education in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland, while Lambe (2007) and Lambe and Bones (2006a, 2006b) look at student teachers’ perceptions of inclusion. O’Donnell (2009) looks at teacher efficacy – with regard to the extent to which teachers believe they possess the knowledge, skills and competencies to include pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes.

On teaching, a variety of issues are raised focusing on specific subject areas and strategies (O’Leary, 2007; Hartney, 2006; Rodgers, 2005; Flanagan, 2005; Fanning, 2001), career guidance (Jordan, 2003), literacy (McNeill, 2008; McMurray, 2006) as well as more general approaches (INTO, 2007).

A substantial number of references focus on teaching interventions. These relate to interventions such as PECS and ABA for children with autism (Dillenburger and Keenan, 2009; Baker, 2001), dyslexia (McPhilips, Bell and Doveston, 2009; Jones, 2000), interventions for specific lessons (Butler, 2009; Greene, 2008; Browne, 2007) and general approaches (DES, 2006; Fitzgerald, 2006; Barry, 2005). In relation to reading interventions there is work by Nugent (2008) and Ní Bhroin (2009).

Several references are made to providing education for people with SEN at third level institutions, or some other form of further education. In Northern Ireland, the Equality Commission (2006) provides a disability discrimination code of practice for further and higher education, while Shevlin and Kenny (2004) examine student perspectives of participation in higher education. AHEAD (2001) also provides a handbook for accessing third level education for students with disabilities. Several references focus specifically on third level education for students with dyslexia (Phayer 2008, 2007; Walsh, 2003).

The final theme in the audit is transition. Transition points identified include transition from primary to post-primary (Jackson, 2008; Conroy, 2005), from post-primary to third level (O'Connor, 2006; Craddock, 2003), as well as transitions from childhood to adulthood (Loughman, 2004; Minogue, 2004; Mitchell, 2000).

3.6 Research and policy related to specific categories of special educational need

Table 19 outlines references to specific categories of SEN / disability in the database. One can see differences in the level of research output across the DES categories of special educational needs. This can be mapped onto significant developments in these areas over the period of study.

Some exploratory comments are offered on the relative levels of research activity across the various categories. It is important, however, to stress the limitations of such analysis as the level of research in no way indicates the quality of the research and such analysis is outside the remit of this exercise.

Table 19. Categories of SEN / disabilities

	Book/ Book				Number of References
	Article	Chapter	Report	Thesis	
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	7		3	10	20
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	44	7	28	63	142
Down Syndrome	13	1	1	8	23
Dyscalculia	1				1
Dyslexia	21	2	6	34	63
Dyspraxia	5		1	4	10
Emotional Behavioural Disorder	5	1	1	11	18
Exceptionally able	3		2		5
Hearing Impairment	2	2	3	8	15
Mild GLD	14	1		18	33
Moderate GLD	12		4	11	27
Multiple Disabilities				2	2
Other	24	1	2	6	33
Physical Disability	1		4	7	12
Severe and Profound GLD	24	1	5	14	44
Specific Speech and Language	2		3	7	12
Visual Impairment	12		2	5	19

Category	Articles	Books / book chapters	Reports	Theses	Number of references
ADHD	7		3	10	20
Autistic spectrum Disorders	42	4	25	59	130
Down syndrome	13	1	1	8	23
Dyscalculia	1				1
Dyslexia	20	2	6	32	60
Dyspraxia	5		1	4	10
Emotional behavioural disorder	4	1	1	10	16
Exceptionally able	3		2		5
Hearing impairment	2	2	3	7	14
Mild GLD	14	1		18	33
Moderate GLD	12		2	9	23
Multiple disabilities				2	2
Other	24	1	2	8	35
Physical disability	1		4	7	12
Severe and profound GLD	24	1	5	14	44
Specific speech and language	2		3	5	10
Visual impairment	12		3	4	19

