

The Philosophy and Practice of Social Research

ECGE7004Q

Assignment 1- Research Proposal

Are students with autism accessing their rights, in accordance with the UNCRC, in mainstream education? A case study of practice.

Background Information

Article 23 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that if a child has a disability, they have the right to special care and education. Using this article as a guide, it is clear to see that article 23 underpins many of the other articles in relation to children with disabilities, in this case, children with a diagnosis of autism. Article 29 suggests that all children have the right to an education which develops them in a holistic way to enable them to reach their potential. As well as this, Article 3 states that there is a responsibility on adults to ensure that the child receives what is best for them, this includes adults in positions of power such as policy makers and those who care and protect (CYPCS, 2019). The articles mentioned are just an example of how the UNCRC is relevant to this research proposal.

This research proposal aims to evaluate whether children with a diagnosis of autism are accessing their rights as set out by the UNCRC in mainstream education. This became something I was interested in recently over the last couple of years, whilst working as a one to one support assistant with a child with autism. I started working with this child when he was given a statement of special educational needs before he had turned three whilst he was attending the nursery for younger children in the mainstream school. It became clear from early on that he was not coping well within a mainstream setting, and by the time he was ready to start the reception class both myself, his parent and the class teacher agreed that specialist care was needed for him. However, he was refused a place in special educational needs units and schools as he was not classed as 'severe' enough to be at the top of the waiting list. This was at a point where he would be emotional for most of the school day, this included intense emotional outbursts, hurting himself, myself, and other children in the classroom due to communication difficulties, sensory sensitivity as well as simply

being unhappy. Although many strategies and changes have been put into place to help with these situations, there is only a limited amount of resources and funding available to us in mainstream settings, and we are not as well equipped as specialist settings to help children with autism. The child mentioned is still currently on the waiting list for a specialist unit or school, 3 years later, and although he has made significant progress over this time period, I cant help but wonder where he would have been had he have had the specialist provision and education offered in special educational settings. Does this mean he has not been able to fully access his rights as set out by the UNCRC as a result of this? This is where the hypothesis for this research has stemmed from, and comes from it the question as to whether children with autism are able to access their rights as set out in the UNCRC in mainstream settings.

Aims and Objectives

The main aim of this research proposal is to discover if children with autism are accessing their rights, in accordance with the UNCRC in mainstream school settings. As well as this it important to identify which articles are being met and which are not in order to distinguish in which areas are mainstream schools able and not able to meet the rights of the child. Another aim of this research proposal is to analyse why these rights are not being accessed by children with autism in mainstream education.

The objectives of this study are to accumulate views and opinions of students, parents or guardians, as well as staff in relation to accessing children's rights in mainstream education. Also, an objective of this research will be to use qualitative research methods in order to gain an in-depth knowledge on the experiences had by children with autism in mainstream education. Lastly, the data formed from the opinions and beliefs of participants will be analysed in order to attempt to answer the indicative title.

Introduction

This research proposal has briefly discussed the background information, and why this topic is relevant to myself as the researcher. As well as this it has set out the

aims and objectives of the research in order to give the reader clarity on the intentions of this study. Also, this research proposal will give a brief overview of the literature which is relevant to the study. As well as this, the proposed paradigm, methodology, methods and data analysis will be focussed upon, with rationale as to why these options were chosen for this study. Ethical considerations will be touched upon, as well as the timeline and budget of the research. Lastly, the choices for dissemination will be discussed and again, reasons for this will be noted.

Overview of Literature

Since the signing of the UNCRC in 1990, the United Kingdom has seen the convention play a vital role in the education of children and young people (ECPAT, 2019). More than 25 years after the signing, the convention is the most widely ratified treaty of human rights and is an important tool for advocacy for the rights of the child as it incorporates all aspects of human rights (Gillett-Swan and Coppock, 2016). The UK government has also pledged to ensure that the UNCRC will be taken into consideration when considering children and their educational experiences in relation to policy and legislation (Parliament. Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2015).

