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Teaching Students with Special Educational Needs in Inclusive Music Classrooms:
Experiences of Music Teachers in Hong Kong Primary Schools

By

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Teaching Students with Special Educational Needs in Inclusive Music Classrooms: Experiences of Music Teachers in Hong Kong Primary Schools

Abstract

It has been a decade since the implementation of Hong Kong's policy of inclusion, that mainstream schools should admit students with special educational needs [SEN]. This study reports on music teachers' experiences of teaching SEN students in inclusive music classrooms. Data were derived from a qualitative multiple case study comprising 10 government-funded primary school music teachers. These music teachers lack knowledge of ways to support the musical development of pupils with SEN and reported learned helplessness and effective exclusion of SEN students. The major barrier to effective inclusive music teaching evidenced is the absence of in-service training in inclusive music education.

Keywords: inclusion, music teachers, primary schools, music education, Hong Kong

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Contextual Background

In 1997, the then Hong Kong's Board of Education proposed a policy document, *Integrating the Disabled into the Community* (LWB, 2009) to advocate the idea of educational integration. Following the introduction of the *Disability Discrimination Ordinance* (EOC, 1996), the then Education Department [ED] (now known as Education Bureau [EDB]) mandated that from 2001 all mainstream schools will accept students with disabilities unless there are insuperable difficulties (ED, 2001). For the EDB, "inclusion is concerned with the learning and participation of all students, not only those with impairments or those who are categorized as having special educational needs" (EDB, 2008a, p. 1). Students with special educational needs [SEN] are usually allocated, through the Primary One Admission System at the age of six, to neighbourhood schools or, in some cases, schools according to their parents' choice. These SEN students are not isolated in special classes within the school, but receive education with peers of the same age. At the secondary school level, SEN students are then usually allocated to Band 3 (lowest academic) schools reflecting their generally low achievement in academic subjects (Forlin, 2007).

To help teachers implement this inclusion policy, the EDB encouraged special schools in Hong Kong to serve as resource schools supporting mainstream primary and secondary schools since 2003 (EDB, 2010). Subsequently in 2007, the EDB then funded for a 5-year

duration, in-service teacher development courses aimed at providing in each mainstream school the following support levels: 10% to 15% of each mainstream school's teachers will study a "Basic course" from which they will 'grasp appropriate (SEN supporting) strategies and skills'. Additionally, each mainstream school will then send at least 3 to 6 teachers to attend both an "Advanced course" which aims to 'put these support strategies into practice', and finally one "Thematic course" where they will be trained to cope with SEN in either 'cognitive, behavioral or sensory' areas (EDB, 2012). Within each mainstream school dissemination of this SEN knowledge is to be achieved by un-monitored peer-to-peer sharing – a situation that in practice, may leave 85% to 90% of classroom teachers with no support.

A further notable limitation is that access to these in-service courses was restricted to teachers of literacy and mathematics. There was no provision to support teachers catering for SEN students in music.

Related Literature

Following the implementation of inclusive education in 2001, Crawford (2002) found that although Hong Kong teachers recognized the desirability of adapting their teaching methodology to cater for students with SEN, they regarded doing so as not feasible given their usual classroom context. Wong (2002) reported that students with SEN found both the academic requirements of mainstream curricula and peer relationships a great burden. In Yuen,

Westwood and Wong (2004), reported that at primary level, language teachers mainly relied on class peers to assist students with SEN instead of adapting the curriculum. There is currently an absence of research in the area of inclusive music education in Hong Kong.

Elsewhere, research demonstrated that teachers either held negative attitudes towards inclusion in Botswana (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003) or, where some teachers did hold positive attitudes about the idea of inclusion, in Australia they disliked having SEN students in their classrooms (Campbell et al., 2003). These attitudes are in part explained by the reports that mainstream teachers felt that they were ill prepared to teach SEN students (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003) and that they had insufficient training and support to implement inclusion in their teaching (Fuchs, 2009). Teachers who had received training in special education were found to be more confident to handle SEN students within inclusive classrooms (Ross-Hill, 2009).