The highest level of research activity is in the area of autism. Autism was only officially recognised as a separate category of special educational need in the Republic of Ireland in late 1998. As a category of special educational need autism has maintained key media attention through high profile court cases, advocacy / lobbying and the ongoing debate about the role of applied behaviour analysis and eclectic approaches to teaching children with autistic spectrum disorders (for example Dillenburger and Keenan, 2009). This area was also the subject of significant task force reports in 2001 in the Republic and Northern Ireland (DES, 2001; DENI, 2001) and reports from other agencies (Autism Northern Ireland, 2007). It has also benefited from a recent systematic review of literature in the area funded by the National Council for Special Education (Parsons *et al*, 2009), which covered international and Irish literature.

Autism research has been wide-ranging focusing on, for example, educational provision (DES, 2006; DENI, 2005; Keenan, 2004; INTO, 2002), characteristics (Tarbox *et al*, 2009; O'Connor *et al*, 2009; Murphy and Barnes-Holmes, 2009; McQuaid, 2007; Balfe, 2003), strategies, approaches and interventions (Stewart, Barnes-Holmes and Weil, 2009; Moylan, 2009; Lydon *et al*, 2008; Níkopoulous and Keenan, 2007; O'Shaughnessy, 2007; Grey *et al*, 2007; Fleming, 2006; Maione and Mirenda, 2006; O'Connor, 2004; Casserley, 2004; MurphyGrey and Honan, 2004; Kerr, Smyth and McDowell, 2003), assessment and IEP development (Reilly, Campbell and Keran, 2009; Prunty, 2007; Lordan, 2002), inclusion (Scott, 2009; Cunnane, 2006; Dunleavy-Lavin, 2006; Duffy, 2005), special classes (Grey *et al*, 2007; Heduan, 2004; Quinlan, 2003), parents (McConkey, MacLeod and Cassidy, 2009; Tehee, Honan and Hevey, 2009; Murphy, 2008; Dillenburger *et al*, 2004; Graydon, 2002; Keenan, Kerry and Dillenburger, 2000), preschoolers (Sugrue, 2009; Cassidy *et al*, 2008; McConkey *et al*, 2007; McKerr and Gallagher, 2006; Fleming, 2006) challenging behaviour (Lacey *et al*, 2002) and teacher education and ABA (Grey *et al*, 2005).

The distinct needs of pupils with Aspergers syndrome have also begun to feature in the research in this area (Cullen, 2009; Coyle, 2006; O'Neill, 2006; Honan, 2005; Walsh, 2005; Lyons and Fitzgerald, 2004; Gilgun, 2003; McSorley, 2003; Collins, 2002).

The level of research in relation to persons with severe and profound general learning disabilities is also welcome given the relative size of the field of study. It reflects that provision for this group of learners has been relatively new and controversial. The battle to secure the right to education for children with severe and profound general learning disabilities was hard fought and eventually won and underpinned by the 1998 Education Act. Areas focused on include curriculum and provision (Julian, 2002), teaching approaches and resources, for example (Higgins, 2009; Ware, 2005; Mehigan, 2004), contact between mainstream pupils and their counterparts with severe and profound general learning disabilities (Shevlin, 2003), the needs of mothers caring for such children (Redmond and Richardson, 2003), quality of life (Andrews and Holran, 2005; Dalton and Williams, 2005), parental experiences (Marren, 2004; Gormley, 2003; Redmond and Richardson, 2003) and communications among nurses and adults with severe and profound intellectual disabilities (Healy and Noonan Walsh, 2007). The volume of theses in this area is worth noting, with six emanating from St Patrick's College. Shevlin also provides articles relevant to this area.