However, it is suggested that despite of the adoption of the UNCRC, children with autism are still facing barriers in accessing their rights in society as well as education (Mepham, 2010). It is stated in Article 2 of the convention that these set of rights 'apply to every child without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background' (Unicef, no date, para 8). However, it is stated that although there is limited research to directly suggest that children with autism are facing barriers in accessing their rights, some believe that their stories are simply disguised and hidden (Jones, 2000). Others also suggest similar theories, Parsons and Cobb (2013) believe that this could partly be as a result of this group of vulnerable people often having little or no communication, and not being offered opportunities to express their opinion in a form of non-verbal communication in which their views can be valued.

Similarly, parents of children with autism believe that their children are not receiving the education which they are entitled to in accordance with the UNCRC. A

recent survey found that 70% of parents believe that support for their child was not put into place soon enough, as well as only 1 in 10 parents being satisfied with the plan which has been set up to support their child in education. Most relevant to this research proposal is that 40% of parents believe that the school placement their child is in is not meeting their needs (APPGA, 2017). Taking this into consideration, it is important to note that 71% of children with autism attend mainstream education despite of the relevant research suggesting that mainstream school are not able to fully support or educate a child with autism (Priory, 2019). Government figures show that almost 3000 children in England alone are classed as 'awaiting provision' as there is a lack spaces available to support these students. This figure is continually rising and has increased since 2018 (Kremer, 2019). It is believed that the cause for this is due to a lack of funding for special educational needs in education (Richardson, 2018). These funding cuts have resulted in £1.2bn worth of loss to children with special needs, which is said to be as a result of shortfalls from central government which began in 2015 (Walker, 2019). These funding cuts are making it almost impossible to ensure that all children with autism are accessing the support and provision that they have a right to. A particular statement which I believe holds significant relevance to the proposed study is 'There is no money, there are no places, there is no support' (Busby, 2018. Para 11).

Paradigm

The term paradigm has been defined as a researcher's view of the world (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006). The view that researchers have can be seen as a perspective, interpretation or shared beliefs that when used can reveal the date in a different light (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). Simply put, from the research paradigm we are able to understand the beliefs of the researcher on the world that they believe, or hope to live in (Lather, 1986). A paradigm is made up of four concepts, these are epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

For this research study, I will be adopting a constructivist paradigm. This paradigm was birthed from Edmund Husserl's philosophy of phenomenology, as well as other German theorists' study of understanding named Hermeneutics according to Eichelberger (1989). This involved researching and gaining knowledge on how people

understand or what they mean. From a researcher's constructivist researchers' perspective, hermeneutics is used as a way of understanding the logic or meaning of an aspect from a particular viewpoint (Mertens, 2010). It can be further defined as a suggestion that all findings from research are interpretive to the researcher, and therefore is built by their social environment which is everchanging (Clegg and Slife, 2009). The main reason for the choice of a constructivist paradigm stems from the ontological and epistemological view that reality is constructed socially, therefore there can be no one truth, however it is the researchers position to delve deeper into the process to gain a better understanding of the lived experiences of participants and interpret the underlying reasons for these aspects (Schwandt, 2000).

The constructivist view on ontology is that reality comes from social construction, which is built by a range of mental concepts which are perceived by the person, these factors may not always link and can often change over time. Our perceptions are derived from the world around us, and therefore factors such as disability or feminism hold different meanings to different people (Mertens, 2010). Furthermore, the epistemological standpoint is that the researcher and participant are intertwined with each of them influencing each other. This suggests that a more personal form of collection of data is required (Groenewald, 2004). In this case, data is able to be traced back to the original source, and the process which was used to interpret can be made clear (Mertens, 2010).

It is also important to consider the axiology of this research design, which involves ensuring that ethics are considered throughout the process by making certain that the right decisions are made in the best interest of value, as set out by the philosophical approach (Finnis, 1980). The process of axiology involves ensuring that right and wrong behaviours in regard to research are understood and taken into consideration, as well as raising awareness and ensuring participants views are well represented (Creswell and Poth, 2018). It is important to acknowledge which axioms are assigned to each area of the research. It is of vital importance that the researcher is able to attribute the values a human should receive to everyone involved in the study (Kivunja and Kuyini, 2017). The ethical considerations of this study will be discussed in the latter part of this proposal.

