What Works: The Views of Young Black People on School Wellbeing Provisions

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Abstract

Wellbeing of children and young people (YP) in the UK is a national concern, which has resulted in an increased empirical and policy interest in this topic. While Black students appear to be at higher risk of wellbeing problems, there is limited evidence on what school support is effective for this student group. Additionally, previous research has predominantly focused on within-child wellbeing interventions, which have been 'done to' rather than 'done with' students. This reinforces the deficit narratives surrounding Black students' wellbeing and disregards systemic factors that exacerbate it (e.g. racial discrimination).

Accordingly, the present study adopts solution-oriented (Harker et al., 2016) and social-ecological lenses (Ungar et al., 2007) to identify what school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people. This study aimed to be culturally sensitive and to empower the researched community, thus a participatory research approach was employed. Two co-researchers provided guidance on the data collection and dissemination approach of this study. Subsequently, 10 young Black people between the ages of 13 and 21 participated in semi-structured interviews. Data was transcribed verbatim and was, then, analysed inductively using Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2022).

The findings were applied to Ungar et al.'s (2007) social-ecological model, illustrating the different systemic factors contributing to young Black people's wellbeing at school. These included personal factors facilitating pupils' resilience, support from key attachment figures at school, needs-driven and accessible whole-school wellbeing provisions, and, crucially, positive and inclusive school ethos. Students suggested that the available support could be improved by promoting anti-discriminatory approaches, reducing academic pressures, incorporating pupil voice into provisions, and providing wellbeing check-ins. Finally, the implications of this study's findings for Educational Psychology practice are discussed, before concluding with the author's reflections on her research journey.

Key words: young Black people; wellbeing; school provision; views; participatory research

Student Declaration

University of East London

School of Psychology

Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Declaration:

I declare that whilst registered as a degree student at UEL, I have not been a registered or enrolled student for another award of this university or of any other academic or professional institution.

I declared that no material contained within the thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

I declare that my research required ethical approval from the University Ethics Committee (SREC) and that confirmation of approval is embedded within the thesis.

Signed: 

Ekaterina Gicheva

Dated: 21.04.2023

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Table of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Corresponding term
BPS	British Psychological Society
CBT	Cognitive behavioural therapy
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CYP	Children and young people
DfE	Department for Education
DoH	Department of Health
EL	Emotional literacy
EP	Educational psychologist
HCPC	The Health and Care Professions Council
LA	Local authority
MH	Mental health
NHS	National Health Service
ONS	Office for National Statistics
RCT	Randomised control trial
RQ	Research question
SDQ	Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
SEL	Social and emotional learning
TA	Thematic analysis
UEL	University of East London
UK	United Kingdom
WoE	Weight of evidence
YP	Young people

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the present research, which focuses on the views of young Black people regarding their schools' wellbeing provisions. It begins with an exploration of the author's position, including personal and professional motivators for conducting the research. The concepts and theories relevant for this study are outlined, followed by a discussion of the national and local contexts, as well as key legislation emphasising the promotion of pupil voice. The wellbeing inequalities experienced by Black students, alongside systemic factors compromising their wellbeing, are highlighted. The participatory approach is introduced and discussed in relation to the present study. The chapter concludes with a discussion of why this study is relevant for Educational Psychology practice and its unique research contribution.

1.2 Researcher's Position

The position adopted within this research was influenced by the author's professional interests and values.

Supporting young people's (YP) wellbeing is an important aspect of the role of Educational Psychologists (EP; Beaver, 2011) and is an ongoing passion of the author. It has been the thread connecting her previous roles of teacher, residential worker, wellbeing lead, and currently of trainee EP. Throughout these professional experiences, the researcher developed her awareness of the wider systems involved when supporting students' mental health (MH) and the predominant within-child and problem-based view of the issues students presented with. These discourses did not tend to incorporate students' cultural references or gain the perspective of YP, resulting in them often being misunderstood and disempowered during the process.

As part of her doctoral training, the author's thinking around this topic was reinforced through an exploration of the key values underpinning the EP profession; namely autonomy, social justice, beneficence and non-maleficence (Fox, 2015). Reflecting on this, the researcher recognised that she strongly aligned with the first two values, which is a major motivator for the present research. From this position, ethical EP practice, above all, involves promoting the voices of those who are marginalised (e.g. YP) as well as challenging oppression to promote their welfare. Linking this with the discussed professional experiences, school wellbeing provisions stood out as a key area to explore due to the detrimental impact of ineffective support on students' lives (Wigelsworth et al., 2013).