Other areas with relatively more research output than other categories of special educational need include dyslexia and mild and moderate general learning disabilities. Again dyslexia was the focus of official task force reports both North and South (DENI, 2002; DES, 2001). This particular category of need has its own specific organisations, including the Dyslexia Association of Ireland, the Dyslexia Centre Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Dyslexic Association. Areas of focus in this area include evaluating the effectiveness of models of special provision (Nugent, 2007, 2006; McPhilips, 2007; Chapple and Spelman, 2003), assessment (Long and McPolin, 2009), memory skills (Atkins and Tierney, 2004) and supporting pupils and effective strategies (McPhilips *et al*, 2009; Tiernan, 2009, McDonagh, 2007, King, 2004; Jones, 2000), handwriting skills (Worrall and O'Shea, 2004) and an evaluation of movement programmes in the treatment of dyslexia (Doyle, 2008).

An Irish perspective on dyslexia and issues at second level and beyond has been the focus of work by Ball, Hughes and McCormack (2006) and McCormack (2002). The

interaction of the learning of mathematics and dyslexia has also received attention (Travers, 2007; Hayden, 2006; Flanagan, 2005; Ryan, 2005; de Buitléir, 2003; McPhillips, 2002; Chinn *et al*, 2001). Unique to the Irish context is recent research on the experiences of pupils with dyslexia in the Irish medium Gaelscoil sector (Ní Chiarúain, 2009). Other specific learning disabilities including dyscalculia, which overlaps with dyslexia and mathematics (Rice, 2004), and dyspraxia (Sweeney, 2008; Kirk, 2005; Ralph, 2004) are beginning to receive attention.

In the area of general learning disabilities considerable time and energy was devoted over the decade to the development of 44 curriculum guidelines for students with mild, moderate and severe and profound general learning disabilities (NCCA, 2007). In the area of Down syndrome there has been a focus on attitudes (Gash *et al*, 2000; Clarke, 2002), the experience of parents (Shevlin *et al*, 2003; Maxwell and Barr, 2003), skill development (Keenan, 2008; Meegan *et al*, 2006; O'Toole and Chiat, 2006) and pupil voice (O'Keefe, 2009). There has also been a focus on international and cultural aspects (McConkey and Timmons, 2006, a surveillance study (Murphy, 2006), gross motor skill acquisition (Meegan *et al*, 2006), inclusion (O'Keefe, 2009; Kenny *et al*, 2005; Egan-McGann, 2000), preschool children (Keville, 2002) and communication (Ní Cholmáin, 2003). There were also many Irish contributors at the 10th World Down Syndrome Congress held in Dublin (Down Syndrome Educational International, 2009).

The needs of learners with mild general learning disabilities have been the focus of work on policy and provision by Stevens (2007) and (Stevens and O'Moore, 2009; Ware *et al*, 2009; Travers, 2009) across special schools, special classes and mainstream settings with support. Other focuses of research for this category of SEN include social functioning (Kelleher, 2006; Irwin, 2008; Furlong, 2007), transition (Conroy, 2005; Loughman, 2004; McGurk, 2002; Mitchell, 2000), post-school outcomes (Gilligan, 2008; Fahey, 2007, 2005; Griffith, 2001), behaviour management (Kingston, 2009; McBride, 2002), reading (McDowell, Keenan and Kerr, 2002; Nugent, 2001), interventions (Walley, 2007; McLernon, 2007; Walshe, 2003; Kelly, 2001; Taylor and O'Reilly, 2000), an historical perspective (O'Riordan, 2002), involving parents (Nolan, 2003), prevention of child sexual abuse (O'Sullivan, 2001), patterns of leisure

participation (Buttimer and Tierney, 2005) and professional development of teachers (Wynne, 2004). It is worth noting that the main output for research into mild general learning disabilities has been in the form of theses, indicating a lack of published research in relation to this group.