Methodology

The chosen methodology for this research study will take a phenomenological standpoint, due to the importance of gaining the experiences of groups of people who have experienced the chosen phenomenon (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Phenomenology has stemmed from philosophy and often a key concept which is uncovered from this type of research is that the reality of a person's experience of the world is intersubjective, this is said to be because of how we encounter the world through and with others (Wilson, 2002). Phenomenological research is said to have derived from the researcher's significant interest in the chosen phenomenon or problem, therefore the researcher's inquisitiveness and elation motivate and inspire the study (Moustakas, 1994). This is relevant to my study as I have previously mentioned I work in the field of education, and have personal links to children with autism who have been educated partly in mainstream education, as well as my own interest in the promotion of children's rights.

Phenomenology has been differentiated by two categories, these are Transcendental and Hermeneutic (Neubauer, Witkop and Varpio, 2019). For the purpose of this study, I will be following the hermeneutic aspect of phenomenology. This is partly due to the belief hermeneutic phenomenologists believe that researchers cannot remove their preconceptions, and there should be no illusion made that this can be done (Hammersley, 2000), I find this crucial to the research study as previously mentioned I have a personal interest in this area and work with some of these students. Due to this, and other considerable points mentioned that I have identified that a phenomenological perspective is best suited to myself as the researcher, as well as the study itself. This belief is in contrast to that of a positivist perspective, in which it is believed that the researcher is completely objective and unbiased towards the research, and there is no room for personal interest. Also, facts play a crucial role in positivist research and little to no communication with the participants is necessary. This is in juxtaposition to phenomenology as there is a significant amount of importance placed on interpreting and understanding the participants, as well as allowing provision for human interest (Crowther and Lancaster, 2008).

As well as this, phenomenology is also well suited for this research study as it seeks to understand the day to day experiences of those who have experienced the

phenomena, in order to uncover how this impacts their lives. The focus here is on the how and why, rather than an accumulation of facts. This is done by using multiple aspects of perceived knowledge in order to gain insight and interpretation as opposed to testing a hypothesis (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). It is stated by Klein & Myers (1999) that hermeneutics phenomenology is classed as an interpretivist approach which suggests that the study is mainly focussed on individual cases of events which allows people's voices to be heard and understood. In the case of my study, I feel that this is vital as 2 out of the 3 child participants in my study are classed as non-verbal, and therefore I want to give them an opportunity to have their opinions taken into consideration, in accordance with UNCRC.

An advantage of using phenomenology is that you are able to capture a holistic view of a phenomenon, whilst gathering data in a natural way rather than artificial (Gummesson, 1991). However, there are potential drawbacks which I need to take into consideration in order to be mindful throughout the research process, the main one being that criticism has been shown towards it due to the view that phenomenological studies can hold a lack of credibility, this stems from the exemplar criteria set for a scientific methodology (Hamberg *et al*, 1994). As the criteria for qualitative and quantitative forms of methodology cannot be compared, it is important for me to consider how to avoid the lack of scientific rigour by ensuring that the study aims to be credible, dependable by ensuring the axioms of this research strategy are adhered to and the ethical guidelines which have been chosen are followed to the highest standard (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), also it is important to ensure that there is adequate documentation and audit throughout the research (Leung, 2015).

Using a qualitative methodology compared to a quantitative allows my research to remain small and with purpose as opposed to a larger study with random participant selection (Boudah, 2011). As well as this, it is also important to mention that using methodologies such as experimental research involves manipulating or adjusting some of the variables involved in the research in order to measure any other changes (Ross and Morrison, 2003). In contrast, the case study approach which this research will be using does not aim to change or alter any of the outcomes of the evidence provided as the aim is to focus on the people and their lived experiences.