The situation is similar in the field of music education. Some music teachers hold negative attitudes toward teaching SEN students (Gfeller, Darrow, & Hedden, 1990), while others hold positive views about inclusion, but have low expectations of SEN students' individual musical achievement (Scott et al., 2007). Whereas some researchers advocate that music teachers should acquire the knowledge and skills to teach SEN students (Hammel, 2004; Nordlund, 2006) and should work together with music therapists and educators with special education training to support them (Montgomery & Martinson, 2006; Darrow, 2010), unlike

core-curriculum subjects such as literacy and mathematics, there is no research into the impact of such interventions on learning within the inclusive music classroom. There is very little research into the teaching of SEN students within the mainstream classroom in Hong Kong.

Analytical Framework

Darrow (1999) identifies 13 critical issues related to the inclusion of students with severe disabilities in music classrooms, including (1) students' accessibility to music lessons; (2) adaptive music materials; (3) collaboration / consultation; (4) expectations of parents; (5) teacher's experience / education; (6) grading / evaluation; (7) information about students' disabilities; (8) performance expectation; (9) lesson planning; (10) placement of students with disabilities; (11) socialization between students with and without disabilities; (12) time; and (13) varied disabilities within the inclusive music classroom.

Notably, of Darrow's 13 issues, only 4 may come directly under the teacher's control (issues 2, 6, 8 & 9). Of the remaining issues, these may be controlled by the school management (issues 3, 7, 10, 12 & 13), educational policy-makers (issues 1 & 5), peers (issue 11) and parents (issue 4). From this analysis, the success or otherwise of SEN learning within a music classroom may not rest with the teachers alone.

Darrow (1999) also identifies 7 categories of methodological adaptation that music teachers employed in their inclusive music classroom: (1) modifications; (2) individual

instruction; (3) multiple approaches that use multiple goals, multisensory experiences and multiple teaching strategies for different students; (4) paraprofessionals such as psychologists, and therapists; (5) peer partners; (6) adjustment of class size; and (7) adjustment of teaching pace. Unlike Darrow's research that focus on students with severe disabilities, the SEN students within the Hong Kong classroom context are more diversified and the available resources are different. In Hong Kong, physical disability is only one of eight designated types of SEN, i.e. Hearing Impairment, Physical Disability, Speech and Language Impairment, Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder, Visual Impairment, Intellectual Disability, Specific Learning Difficulties and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (EDB, 2008b). Therefore many of Darrow's categories of methodological adaptation cannot be applied in Hong Kong. Only two categories may be implemented (categories 1 & 5). For example, it is a common practice for Hong Kong schools music teachers to teach with music textbooks that are written according to the official music curriculum (EDB, 2014). It may cause extra workload to music teachers if they have to design adapted curriculum for SEN students. Furthermore, the class size in Hong Kong is around 32 students per class, which is relative bigger than that in the USA. It is a challenge for music teachers in Hong Kong to manage a large music class with both regular and SEN students. A major barrier to implementing (2) individual instruction, (3) multiple approaches and (7) adjustment of teaching pace within the Hong Kong music classroom is the combination of class-time and curriculum content both pressured by a perceived need to attain

school-based outcomes which are set according to the ability of average mainstream students. There is no provision for a special education specialist nor paraprofessional support for pupils in Hong Kong mainstream schools. Responsibility within the Hong Kong music classroom for the remaining categories - (4) paraprofessionals and (6) adjustment of class size – is firmly held respectively by school management and educational policy makers. From this analysis of the methodological adaptation deemed helpful to address SEN in music lessons, less than one third of these adaptations appear to be applicable in the Hong Kong music classroom.