In relation to learners with moderate general learning disabilities (severe learning difficulties in Northern Ireland), in addition to the overlap with research in the area of Down syndrome and autism, the following have been researched: challenging behaviour (Byrne and Hennessy, 2009; Fleming, 2007a), inclusion (O’Keefe, 2009; Drudy, 2009; White, 2007; Ring and Travers, 2005), interventions (Drysedale, Casey and Porter-Armstrong, 2008; Ryan, 2002; Sheehy, 2002; Duffy and Fuller, 2000), assessment (Guerin *et al*, 2009; Grey *et al*, 2003), social competence and self concept (Hardiman, Guerin and Fitzsimons, 2009), educational provision (Minnock, 2005), immigrant students (Carrig, 2005) and enhancing capacity to make sexually-related decisions (Dukes and McGuire, 2009).

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) has been the focus of work in relation to diagnosis (Buckley *et al*, 2006), practical guides (SESS, 2008; DENI, 2004a), prevalence (Buckley *et al*, 2008; Fagan Shiels, 2006), parents and family factors (Jones, 2006; Lange *et al*, 2005), strategy learning (Kelly, 2006), social competence (Níxon, 2001), teachers’ construction of attention hyperactivity disorder (Seery, 2006) and challenges from a nursing perspective (Nícholson, 2009; Murtagh, 2007).

In the area of emotional and behavioural difficulties there has been a focus on provision (Ní Bhuachalla, 2008), juvenile delinquency (O’Mahony, 2005), measuring self-esteem profiles and teacher attitudes (Scanlon, 2007), comparisons of provision North and South (McKiernan, 2005), drug use among students in an EBD unit (McCrystal, Higgins and Percy, 2005), students returning to mainstream (Groom, 2006) and specialist provision (Thomas, 2002). The ratio of theses to articles is striking for this category with most of the research being in the form of theses from a variety of institutions.

The NCSE has recently published a review of research into visual impairment (Douglas *et al*, 2009). The areas focused on in relation to visual impairment include facilitating communication with a deafblind child (Deasy and Lyddy, 2009), preschool children (Dempsey, 2003), prevalence and outcomes (Gray, 2009; Donnelly, Stewart and Hollinger, 2005), visual impairment in childhood (Flanagan, Jackson and Hill, 2003), inclusion (Gray, 2009, 2005a), professional development (Gray, 2008, 2005b), attitudes towards dating (Hanly, 2000), an audit of outreach clinics (Lindsay *et al*, 2004), interaction with learning disability (McGlade, 2007; Lindsay *et al*, 2006), assessment (Saunders *et al*, 2008) and the changing profile of a regional specialist school (McClelland *et al*, 2007).

A major review of research into hearing impairment (Marschark, 2009) has also been undertaken for the NCSE. There has also been work on potential for communication (Deasy, 2009), deaf friendly schools (DENI, 2002), language planning issues (Fourie, 2005), attitudes (Hanly, 2000), use of ICT (Hickey, 2003; O'Reilly, 2000), aspects of verbal valency in Irish sign language, (Leeson, 2002), collaboration in addressing service provision (Logue-Kennedy *et al*, 2008), deaf studies in Ireland (McDonnell, 2004), system improvement (NAD, 2002), developing sign bilingualism (Swanwick, 2000) and the visiting teacher service (Williams, 2007).

Within the area of physical disability emphasis is on cerebral palsy and the role of the physiotherapist (Mahon and Cusack, 2002; Parkes *et al*, 2002) and mothers communicating with their children with cerebral palsy (Power, McManus and Fourie, 2009). Other work has been done on psychological functioning among children with mild physical disabilities and an evaluation of a social skills training group (Brinkley, 2003), assistive technology (Craddock and McCormack, 2002), second level experience (Daly, Keogh and Whyte, 2007), access to third level (Daly, MacDermott and Green, 2001), quality of life (Daultrey, 2001) and communication modes (McCleary, 2008). There is less research in the area of multiple disabilities (Bracken, 2005).

Under specific speech and language disorder and difficulties, there has been a focus on provision for pupils in special classes (DES, 2005; Linehan, 2004), training (Lyons,

2004), support services (INTO, 2001), satisfaction levels and perceptions of teachers in the area (McGagh, 2009), comparative analysis of provision in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland (O'Connor, 2006) and perceptions of speech and language service (O'Shaughnessy, 2003).

