BEST PRACTICE 1

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

This education approach is based on the belief that all learners have a right to be educated as much as possible in the environment that is best for them. This approach is different from the other approaches (mainstreaming/integration) in several ways:

- It emphasises modifying the teaching methods to suit the learner, instead of trying to change the learner so that he 'fits in'

- There is awareness that all learners have their own strengths and weaknesses, things that help them to succeed and things that prevent them from succeeding

- An inclusive approach always tries first to help learners to succeed in mainstream, but if it turns out that mainstream education cannot help them to achieve their full potential, then it makes specialised learning support available to them

- Inclusive education calls attention to the fact that almost anything can be a barrier to learning, if it is not managed correctly

The difference between mainstreaming and inclusive education.

Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System,
in the Education WHITE PAPER 6 (July 2001)

'MAINSTREAMING' OR 'INTEGRATION	'INCLUSION'
Mainstreaming is about getting learners to 'fit into' a particular kind of system or integrating them into this existing system.	Inclusion is about recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and building on the similarities.
Mainstreaming is about giving some learners extra support so that they can 'fit in' or be integrated into the 'normal' classroom routine. Learners are assessed by specialists who diagnose and prescribe technical intervention, such as the placements of learners in programmes.	Inclusion is about supporting all learners, educators and the system as a whole so that the full range of learning needs can be met. The focus is on teaching and learning factors, with the emphasis on the development of good teaching strategies that will be of benefit to all learners.
Mainstreaming and integration focus on changes that need to take place in learners so that they can 'fit it'. Here the focus is on the learner.	Inclusion focuses on overcoming barriers in the system that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. The focus is on the adaptation of and support systems available in the classroom.