Subsequent to her 1999 research, Darrow (2009) observed that the major barriers to effective inclusion in music instruction were teachers' beliefs, attitudes and their knowledge about teaching students with SEN. However, as indicated by the above analysis which adopts the prism of a Hong Kong teacher's perspective of their classroom context, the flexibility to implement methodological change may appear restricted to less than a third of the range initially outlined in 1999 by Darrow. This restrictive range raises a question: is it helpful to place the responsibility for addressing SEN and 'inclusive' education solely on the classroom teacher, when support staff with expert special education training is unavailable in the classrooms of mainstream school system?

Context and purpose of the study

In Hong Kong, the 'inclusive' education system remains academically competitive resulting in SEN students entering their secondary years of education normally within the academically

lowest Band 3 schools. At the start of primary-level (age 6), SEN students normally are allocated to a primary school within their home district. Given that only in primary education is 'inclusive' education truly apparent, this study limits its focus to primary-level schools.

The purpose of this study is to explore the experience of addressing SEN and 'inclusive' education within the Hong Kong music classroom – specifically at primary level. To explore the question of responsibility for addressing SEN and 'inclusive' education, this research focused on what primary schools music teachers say about their (1) curriculum planning, (2) teaching and (3) assessing SEN students in 'inclusive' music classrooms.

Methodology

This study adopted a multiple-case study approach comprising 10 teachers. Purposeful sampling was employed for collecting qualitative data (Merriam, 1998) which for the purpose of this research resulted in selecting participants who were both in-service Hong Kong primary school music teachers and were currently teaching mainstream classes that included pupils with SEN.

Semi-structured interviews were employed, allowing comparisons across cases and enabling teachers to focus on the topics of this study (Bogden & Biklen, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). An interview guide – comprising three sections: (1) professional training; (2) views on SEN students and (3) experiences of teaching SEN students in mainstream music

classrooms - was developed from the research literature on inclusion and inclusive music education (Foddy, 1993). To ensure that the study would yield authentic and credible outcomes, participant's interview responses were audio-taped and transcribed with these transcriptions checked by teachers before data analysis (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). All data were coded, categorized and analyzed, with emergent themes used to report music teachers' experiences of including SEN students in their inclusive music classrooms.

The data were coded according to categories generated to address the study's research focus on their experiences of (1) curriculum planning, (2) teaching and (3) assessing students with SEN in inclusive music classrooms. These categories include: (i) personal profiles of teachers (ii) music curriculum planning (iii) assessment practices (iv) views on challenges of teaching students with SEN and (iv) pedagogical strategies for teaching students with SEN in inclusive classrooms. The method for analysis employed involved 'within-case analysis', which studies the interview data of an individual teacher, followed by a 'cross-case analysis' that compares the overall findings of all the teachers (Merriam, 1998). Throughout, the research language was Cantonese – Hong Kong's spoken language – with translations for reporting in English transcribed and verified by professional translators.

Findings and Discussion

Personal profiles of the participating teachers show they all were qualified instrumental

teachers and had received training in music education. All had experience of teaching students with special education needs in inclusive music classrooms. Notably, their initial teacher training contained no provision for any courses on special or inclusive education. Consequently, none had any training either in special education in general nor in music education for SEN students. Table 1 presents a summary of the teachers' personal profiles.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Table 2 presents a summary of respondents' music curriculum planning, assessment practices, challenges of teaching SEN students and strategies for teaching SEN students in inclusive classrooms.

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Music Curriculum Planning

Uniformly, all respondents followed the 'U' – usual music curriculum without any modifications or adjustments for SEN students. To understand this uniformity is to understand the local Hong Kong context in which primary music teachers are required to teach across several subjects. This cross-subject timetabling commonly results in several music teachers teaching different groups of students of the same level, requiring them to align the curriculum across different groups. This alignment is commonly achieved by the expedient of following all materials and activities, such as music recordings, songs and recorder pieces supplied by the music textbooks (EDB, 2014). This 'teaching to the text-book' is further prompted by

teachers having not only several subjects to teach, but also a full teaching timetable - which excludes preparation-time - and to class-sizes that rarely are less than the maximum seating capacity of their assigned classroom (i.e. 35 student places). Given this context, all respondents stated that they would not modify their curriculum to cater for the learning needs of SEN students, though the reasons given may vary from case to case.

