

Collaborative working between Speech and Language Therapists (SLTs) and teaching staff in mainstream UK primary schools: A scoping review.

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Background

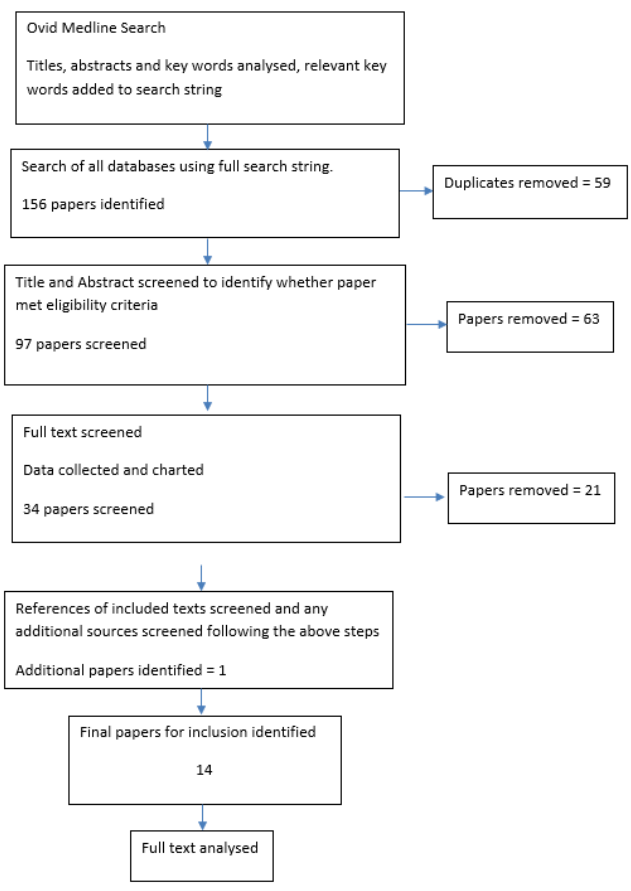
Support for school-age children with Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) usually takes place within the school setting. Successful outcomes for children with SLCN rely on effective collaborative working between SLTs, school staff and families.

Research questions:

- RQ1: What research is there into collaboration between SLTs and mainstream primary school teaching staff?
- RQ2: How are the concepts of roles/relationships/collaborative working are described?
- RQ3: Who are the participants in the research?

Method

A scoping review methodology was followed (Peters et al., 2020).



Results

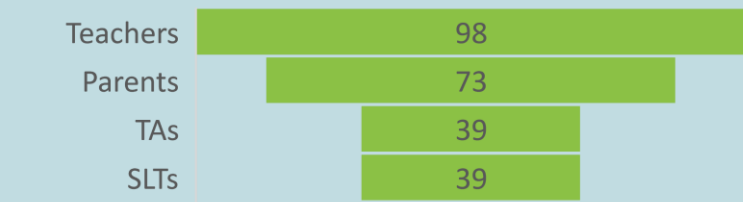
RQ1: 14 papers were identified, but collaboration was the primary focus of only 5. All papers discussed participants’ *views and experiences* of collaborative practice. Papers *described current collaborative practice* (n = 6), *investigated barriers and facilitators* (n = 4), and also *discussed clarity or perceptions of roles* (n = 6).

RQ2: “Collaboration” was used broadly, to refer to management and policy as well as day-to-day working.

A wide range of other terms were used:

interagency working, communication, shared working, **collaboration**, co-working, social capital

RQ3:



Numbers of participants (e.g. Senior Leadership team) were unclear in many papers.

Discussion

- Insufficient research for a systematic review
- Collaboration was often a secondary aim/theme of the research
- The term “collaboration” is used in a broad and varied way, making literature synthesis a challenge.
- Clarity and perceptions of roles is a key theme.
- Limited empirical research into barriers and facilitators.
- TAs views are underrepresented.

Conclusions

Further research should consider collaboration within the complex social network of school staff, including TAs and SLTs. Investigation of understanding of roles and responsibilities in supporting SLCN in schools is crucial, and within future research “collaboration” needs to be clearly defined. This research is needed to ensure that future guidance is evidence based.