Overall, it was felt that adopting a culturally sensitive and solution-oriented approach that accounts for the systemic factors impacting students' wellbeing was needed. The author hoped that this would 'thicken' an alternative narrative to the explanations that are commonly available when discussing the wellbeing difficulties of students (White & Epston, 1990). To reinforce this, a decision was made to empower students by promoting their voice throughout this study. As discussed in Section 2.3.2, this study explores what wellbeing provisions at secondary school are perceived as helpful by young Black people.

1.3 Definition of Key Terms

1.3.1 Wellbeing and Resilience

The Department for Education (DfE) wellbeing definition is adopted in the current research, namely 'feeling good and functioning well; an individual's experience of their life; and a comparison of life circumstances with social norms and values' (De Feo et al., 2014, p. 6). As implied in this definition, wellbeing is conceptualised as a continuum incorporating both difficulties and thriving (Dooris et al., 2018). This definition was also

chosen because it encompasses subjective and objective dimensions of wellbeing (De Feo et al., 2012). The former relates to people's direct evaluation of their wellbeing, while the latter is associated with meeting one's basic needs. These two dimensions are both crucial, having been linked to essential outcomes such as one's health, and future prospects (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2012; ONS, 2013). Importantly, the concept mental health (MH), or one's ability to apply themselves, cope with stress, be productive and contribute to their community (World Health Organization, 2004), incorporates similar domains to subjective wellbeing (Statham & Chase, 2010). Thus, it will be used in this thesis to indicate when the author is focusing on subjective wellbeing.

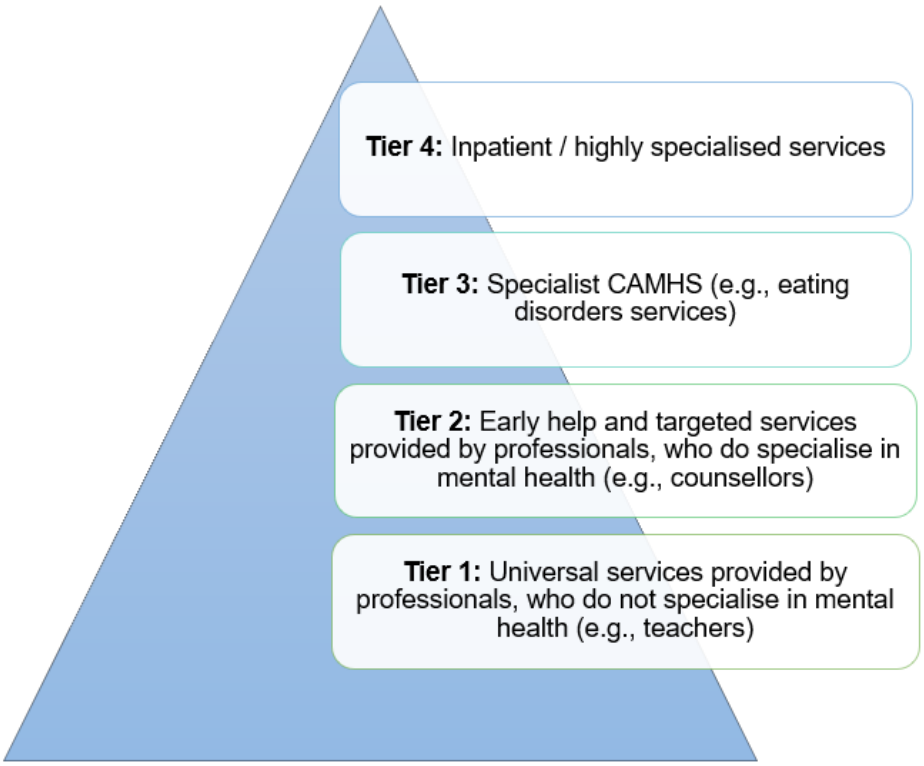
Secondly, resilience is an important concept utilised in this research. There is no agreed way of defining resilience (Herrman et al., 2011), however it essentially refers to one's ability to adapt positively and to sustain or improve their wellbeing during adversity (Wald et al., 2006). The author moves beyond the view that resilience is a personal trait, acknowledging the impact of wider systems (e.g. one's school; Cicchetti, 2010). This is explored further in Section 1.4.2.