Notably, other research methodologies were taken into consideration before this stage. For example, a case study methodology was considered as it also allows for research to be in-depth and communication with participants is vital (Yin, 1989). Also, research which stems from a case study approach attains information from a range of sources and is analysed through accounts of the case and also considers information from cross case references (Creswell and Poth, 2018). However, from research of this methodology it became clear to me that the main focus of case studies tends to be on an event or one person, rather than personal experience from different perspectives (Johansson, 2003).

Methods

Child Participants;

The child participants in this study were chosen from a range of children who have an ASD diagnosis, in the chosen mainstream school. The children were chosen for their differences in age, severity, and placement in the school. The children's ages range from 6 to 10 and are in different classes due to their ages. Notably, the school in which this research will take place is in an area classed as deprived. The school is significantly diverse in regard to culture and ethnicity, with just under half of the school speaking English as an additional language. Together there are over fifteen languages spoken in the school with a relatively high percentage being Sylheti. In 2014, it was stated that around 30% of pupils in the school are diagnosed with additional learning needs, which was higher than the Welsh average at the time (Estyn, 2014). Since then, the number of children with special educational needs in the chosen school is over 100 out of the 250 pupils who attend. The school received a standard of 'good' and 'excellent' in the most recent inspection, and also have received the Level 2 Rights Respecting School award, in which they were the first in Wales (Hafod Primary School, 2019).

It is also important to mention that before research takes place access will need to be gained, and cooperation agreed by the gatekeepers of the chosen school. The importance of building a relationship with the gatekeeper is stressed by Bell (2003), who states that gaining access can be an unpredictable process. However, attention

has been paid to this throughout the planning process by deciding on a school in which I have worked for many years and the relevant people know that I can be trusted in this environment with the pupils, parents and staff. Higher and lower level gatekeepers were asked in this study, the chair of governors, headteacher and class teachers were notified of my study, and agreed to access, cooperation and support.

The chosen method for child participants is naturalistic observations, this involves studying the children in a natural environment to them, in this case their school classroom (Salkind, 2010). This type of method was chosen as I am aware that some of the children may feel uncomfortable or under pressure if I was to communicate with them directly, therefore I will ensure my presence is as unnoticeable as possible and I will avoid interaction unless the participant chooses to do so. Taking this into consideration, I came to the conclusion that participant and structured observation styles would not be best suited to my study. Naturalistic observations are typically qualitative, and avoid any manipulation of the environment (Slatcher and Trentacosta, 2011). I believe that this suits my research study well as I am aiming to uncover the reality of the participants experience in an in-depth way which come from everyday activities. It is important to mention that although the observation will take place in a natural setting and be without manipulation, the researcher's role should be systematic to ensure efficiency (Adler and Adler, 1994). Although the term observation is largely linked to the sense of watching or viewing, in the terms of researchers it is fundamental that all senses are used as a tool for understanding the whole picture (Angrosino, 2007).

A double hermeneutic interpretation approach will be used for these observations which involves attempting to understand the participant, whilst the participant is trying to assess what is happening to them (Porto, 2017). This stems from Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, which encourages the researcher to look beyond the sole focus of the phenomenon, and pay attention to the outside ideology as well (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009).

It is important to mention that whilst all observations take place the researcher will be taking notes on what is happening and what they observe. This is vital to the credibility and reliability of the study as memory alone is simply not reliable in an educational research study such as this one. During this process I will observe aspects

which have particular relevance to myself and the study in great detail (Spradley, 1980). It is suggested that researcher notes should be recorded in a way which remains the same throughout, and is clear to the point (*See appendix 1*) (Angrosino, 2007).