Betty: I have a music textbook to follow; it's impossible for me to modify the curriculum because of students with SEN. The modified curriculum may not suit the needs of other students. ...

Candy: It's really difficult to cater for their needs in a big class (i.e. 35 students). I don't have extra time to work out a modified curriculum for students with SEN. ...

Flora: I think a modified curriculum couldn't help them much because they are weak in learning...

Gail: It's difficult. I don't know how to modify the curriculum to help students with SEN...

Assessment Practices

Lacking resources or specific professional development training, many teachers in this study report that they face difficulties in assessing the musical abilities of SEN students. Music assessments in mainstream schools are school-based assessments. The content and assessment criteria are set by individual teachers and accordingly vary from school to school. Usually, the assessment includes a solo or group performance of singing and/or recorder playing and a listening and/or written test on simple music rudiments/notation. Some schools may also

include creative sound projects or melody composition. These assessments are set according to the average abilities of each school's mainstream students instead of SEN students. Given the absence of a common professional knowledge-base, respondents hold diverse opinions about assessing their music performance - ranging from a common assessment of all students based on one set of assessment criteria to giving a passing grade to all SEN students regardless of their real performance in music.

Amy: for students with SEN. ... it's difficult to assess them. I won't adapt the music assessment according to their abilities; otherwise it would be unfair to others.

Denise: I think the learning problems of students with SEN are mainly due to their weakness in emotional control and social integration ... I use the same assessment criteria to assess them; otherwise it would be unfair to other students.

Eva: because of the few students with SEN... I would lower my expectation on their performance and won't give them a very low grade.

Henry: if (my SEN students) can't meet the lowest criteria for getting a pass mark, I would adjust the assessment criteria and let them pass.

Ivy: It's difficult to assess (my SEN students) because they don't participate in music activities. Anyway, I would give them the lowest passing mark instead of letting them fail in music.

Jade: I would lower my expectation of performance according to the ability of students with SEN. All students in my class will get a passing grade.

Challenges of teaching students with SEN

Bereft of any professional training in how to address the challenges of pupils with SEN, all respondents naturally revert to describing not the cause hindering SEN students' learning but

the effect such students have on the teacher's classroom management. This 'classroom-effect' is uniformly negative, and expressed in terms of being an interference with a 'normal' (that is, without SEN student) classroom. Whereas the ideal of 'inclusive' education involves peer-learning through peer acceptance, the practice here is of an unchanged curriculum combined with a largely token assessment which leaves SEN students untouched by the potential that music may offer. For six of the ten respondents on Table 2 - Candy, Denise, Eva, Flora, Gail and Jade – the problem appears to be that SEN students 'are weak in learning music.' For the other four, Amy points to classroom management issues, Betty to SEN students' poor socialization skills, Henry to the challenges of 'diversified learning abilities' while for Ivy it is in SEN students' unresponsiveness. For all ten respondents, a key issue is their own coping strategies, variously expressed in Table 2 as problems with 'classroom management', the need for extra preparation time, feeling under pressure and knowing that SEN students need help but not knowing what to do. This sense of imposed helplessness echoes throughout the following interview excerpts:

Amy: Students with SEN might cause chaos in classroom and disturb everybody. They are inattentive and don't participate in learning activities. I have to use extra time to settle them. They are weak in learning and can't understand abstract musical concepts. It's impossible for me to help them individually.

Betty: Poor socialization is a hindrance for students with SEN to be included in mainstream schools. They can't follow the progress of curriculum and other students don't want to collaborate with them, or may join them to disturb others, and I have to spend time to settle them. It's wastage of lesson time!

Candy: Students with SEN are weak in learning, they are too slow in learning and affect my pace of teaching and might have negative effect on high performance mainstream students. Students with SEN can't differentiate musical elements through listening activities. I don't know why they can't do it and don't know how to help them.