In the area of the exceptionally able, there have been National Council for Curriculum Assessment guidelines (2007) and a focus on the special needs of these learners (Mac Giolla Phádraig, 2004; Graves, 2004; Gilheany, 2003). Grouped under 'other' there are references to 22q11.2 deletion syndrome (Prasad, Howley and Murphy, 2008), acquired disabilities (Johnstone *et al*, 2008), cri-du-chat syndrome (Collins *et al*, 2004, 2003), epilepsy (McCusker, 2002; Senior, 2001) fragile X (Reilly and Senior, 2007a, 2007b; Owens, 2001), Tourette's syndrome (Quigley, 2001), development co-ordination disorder (Jones, 2004), movement learning difficulties (MacIntyre and Mc Vitty 2004), retained primary reflexes (Jones, 2005), mutism (O'Neill, 2005; Sharkey *et al*, 2001), Prader-Willi syndrome (Meyler, 2009; Reilly, 2009) and the special educational needs of preterm children (Johnson *et al*, 2009).

Overall, it is useful to explore the research output relative to the prevalence of the category of disability in the wider school-going population and in terms of resource allocation to these groups of learners. To do this we used the prevalence estimates in the NCSE's report on the implementation of the EPSEN Act and the resource allocation figures from the NCSE Special Education Administration System (SEAS) database. In using the figures from SEAS it must be remembered that they do not include resources allocated to children with high incidence special educational needs at primary level, which are allocated under the General Allocation Model. In addition, it is important to state the limitations of the above analysis. The number of studies in an area does not indicate the quality of the evidence base as a guide to practitioners and policy makers.

Taking the above into account it can be seen that areas of relatively lower incidence of special educational need have much higher research activity. This is evident in the area of autistic spectrum disorder, which has the highest number of references. It is also evident within the area of general learning disabilities. This area can be broken into

mild, moderate and severe and profound levels of disability. The first level is included in the DES (2005d) category of high incidence special educational need and the other levels as low incidence. Within the low incidence levels of general learning disability (moderate, severe and profound) the prevalence proportions according to diagnostic category are moderate (70 per cent), severe (25 per cent) and profound (5 per cent) (NCSE, 2006, p. 66). However, the level of research activity is relatively higher for the moderate and severe and profound area than in the area of mild general learning disabilities. The significant overlap between general learning disabilities and the areas of autism and Down syndrome is acknowledged but the figures here refer to the primary research focus.

Interestingly, the area which garners most resources (such as allocation of special needs assistants and resource hours) in mainstream schools is that of emotional and behavioural difficulties (NSCE, 2009) which has received relatively little research attention. The reasons for this are not clear and may include the lack of lobbying, fundraising and advocacy for these learners in the system. Again, given their prevalence rates, the areas of specific learning disability and physical and sensory disabilities would be expected to have higher levels of directly focused research activity.

4. REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The number of entries (1,693) in the database is testament to the huge interest, commitment and endeavour in the field of special education. A number of initiatives have resulted in the large volume of work in the database. This section highlights some of these along with noting gaps in the knowledge base and recommendations arising from the exercise.

4.1 Developments in the last decade

The development of masters programmes in special education across many institutions has provided a major stimulus for research. The large increase in students at masters level has led to the dominance of single author small-scale research activity in the database. Such research activity serves many purposes including initiation and induction of new researchers into the field and professional development in the content area of the research. It is also the main vehicle for practitioner research and could potentially make an immediate difference in the lives of students with special educational needs and in creating cultures of inquiry in schools. The impact of this activity in the wider context of practice, policy and future research, however, is seriously diminished through lack of dissemination of findings and access to the theses. This could be improved in a number of ways:

- Institutions could select the best of this research over a three- to five-year period and publish it as an edited book;
- Some students should be encouraged to co-author with their supervisor for a journal;
- Institutions should move to putting all thesis abstracts online and, where possible, the full thesis. If unlimited access is not possible, inter-library loans could be facilitated by electronic access to the theses on request;
- Online databases (the current database and resources such as the Index of Theses) should be regularly updated.