Considerations have been made as to whether other research methods would have been better suited to this study, for example that of qualitative interviews. It has been suggested that to be able to gain better understanding of children's experiences, we need to be able to draw out their own representations of them. Interviews are said to be the most efficient way of doing so (Docherty and Sandelowski, 1999). However, on the basis of this study, I believe that qualitative interviews would not be helpful as the child participants have autism and therefore may find it difficult or impossible to understand and/or respond to my questions whether they be open or closed. Also, interviews come across as a more formal method of data collection, as the child will either be taken out of the natural classroom environment or an area will be set aside for the interview to take place in the classroom (Qu and Dumay, 2011). In either of these scenarios, the child's routine and normal day to day activities will be broken or changed. I also feel that it is of paramount importance to ensure that the children involved in this study are in no way made to feel uncomfortable by my presence, which I believe would be the case in an interview setting. Although I do feel that qualitative interviews are a very important method to gaining information, I feel that observations are best suited to this participant group.

Adult Participants;

The adult participants in this research study are set into two groups. The parents/guardians of the child participants, and the staff at the chosen mainstream school. The parent/guardian group were chosen due to their relation to the chosen child participant, as well as their willingness to participate in the study. Similarly, the staff group were chosen due to their involvement willingness, as well as their roles in the school. The staff group will include a one to one teaching assistant who works with a child with autism, a class teacher who has a child with autism in their class, as well as the Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator of the school. The chosen research method for this study will be qualitative interviews. Importantly, the observations with

the child participants will be used in order to lay a foundation in which the interviews with adult participants will stem from (Angrosino, 2007). It is also important to note that although the adult participants are categorised into groups, all interviews will take place on a one to one basis. Throughout the planning process of these interviews, I had originally decided to do 2 interviews with each adult participant, however Locke, Silverman and Spirduso (2004) state that in order for an in-depth phenomenological interview to become meaningful and to fully understand the context of the opinions on the participants, 3 interviews are essential. Therefore, each adult participant will be interviewed separately on three occasions. (See *Appendix 2 for example Interview Schedule*).

At the centre of interviews lies human inquiry, the original paradigm suggests that inquiry is simply two people conversing and asking each other questions. Therefore, it is suggested that interviewing can be seen as the most basic form of inquiry. The main focus of in-depth, qualitative interviews is to uncover and understand the lived experiences of people, and the importance this holds (Seidman, 2006). The importance of interviewing lies in other people's experiences and views, because they hold significant value. For this reason, it is incredibly difficult to quantify them and their opinions, which shows the importance of in-depth interviews (Kvale, 1996).

In order to preserve the words of the participant, all interviews will be recorded. Not only does this ensure that the answers given are recorded, but it is of the belief that due to this, participants feel more trusting that their words will not be used against them in any way. Recording interviews is also helpful for the researcher as it ensures that they have the original data if needed, for example if they were unsure the tone of an answer, or if they were accused of any mishandling of information (Seidman, 2006).

Importantly, other methods of data collection were taken into consideration due to the amount of time and often money needed to complete in-depth interviews from start to finish, including gaining access, making contact, interviewing, transcribing, analysing and sharing the data received. For this reason, focus groups were considered as they are a very useful method of gaining knowledge on others opinions and views, and are often considered to be a more natural way of accessing

information in comparison to interviews (Litosseliti, 2007). Focus groups involve small, selected groups of people who have been set together in order to discover their position on a particular topic, these groups are typically led by a researcher or moderator to ensure the conversation stay relevant (Morgan, 1997).

Although focus groups are useful for gathering views and opinions, there are drawbacks which I felt that were important to consider as I felt that if I had chosen this method it could have significantly impacted my study. These are, due to the fact that the conversation is participant lead there may be the possibility that the conversation could go off topic, which therefore results in the researcher having a lack of control (Kitzinger, 1995). Most importantly, in relation to sensitive subjects research suggests that focus group environments have the ability to make a participant feel vulnerable or nervous, which in turn has an effect of the persons willingness to share information (Litosseliti,2007). Taking into consideration that this study significantly relies on the experiences of others and can be considered as sensitive, I felt that using focus groups as a method would not be suitable.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is imperative to the success of the study, it involves reading, preparing and organising the data which has been collected, then setting it into themes in order to exhibit the data in a write up (Creswell, 2007). The data analysis approach which will be adopted for this study will be thematic. Thematic analysis is useful for coding qualitative data and involves significant reading, and then reading again of the data which is then able to be identified into themes. From this, patterns form and we are able to analyse the themes in order to define them, and therefore produce a write up of the study (Rice and Ezzy, 1999). Boyatzis (1998, p. 11) sets out 4 stages for thematic analysis, these are 'sensing themes', 'doing it reliably', 'developing codes' and 'interpreting the information and themes in the context of theory'. This form of data analysis offers two methods to coding which can be followed, these are inductive and deductive. The deductive approach involves holding preconceived themes as a result of previous knowledge, or theory. However, the inductive method allows the themes to come to light naturally through the data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). For the purpose of this study, the inductive