Denise: Students with SEN can't control their fingers to play musical instruments. They are not sensitive to pitch and always sing out of tune. There's no way for me to help them. It seems very unfair to them to study with mainstream students. Their destructive behaviors may be dangerous and cause problems in classroom management. I feel great pressure when dealing with them. I have to control my emotion too.

Eva: Many students with SEN can't follow the pace to learn singing and playing recorder. They don't understand abstract musical concepts, and historical or cultural concepts that are not related to their daily life. They can't compose simple melodies without computer aid. Although I try my best to help them, I know I won't help them much.

Flora: Students with SEN are very weak in paying attention and can't follow listening activities because they may be day-dreaming. They are weak in expressing their ideas and can't communicate properly with other students, and disturb others' learning. I don't like teaching them because they disturb others.

Gail: Many students with SEN are unable to sing in pitch as mainstream students. They can't control their emotions and disturb others. It's difficult to teach them because of the wide range of diversities.

Henry: Some students with SEN are good at singing, but many are not. Some of them can follow all listening activities, but many of them cannot. It's really difficult to teach them because of their wide range of diversities.

Ivy: Many students with SEN don't respond to my instruction and don't participate in any learning activities. I don't like teaching them. I'm afraid of teaching them because they would disturb my teaching.

Jade: It's difficult for students with SEN to understand abstract musical concepts. They are very much affected by their emotions and mood. They affect my pace of teaching. I have to use extra time to settle them. I'm not experienced to teach them. I don't know how to help them.

The music teachers of this study, like all other music teachers in Hong Kong, have no training in supporting SEN students, and so find themselves cast into an apparently helpless situation.

Pedagogical strategies for teaching students with SEN

Lacking professional knowledge in how to support SEN students' learning, all teachers in this study sought pedagogical strategies adapted from their primary/kindergarten-school pedagogy. The common impulse is one of simplification, smaller-steps, slower-pace, teacher-proximity – all and each destined to incur social consequences from mainstream primary pupils geared to anticipate growth via the precise opposite. This tension is observable in all ten of the following interview extracts:

Amy: I would give them more opportunities to participate in activities; sometimes I arrange special tasks for them to keep them busy, or arrange them to sit close to me; sometimes I arrange peer assistants to help them.

Betty: I would try to use a lot of different activities to attract their attention. However, it doesn't mean that they are motivated to learn. Some of them simply refuse to participate in any activities, and I would give up helping them, as long as the majority of mainstream students are learning properly.

Candy: I use peer assistants to help them, collaboratively group work may benefit them.

Denise: I design a wide of various music learning activities for them, hoping that they won't feel bored. I won't slow down the teaching pace because other students may feel bored.

Eva: I arrange them to sit closer to me and allow them to have more opportunity to participate in activities. I would arrange a peer assistant to help them. I may also slow down a bit to help them.

Flora: I arrange them to sit in front of me so that I can help them while teaching other students.

Gail: I breakdown learning tasks into smaller tasks and slow down my pace of teaching. I have to repeat my instruction, schedule more practice time in performing activities, give them more hints and repeat playing sound clips in listening activities.

Henry: I arrange them to sit at the corners so that they can't disturb others. I don't have any special strategy to teach them music.

Ivy: I don't have strategy for teaching them. I won't force them to participate in music activities. I'll let them sit at the corner instead.

Jade: I use peer assistants to help them individually. I arrange them to sit close to me if they need attention, or let them sit at the corner if they are emotional unstable.

The results of lowering the expectation of the abilities and achievement of SEN in music learning and tend to ignore SEN students in the music classes are perhaps predictable – limited, haphazard success but more commonly failure and worst still, social exclusion.