The development on the island of professional doctoral programmes to complement PhD programmes has given a further boost to educational research, general and special.

The Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) estimates that there are currently 250 students undertaking doctoral study here in education. Some institutions have specific special education pathways as part of their programmes.

The development of the National Council for Special Education has provided another major boost, as research is one of its core functions.

The appointment of a head of research and research officer, together with a research committee with responsibility for developing a research framework and strategy in the area, represents major progress. This will hopefully lead to policy initiatives being informed by the research evidence available.

It is also important to recognise the contribution of Irish-based special educational / disability journals such as *REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland*, *Learn Journal of the Irish Learning Support Association* and the *Frontline of Learning Disability* as vehicles for the dissemination of research findings and policy analysis while also giving a voice to practitioners and parents in the field.

4.2 Gaps in the knowledge base

While acknowledging the extent of research activity in the field, significant gaps in the knowledge base remain. An urgent need persists to document what is happening and what works at all levels of the system. Evaluative reviews of the major themes highlighted in this inventory would be beneficial. Gaps identified in the literature include the following:

- There are large gaps about how best to prepare teachers for inclusion at initial, induction and continuing professional development levels. The evidence base for many practices in special education is thin and there will always be a need for empirically validated pedagogy in the area;
- Similarly, relatively little research focuses on the role of key professionals in the area of special education, such as school principals and educational psychologists;
- Gaps exist in our knowledge about interagency work and in developing partnerships between the special and mainstream school sectors;

- Ongoing statistical information across all fronts is needed to create reliable databases, particularly regarding the prevalence of special educational needs;
- The application of technology in special education has received relatively little attention in the Irish context;
- The involvement of persons with special educational needs in the research process is still in its infancy. Accessing and analysing the voice of persons with SEN, including children in all aspects of their education, is largely underdeveloped;
- The interaction of special educational needs and ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity is an area that has only recently begun to receive attention;
- Similarly, there has been a dearth of research addressing the needs of pupils with SEN in Gaelscoileanna and in Gaeltacht areas;
- The area of quality assurance and indicators of effective education for students with special educational needs has received very little attention;
- Very little Irish research exists on early interventions for children with special educational needs;
- Few research projects compare Irish practice with international practice in special education;
- Academic research from areas of education, psychology, healthcare and social studies has been conducted, but overlap or multidisciplinary research is rare;
- Distribution of research is uneven across categories of disability and themes. Many factors have contributed to this including personal interests, institutional concerns, lobbying, funding mechanisms and the absence of a coherent overarching research framework;
- In relation to types of research there is a need for an increased focus on longitudinal studies, process of implementation studies, critical commentary, intervention studies, historical studies, comparative research and evaluation of outcomes and the impact of practice and policy guidelines.

4.3 Future research

Given the methodological difficulties in many aspects of the field of special education research and the large number of small-scale studies, more large-scale collaborative projects are needed that utilise available research design expertise to address key priority

issues at national policy level. Some of this research should be multidisciplinary across education, sociology, psychology, nursing, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy, for example, to gain a more complete understanding of the key issues. Such an approach would also help to develop more of a cumulative effect from research activity building on the existing knowledge base. At present, there seems to be a risk of unnecessary small-scale duplication and insufficiently considered replication. The development of the NCSE research strategy presents an opportunity for greater co-ordination of research activity to maximise its impact at policy and practice levels.

The sources of funding for research in special education are narrow and need to be expanded. In the interim, however, it is vital that the research budget and role of the NCSE in this regard is protected. It is vital to continue to build capacity for research in the area of special education / inclusion in the system.