method will be adopted as I feel it best suits my study as I believe the importance of the data lies in the words and actions of the participants therefore I believe it is important to code due to naturally occurring themes.

There are many advantages of using a thematic approach to data analysis, Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that thematic analysis is a flexible option to analysing data and therefore it can be adjusted to suit any study which enabled the study to be full of detail and relevant data. It has also been stated that thematic analysis is significantly useful in order to review the perspectives and experiences of a range of participants (King, 2004). This is important to my study as the participants range from children with autism to parents and guardians to members of staff in the school. Using this approach highlights the similarities and differences amongst the data collected, despite of the diversity of the participants. However, there are drawbacks which I must be aware of, most importantly it is noted that although the flexibility can be an advantage, it is argued that there can be too much flexibility which can lead to inconsistent data and themes (Holloway and Todres, 2003). However, I will try to avoid this by ensuring that my epistemological standpoint is clear and encompasses my study (Nowell *et al*, 2017).

Ethical Considerations

Research ethics focusses on ensuring that the participants receive as much respect and dignity as possible throughout the duration of the study, in this case the British Educational Research Association's (BERA, 2018) guidelines will be followed. Ethical guidelines aim to protect participants and researchers, as well as the institution. There are three main ethical frameworks which need to be considered, these are based upon 'duty, rights and harm and benefit' (Alderson and Morrow, 2011. p. 17). The ethical considerations of this study have been discussed in assignment 2 of this module, and include the responsibility to and support for the child and adult participants, responsibility to the institution and school, consent and assent, ensuring of the right to withdrawal, harm arising due to sensitive material, confidentiality, privacy and anonymity, as well as complying with GDPR regulations (BERA, 2018). All participants are made aware of the aims and objectives, as well as what is expected of them before taking part in the study (See *appendix 3*), and asked

to sign an agreement to show their understanding and willingness to proceed in the form of consent forms (*See appendix 4*).

It is also important to note that during the dissemination phase of the study, participants will be offered the opportunity to meet with myself in order to read or be given information from the report in order to engage them in the literature. This meeting also gives the researcher the opportunity to show gratitude towards the participants for their involvement (Bengo, Ndebele and Masiye, 2008). Also, the school in which the research took place, as well as the local authority will be offered access to the final report, in the hopes that it may have the impact to make change and raise awareness.

Conclusion

I would like to take this opportunity to stress the importance of reflexivity throughout the process of this research study. Not only does it help to improve reliability, validity and rigour in a qualitative study, but it also allows the researcher to expand their ways of thinking and develop and mature their own workings (Attia, 2017). Throughout this process, with the aid of reflection I have been able to make changes which I believe have helped me to better my understanding and the quality of this study. For example, the methodology as well as one of the chosen methods were changed since the previous assignment, this was done as I believe it is now better suited to the nature of the study.

To conclude, I feel that this research focus is unique to any other in the field of education as there is little research which directly links the rights of the child to children with autism in mainstream education. I feel that if this research was to take place, the results would prove interesting to read and have the potential to have an impact on children with autism's education and well-being.

