

# Advancing Anti-ableist Pedagogy in Art Education

Dr Claire Penketh

Associate Professor Disability Studies

Liverpool Hope University

nsead

**CCDS**   
Centre for Culture & Disability Studies

# What is Ableism?

- Our subtle preferences for the typical behaviours, abilities and attributes of so-called normal bodies and minds.
- In art education ableism may be evident in assumptions about vision, coordination, attention span, mobility, working independently but may also relate to assumptions about disability as an individual deficit requiring intervention, or disability as something to be overcome
- Ableism provides the nutrients for disablism to grow (Dan Goodley)  
Disablism refers to active discrimination against disabled people

# Addressing Inequality: changing social and cultural attitudes towards disability

**Stage 1: Special Educational Needs:** prioritising access for those identified as requiring support (basic legal requirement)

**Stage 2: A Need to go Beyond Need:**

‘a series of reports commissioned by the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC, 2011, 2012, 2017) suggest that many disabled people experience a ‘drip, drip, nag, nag of low-level harassment.’

- Increase in disability hate crime (Sherry, Burch, Chakraborty)

# Anti-ableist Pedagogy

## **Stage 3: Advancing AaP to learn from and with...**

**3.1 Reflection/Review/Identification** of subtle preferences that prioritise and value so-called 'normal' or 'typical bodies and minds.

**3.2 Design changes** (curriculum, learning & teaching, assessment)

Trialled and reported as a 'Vital Pedagogy...'

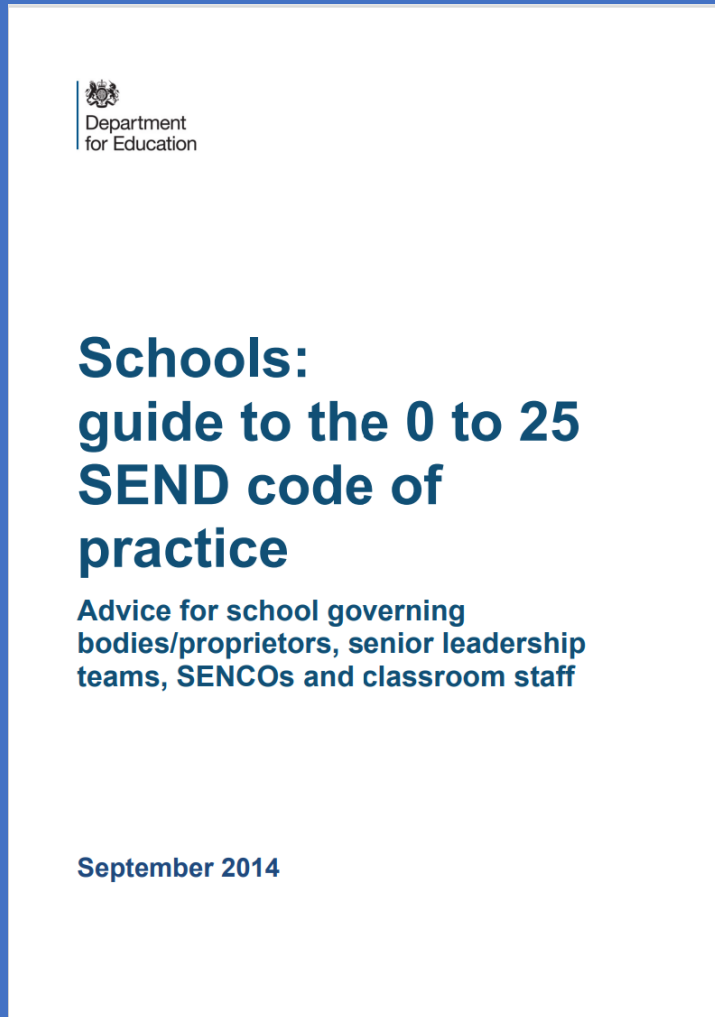
**3.3 Dissemination/Reflection** – recognition of value and co-learning