In conclusion, reverting to the three aims of this inventory, it is hoped that this resource will, first, provide a valuable research database for the National Council of Special Education and others conducting research in the field of special education. Second, that it will provide for a more efficient use of research resources by helping to highlight the evidence base on which to build. Finally, that it will be used to identify gaps in research, which can be addressed in the formulation of research strategies. Taking these into account we make the following recommendations.

4.4 Recommendations

1. The database should be updated formally every two years;
2. Gaps in the research knowledge should be addressed in the drawing up of research strategies across relevant bodies;
3. Dissemination of findings and access to theses should be improved across all third level institutions by making more theses available online as appropriate (given quality and closed access considerations);
4. There is a need for multidisciplinary research across the disciplines and areas of special education to gain a wider understanding of key issues;

5. The influence of the Irish journals, *REACH Journal of Special Needs Education in Ireland*, *LEARN Journal of the Irish Learning Support Association* and the *Frontline of Learning Disability* in particular, would be greatly enhanced through full-text online access. Measures to support this should be examined;
6. The practice of some organisations not to date much of their online publications should be discontinued.

5. SUPPLEMENTARY REPORTS

Please see separate documents:

Supplementary Report A: Alphabetical List of all References

Supplementary Report B: Themes and Categories of Special Educational Needs

6. APPENDICES

Appendix I – List of Universities and Colleges Contacted

Athlone Institute of Technology
Carlow Institute of Technology
Church of Ireland College of Education
Cork Institute of Technology
Dublin City University
Dublin Institute of Technology
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Froebel College of Education
Galway Mayo Institute of Technology
Hibernia College
Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Marino Institute of Education
Mary Immaculate College of Education
Mater Dei Institute of Education
National University of Ireland, Maynooth
National University of Ireland, Galway
Open University
Queen's University Belfast
St Angela's College, Sligo
St. Mary's University College, Belfast
Stranmillis University College, Belfast
Tallaght Institute of Technology
Tralee Institute of Technology
University College Cork
University College Dublin
University of Dublin, Trinity College
University of Limerick
University of Ulster
Waterford Institute of Technology

Appendix II – List of Organisations Contacted

Archways
Aspire – The Aspergers Syndrome Association of Ireland
Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD)
Association of Community and Comprehensive Schools
Association of Northern Ireland Colleges
Association of Secondary Teachers in Ireland (ASTI)
Association of Teachers / Education Centres in Ireland
Autism Northern Ireland
Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB)
Brothers of Charity Service
Catholic Institute for Deaf People
Catholic Primary School Management Association
Central Remedial Clinic
Centre for Disability Studies
Centre for Excellence in Universal Design
Centre for Independent Living (CIL)
Centre for Studies of Developmental Disabilities
Children in Northern Ireland
Children’s Act Advisory Board
Children’s Research Centre
Church of Ireland Board of Education
City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee
Co Action West Cork
Comhairle
Compass Advocacy
Conferences of Religious of Ireland
Contact a Family (CAF)
Co-operation and Working Together (CAWT)
COPE Foundation
Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (NI)
Curriculum Development Unit, MICE
Daughters of Charity Service
Department for Employment and Learning
Department of Education and Science (DES)
Department of Education Northern Ireland (DENI)
Department of Health and Children
Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform
Department of Social and Family Affairs