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Appendices

Appendix 1- Example observation notes

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Participant: _____

Observation No: _____

Considerations before observation:

Notes:

Appendix 2- Example Interview timetable

Key

P- Participant

G- Guardian

P/G- Parent/Guardian



- Parent/Guardian



- Child



- Staff



- All Participants

MARCH 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	Initial meeting with Parent/G P1. 2	Initial meeting with child P1. 3	Initial meeting with Parent/G P2. 4	Initial meeting with child P2. 5	6	7
8	Initial meeting with Parent/G P3. 9	Initial meeting with child P3. 10	11	12	13	14
15	Initial meeting with Staff P1. 16	Initial meeting with Staff P2. 17	Initial meeting with Staff P3. 18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	Consent & Assent forms returned for all P's. 27	28
29	30	31				

(Free Printable Calendar, 2020)

APRIL 2020						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 st interview with P/G P1. 1	2	1 st interview with P/G P2. 3	4
5	1 st interview with P/G P3. 6	7	8	1 st interview with staff P1. 9	10	11
12	1 st interview with staff P2. 13	14	1 st interview with staff P3. 15	16	17	18
19	2 nd interview with P/G P1. 20	21	2 nd interview with P/G P2. 22	23	2 nd interview with P/G P3. 24	25
26	2 nd interview with staff P1. 27	28	3 rd interview with staff P2. 29	30		

(Free Printable Calendar, 2020)

To Parent/Guardian/Member of Staff,

You are invited to take part in a research study looking into children with autism in mainstream education, and their rights as a child.

The main aim of this study:

To discover if children with autism are accessing their rights, in accordance with the UNCRC in mainstream school settings.

The main objective of this study:

To accumulate in-depth views, opinions and experiences of students, parents or guardians, as well as staff in relation to accessing children's rights in mainstream education using qualitative forms of data collection, e.g. interviews and observations.

What's involved?

As a parent/guardian:

You will be interviewed three times over the space of three months, which will take around an hour to an hour and a half each time. This will take place in your child's school. You will be asked your views and opinions on your child and their school environment in relation to their rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Your child will also be observed, **if they are willing** in order to gain knowledge on their experiences.

As a member of staff:

Again, you will be interviewed three times over the space of three months which will take around 60 to 90 minutes, in your work environment. You will be asked to give your views and opinions on the experiences had by children with autism in the school, in relation to children's rights.

Participants are able to withdraw from the study at any point.

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be guaranteed with agreements signed before the research process begins. This study has been approved by the Ethics Committee at UWTSD.

If you have any questions or queries, please contact Amy Webb-Erwin on 1401262@student.uwtsd.ac.uk

Appendix 4- Consent form

Are students with autism accessing their rights, in accordance with the UNCRC, in mainstream education? A case study of practice.

Consent form

- I _____ agree to take part in this study as a voluntary participant.
- I am aware that I am able to withdraw at any time, and I do not have to answer any question if I do not wish to, without any consequences.
- I have been given information regarding the purpose of this study explained to me in writing and I have been given the opportunity to question the researcher in relation to the study.
- I am aware that participation in this study involves three in-depth interviews, which will be video recorded for the purpose of the study.
- I have been made aware that the nature of this study may be sensitive, and will be offered support via H**** Primary School if necessary.
- I am aware that I will not benefit financially from this study.
- I have been made aware that any information I give will be treated with confidentiality, unless there is a situation which the researcher is made aware of others or myself being harmed. In this case, relevant authorities will be notified.
- I am aware that my identity will remain anonymous in any document relating to this study. The identity of any person I speak about will also be made anonymous.
- I understand that data from my interviews may be mentioned or quoted in the published research paper.
- I understand that signed consent forms, data relating to myself and recordings will be held on the researcher's private password-controlled computer in a secured file.
- I have been made aware that I am able to access the information I have given in the interviews at any time.
- I understand that the research may be discussed with a Support Lecturer at UWTSD.

- I am aware that I am able to contact the researcher if I need further clarification or information.

Signature of participant

_____ Date: _____

-

I believe that the participant is giving informed consent to take part in this study.

Signature of researcher

_____ Date: _____