Dr Sandra Hiett

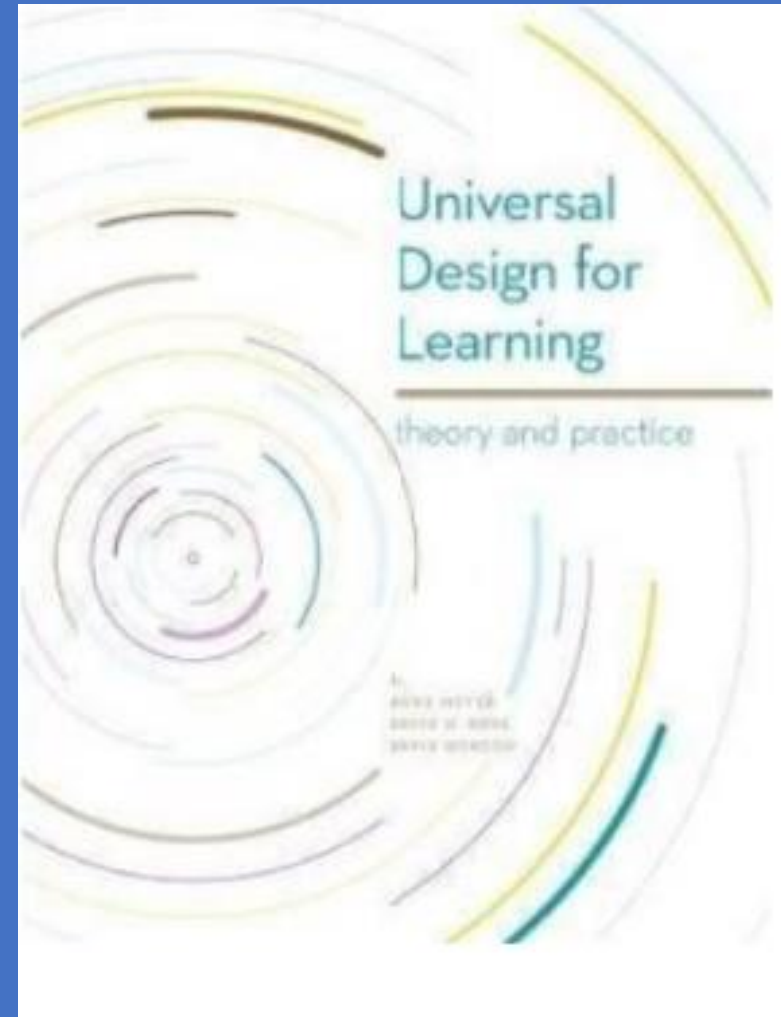
PGCE Art and Design

Liverpool Hope University

# Medical model



# Social model



Teacher Standards for ITT (DfE): T5 Adapt teaching to respond to the strengths and needs of all pupils

# Paul Morrow

Lead Practitioner – Westminster Special Schools

By law it is not enough to not discriminate, all public bodies have a duty  
to:

*Actively advance equality of opportunity between people who share a  
protected characteristic and people who do not share it.*

And:

*Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between  
people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not  
share it.*



# Using contemporary art to promote anti-ableist pedagogy

Contemporary art practices can align itself with the promotion of Anti-ableist pedagogy

The National curriculum for Art and Design states:

*know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms*

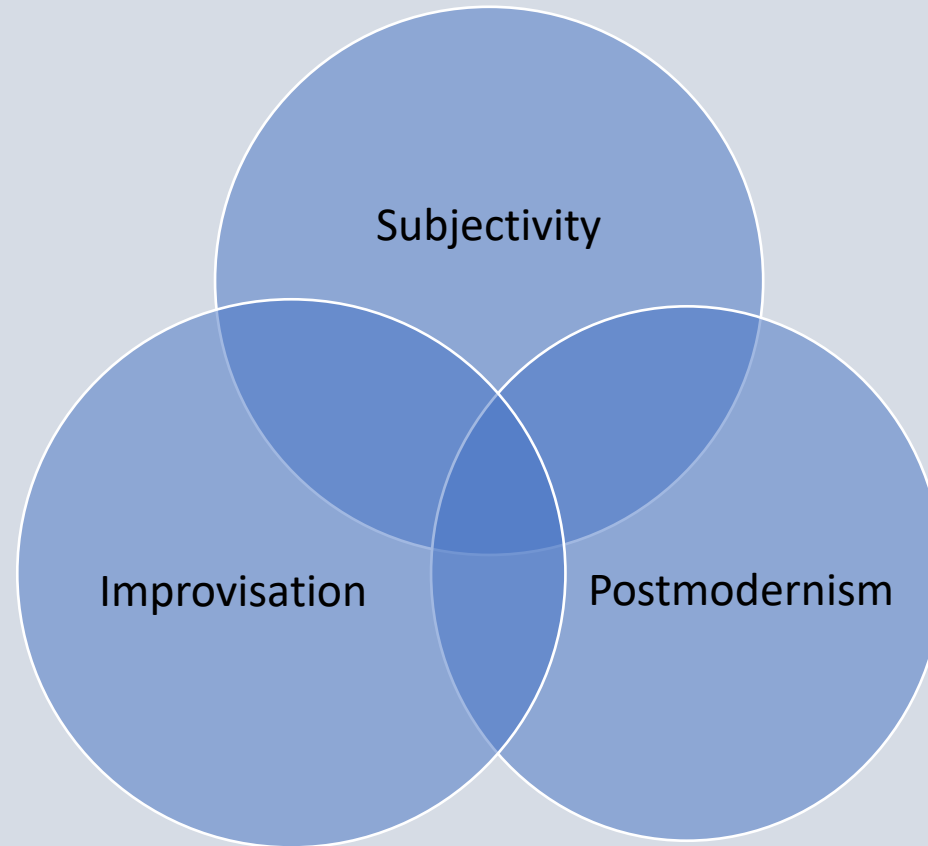


Nnena Kalu, Studio Voltaire elsewhere, 2020,  
Commissioned by Studio Voltaire in partnership with  
ActionSpace, courtesy of the artist and Studio Voltaire,  
credit Francis Ware



Nnena Kalu, Project Ability Ltd  
Glasgow, United Kingdom, 2018

# Using the characteristics of contemporary art practice



# Clare Boreham

Primary SEN/Autism and DT Teacher





Baltic Stars One: Sally Madge





Baltic Stars Two: Zoe Allen. Gallery work





# Baltic Stars Two: Zoe Allen. Opening







# Baltic Stars – 3 year project

- project funded by Children in Need run by the Baltic Gallery, designed specifically for pupils with additional needs

We have participated in three versions of Baltic Stars;

1. a short school based extracurricular pilot with artist Sally Madge
2. full programme across school and the Gallery with Zoe Allen
3. re-designed for the pandemic (school based).

# Project 2:

An invaluable aspect has been working with innovative artists who are experimental, adapt to the groups' needs and demonstrate creative approaches to projects. Visiting, working in and having their work presented in the gallery was an incredibly valuable experience for the children. Working with galleries can be inclusive and anti ableist.

*It is indeed ableist to assume that all pupils can sustain concentration longer than the school day as well as transition to new places easily.*

*Being involved in the AaP SIG has allowed me to have unique and important conversations with like minded professionals, honing in on why I do what my gut tells me to, with more confidence and understanding. Its allowed me to reflect on what we do and identify which pedagogies work well and why anti-ableist pedagogical design needs unique approaches to be most effective.*

# Advancing AaP

What's next?

- Continuation of SIG meetings – featuring disability arts and contemporary practice
- Take-over issue of *AD*
- Examples in practice via NSEAD webpages
- Researching the usefulness of AaP in practice