

Inclusion in KS2: Dissertation Titles

1. Parental perspectives of inclusive education in the KS2 classroom

While many parents see the benefits of diversity and inclusion in the classroom, these views may differ depending on parental socioeconomic status, education level, location within the UK, culture, etc. Studies have previously been conducted on parental perspectives of inclusion, though these studies typically exist within the USA context and with younger children. This study could potentially expand on this research by presenting the UK context at the KS2 level. Questionnaires would likely be the main form of data collection for this topic and there are a number of options. One of these options is the Opinions Related to Mainstreaming Scale, with follow up short answer questions, though there are other surveys available.

2. Student interpretations of 'inclusion' at the KS2 level

As KS2 is still a developing stage of learning, it is possible that students may not fully be able to comprehend what inclusion actually means or why it might be applied in their classroom. With this topic, two approaches could be considered. A case study could be used to examine one site (school) where students define 'inclusion' and explain why they think it is 'good' or 'bad.' It would also be possible to approach this topic from a broader perspective, examining schools with higher SEN populations, in comparison to schools with very low SEN populations to see if differences exist. As this would require working with children, additional ethical clearance would likely be required. Data collection methods would likely require structured or semi-structured interviews.

3. Examining differences between theory and practice as it relates to inclusion

This dissertation might start with a literature review on the government's interpretation of inclusion and the theory behind the application of inclusive education in the classroom. There are significant scholarly resources to support this review. Data collection would then take the form of observations or interviews (or both) of teachers at the KS2 level. Inclusive education requires teachers to use inclusive and collaborative teaching techniques in order to develop active participation, so this study would examine the extent to which teachers are actually able to meet the diverse needs of all learners (as outlined in the government writings on inclusive education).

4. The changing nature of the inclusive classroom at the KS2 level

This dissertation topic would require intimate interviews with teachers with significant levels of experience who have witnessed first-hand the changes in educational policy at the KS2 level over the years. Themes within this topic would have to be narrowed down based on the interests of the writer, but essentially the writer would be questioning whether the inclusion of pupils with SEN has changed the classroom setting, whether social inclusion programs

have been changed, and whether discriminatory practices have been minimized as a result of the implementation of inclusive education.

5. *Perceptions of inclusive education by low-level SEN pupils in KS2*

This dissertation topic would require interaction with pupils who are currently included in mainstream education despite being designated as SEN. This in itself may be challenging, and the writer may choose to pick a specific aspect to focus on. Perhaps one of the easiest would be to examine students who have English as a Second Language, as ethical clearance may be easier to obtain. Essentially, through interviews (and possibly observation) the writer would get students to discuss their interpretation of inclusive education and how it has affected (or is affecting) their learning.

References

1. This dissertation was a good place to start as it provides a NZ context, which could be replicated in KS2 in the UK.

Armstrong, H.M., 2014. *Inclusion through different eyes: a thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree Master of Educational Psychology at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand* (Doctoral dissertation, The Author). <http://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/6626>

2. This book provides a pretty solid overview of inclusive education as it relates to the UK, especially focusing on teaching and educational policy.

Grainger, T. and Tod, J., 2013. *Inclusive Educational Practice*. Routledge.

3. This article could be replicated to include KS2 with a different SEN and would provide a solid foundation for a research study.

Reed, P. and Osborne, L.A., 2014. Mainstream education for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. In *Handbook of Early Intervention for Autism Spectrum Disorders* (pp. 447-485). Springer New York.

4. This is a new resource out on the response to educational policy and would provide good background information for a literature review.

Alexiadou, N. and Essex, J., 2016. Teacher education for inclusive practice—responding to policy. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 39(1), pp.5-19.