Discussion

The research findings here present perhaps a grim view of the realities facing both Hong Kong's SEN students and their music teachers collectively placed – albeit with good intentions – into 'inclusive' education classrooms. Of the ideals of 'inclusive' education perhaps the highest is social integration for mainstream students to know about the special

needs of SEN and accept that these special needs are only a part of an individual's potential and that everyone can be a valued member of society. However as these findings highlight, the absence of professional knowledge of how to support SEN learning creates a dilemma for otherwise caring and pro-active teachers – how to 'manage' SEN inclusion? These findings seem to confirm the view that teachers need to receive specific SEN training (Fuchs, 2009; Hammel, 2004; Nordlund, 2006).

Lacking such support, it is perhaps not surprising that the voices of Betty, Ivy, Flora and Denise frankly express negative feelings about teaching SEN students (Hammond & Ingalls, 2003; Gfeller et al., 1990). Of greater significance than confirming these previous research findings, is the recognition that such negative feelings effectively counter the aims of 'inclusive' education, producing not understanding and communication with SEN students, but rather their social exclusion and their teacher's learned helplessness. It is perhaps this insidious double-jeopardy – our weakest students unsupported by increasingly 'helpless' teachers – that predicts policy failure and longer-term social issues. From this perspective, the early findings such as Darrow's (1999) that teachers regard SEN students as a source that could cause classroom management problems, perhaps now seem a dangerous gloss. The emerging issue here is not one of 'classroom management' but of professional ignorance where professional knowledge might help those most at risk. Lacking due professional knowledge, the majority cases of this study - including Amy, Candy, Denise, Gail, Ivy and

Jade - voiced concerns that SEN students both disturb and affect the pace of their teaching. Lacking access to a homogenizing pedagogy that embraces both SEN and 'mainstream' learning, a classroom SEN-ghetto can form, leading to exclusion and labelling with predictable negative outcomes.

This negative process is not inevitable for, unlike the findings of Scott et al (2007) that music teachers who hold positive views about inclusion would lower their expectations of students' individual achievement, the findings here subtly but significantly differ. In the current research findings, the majority of case studies show Hong Kong teachers hold negative views about inclusion and lowered their expectations of students' achievement because they held themselves to be unaware about how to teach music to SEN students. The difference between the Scott et al (2007) and the Hong Kong results is the latter reflects the voice of classroom realism. These Hong Kong classroom teachers – and their SEN students – are in a tough situation, the nature of which they are fully aware. Perhaps this is the bedrock and the basis from which a real solution can emerge?

Darrow's (1999) study and this Hong Kong research have different contexts and caution is required in drawing comparisons. For example, in both studies teachers adopt adapted strategies including the use of multiple approaches, peer partners and an adjustment of teaching pace. However the Hong Kong teachers openly acknowledge that their adaptations are essentially 'stabs in the SEN dark', with any success attributable only to the blind-luck of

their individual pedagogical experimentation. Equally, an analysis of Darrow (1999) has shown that among her 13 critical SEN issues only 4 (31%) may be directly under the Hong Kong teacher's control; among her 7 categories of methodological adaptation to support SEN learning less than one third appear practical within the Hong Kong classroom context. Where teachers lack control, surely responsibility for successful implementation of 'inclusive' education lies elsewhere? From this perspective, Darrow (2009) may now be challenged in that the major barriers to effective inclusion in music instruction are not necessarily teachers' beliefs, attitudes and their knowledge about teaching students with SEN. As these findings indicate, a major barrier to effective inclusion in Hong Kong's music instruction is a lack of adequate in-service teacher training in inclusive music education.

Conclusion

This study reflects the dilemma that primary music teachers in Hong Kong face due to under-resourced 'inclusive' education. The lack of specific training in inclusive music education creates a learned helplessness amongst these Hong Kong primary music teachers required to integrate SEN students within their 'inclusive' music classrooms. Although some teachers here experiment with various coping strategies, the common theme is one of surrender, giving up and effectively excluding SEN students. Although these findings echo those of earlier research – significantly the call for effective in-service support for SEN learning - there emerge significant differences. In Hong Kong, negative feelings about

teaching SEN students effectively undermine the ideals of an 'inclusive' education. These teachers are in a tough situation, the nature of which they are fully aware. A major barrier to effective 'inclusive' music teaching is the absence of in-service teacher training that will support the musical learning of students with SEN.