Disability Action
Disability Federation of Ireland
Disability Sport – Northern Ireland
Dochas
Down Syndrome Ireland
Down’s Syndrome Association Northern Ireland
Dyslexia Association of Ireland
Dyslexia Centre Northern Ireland
Dyspraxia Association of Ireland
Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI)
Educate Together
Education and Library Boards Northern Ireland
Education Guidance Services Adult (EGSA)
Education Studies
Educational Research Centre
Enable Ireland
Epilepsy Association
Equality Authority
Equality Commission of Northern Ireland
European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE)
European Network on Independent Living
Families in Contact
Foras na Gaeilge
Foras <u>Patrúnachta</u> na Scoileanna Lán Ghaeilge
Further Education and Training Awards Council
General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland
Health Research Board
Health Service Executive Head Office
Health Service Executive Northern Ireland
Higher Education Authority (HEA)
Home School Liaison Service
Hyperactivity Attention Deficit Disorder Family Support Group
IMPACT
Inclusion Ireland – National Association for People with an Intellectual Disability
Inspectorate, Department of Education and Science
Institute of Public Administration (IPA)
Irish Association of Teachers in Special Education (IATSE)
Irish Autism Action
Irish Deaf Society
Irish Learning Support Teachers’ Organisation (ILSA)
Irish National Teachers’ Organisation (INTO)

Irish National Teachers' Organisation Northern Ireland
Irish Nurses' Organisation
Irish Primary Principals' Network
Irish Society for Autism
Irish Vocational Education Association
Irish Wheelchair Association
Joint Epilepsy Council of UK and Ireland
Joint Managerial Body for Secondary Schools, Ireland
Leadership Development for Schools
Mencap Northern Ireland
Middletown Autism Centre
National Association of Boards of Management in Special Education (NABMSE)
National Association of Head Teachers
National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals
National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)
National Centre for Guidance in Education
National Centre for Technology in Education (NCTE)
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)
National Council for the Blind of Ireland
National Disability Authority (NDA)
National Education Welfare Board
National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
National Federation of Voluntary Bodies
National Institute for Intellectual Disability
National Learning Network, Disability Support Service
National Parents Council (NPC)
National Parents Council Post Primary (NPCpp)
North Eastern Education and Library Board
Northern Ireland Audit Office
Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People
Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action
Northern Ireland Curriculum
Northern Ireland Department of Education and Training Inspectorate
Northern Ireland Dyslexic Association
NØW project
Ombudsman for Children
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
People with Disabilities in Ireland (PwDI)
Phab NI Inclusion Matters
Positive Futures

Praxis Care Group
Primary Curriculum Support Programme
Primary Professional Development Service
Principals' Support Network for Pupils with a Mild General Learning Difficulty
Principals' Support Network for Pupils with a Moderate / Severe GLD
Principals' Support Network for Pupils with a Physical Disability
Psychological Society of Ireland (PSI)
Regional Disability Services Unit
Rehabcare
Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB)
School Development Planning Initiative
School Development Planning Support
School of Education and Lifelong Learning
School of Education, Dublin City University
Second Level Support Service
Secondary Education Committee (Protestant Schools)
SENSE
Skill Northern Ireland
Skill Northern Ireland National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
South Eastern Education and Library Board
South West Regional Authority, Cork
Southern Area Children and Young People's Committee
Southern Education and Library Board (SELB)
Special Education Support Services (SESS)
St John of God Hospitaller Services
St Michael's House
Standing Conference on Teacher Education North and South (SCoTENS)
Teacher's Union of Ireland (TUI)
Teaching Council
Union of Secondary Students
Visiting Teacher Service
Western Education and Library Board
Youth Encounter Project Schools
Youthreach

Appendix III – Sample Contact Letter

October 2009

Dear Sirs,

A team of researchers from the special education department in St Patrick's College is compiling an audit of all research in special education conducted in the island of Ireland since 2000, on behalf of the National Council for Special Education. This will form a searchable database that will be made available by the Council and updated.

It is important that all unpublished work at masters level and higher is included in the database. We are kindly requesting that you forward to us a list of such work conducted in your institution since 2000 for inclusion that is not available online. If this is not possible we are requesting information on how best to access the work.

The audit is purely descriptive and no evaluative comments will be made on any of the work. The description will include name, year, title, focus, research question and theme. If you have any queries in relation to the compilation of the database please feel free to contact me at _____ . Looking forward to hearing from you

Yours sincerely

Dr Joseph Travers
Director of Special Education