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Table 1. Teachers' personal profiles.					
Cases	Gender/ age	Education	Musical training	Experience of teaching primary school (years)	Experience of teaching SEN^a
(1) Amy	F/30	B. A. in ReligionPGDE in Music ^b	PianoSinging	6	Yes
(2) Betty	F/40	Cert. Ed. in Music ^c B. Ed. in Chinese	Piano	18	Yes
(3) Candy	F/27	B. A. in MusicPGDE in Music	PianoOrgan	4	Yes
(4) Denise	F/32	B. A. in MusicPGDE in Music	Piano	8	Yes
(5) Eva	F/45	Cert. Ed. in MusicB. A. in Chinese	Piano	23	Yes
(6) Flora	F/38	B. A. in MusicPGDE in Music	Piano	14	Yes
(7) Gail	F/32	B. Ed. in Music	PianoSinging	8	Yes
(8) Henry	M/36	B. A. in MusicPGDE in Music	PianoSinging	6	Yes
(9) Ivy	F/30	B. A. in MusicPGDE in Music	ViolinPiano	6	Yes
(10) Jade	F/28	B. Ed. in Music	PianoSinging	3	Yes

^aSEN, Students with special education needs; ^bPGDE, Postgraduate Diploma in Education, major in Music; ^cCert. Ed. in Music, Certificate of Education, with Music as one of the two elective studies. This certificate programme was a non-graduate two-year or three-year programme, offered by the Colleges of Education in Hong Kong for training teachers before establishing Hong Kong Institute of Education in 1995.

Table 2. Teachers' opinions about teaching music in inclusive classrooms.				
Cases	Curriculum	Assessment	Challenges	Pedagogical strategies
(1) Amy	U	U	(1) Classroom management problems and (2) Need extra time	(1) Design special tasks for SEN, (2) Peer assistants, (3) More teacher-student interaction with SEN and (4) Sit close to teacher
(2) Betty	U	X – pass grade	(1) Poor socialization of SEN and (2) Need extra time	(1) Provide a variety of activities
(3) Candy	U	X – pass grade	(1) SEN are weak in music learning, (2) Affect teaching pace, (3) negative effect on mainstream students and (4) Do not know how to help SEN	(1) Peer assistants
(4) Denise	U	U	(1) SEN are weak in music learning, (2) Do not know how to help SEN, (3) Classroom management problems and (4) Feel great pressure	(1) Provide a variety of activities
(5) Eva	U	X – lower expectation	(1) SEN are weak in music learning and (2) Do not know how to help SEN	(1) Sit close to teacher, (2) More teacher-student interaction with SEN, (3) Peer assistants and (4) Slow down teaching pace
(6) Flora	U	X – lower expectation	(1) SEN are weak in music learning and (2) SEN are weak in communication	(1) Sit close to teacher
(7) Gail	U	X – easy tasks	(1) SEN are weak in music learning, (2) Diversified learning abilities and (3) Classroom management problems	(1) Design special tasks for SEN, (2) Repeat instructions, (3) Slow down teaching pace and (4) More practice time
(8) Henry	U	X – pass grade	(1) Diversified learning abilities	(1) Sit at corners
(9) Ivy	U	X – pass grade	(1) SEN do not respond and (2) SEN disturb teaching	(1) Sit at corners

(10) Jade	U	X – pass grade	(1) SEN are weak in music learning, (2) SEN disturb teaching, (3) Need extra time and (4) Do not know how to help SEN	(1) Peer assistants, (2) Sit close to teacher and (3) Sit at corners
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U, usual curriculum/assessment criteria; X, modified curriculum/assessment; SEN, students with special education needs.