1.3.2 Wellbeing Provisions

A key concept that will be used throughout the study is 'wellbeing provision'. The author defines this as any school practices that promote students' wellbeing, because having a well-rounded approach to support can have long-term positive implications (Clarke et al., 2015). In England, wellbeing support is tiered to ensure that it appropriately meets students' needs (National Health Service [NHS], n.d). This research will focus on early help and preventative practices due to their effectiveness in building pupils' resilience (Membride, 2016). As seen in Figure 1.1, this is consistent with Tier 1 and Tier 2 support.

Figure 1.1

Tiered System for Wellbeing Support in England (Adapted from NHS, n.d.)



1.3.3 Race

As postulated by critical race theory (Nyika et al., 2017, p. 424), race is a social construct, which has been 'created, reinforced and regulated, covertly or otherwise, in discourse aiming to serve a socio-political purpose'. As such, the racial categories that are commonly employed nowadays have been developed arbitrarily, using physical characteristics (Carbado & Gulati, 2002). This practice has been refuted scientifically (Witzig, 1996). However, for the purposes of this study, the author will utilise these categories to investigate the implications they may have on wellbeing support at school. Thus, the term race is defined as the social conceptions regarding one's identity based on their skin colour (Jablonski, 2021). Please, see Appendix 2.14 for a list of the racial categories used, including the term 'Black' discussed in the next section (ONS, 2021).

1.3.4 Black Ethnic Group

Throughout this study, the terms ‘Black ethnic group’, ‘Black’ or ‘identifying as Black’ will be used interchangeably. These concepts are employed to represent people who describes themselves as ‘Black, Black British, Caribbean, African or any other Black, Black British, or Caribbean background’ (ONS, 2021). As suggested by the reference group employed in this study, the term ‘Black’ is capitalised. It is acknowledged that using the category ‘Black’ as a collective can be imprecise (Aspinall, 2002), and may not lead to identifying the experiences of all people identifying as ‘Black’ (Maylor, 2014). The author hopes that employing this term, which has been commonly utilised in empirical evidence and policy documents (GOV.UK, n.d.), would not lead to people feeling discriminated against or excluded.

1.3.5 Young People

For the purposes of this research, the term YP is used when talking about people aged 11 to 25. This considers the statutory responsibilities of local authorities (LA) to YP that are aged 25 and below (DfE, 2015).

1.3.6 Urban Areas

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affair’s (n.d.) definition of ‘urban area’ is employed. Namely, a settlement with at least 10,000 residents.

1.4 Theoretical Frameworks

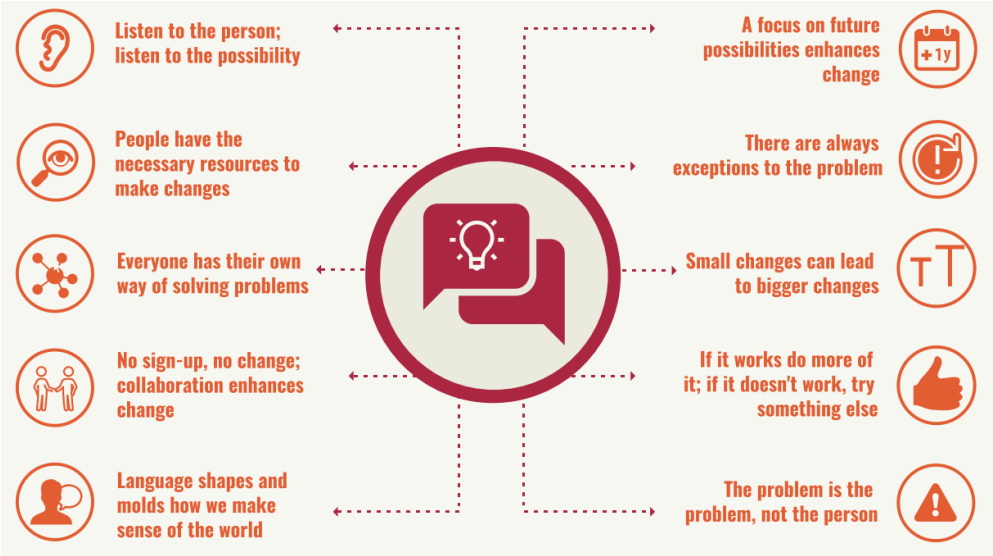
1.4.1 Solution-Oriented Approach

The solution-oriented approach focuses on both ‘pain and possibility’ of human experience (Harker et al., 2016). Thus, whilst it validates people’s negative perceptions of situations, it also encompasses culturally sensitive practice by identifying ‘what works’ for everyone (Reiss, 2016). In the case of students experiencing wellbeing difficulties, as well as acknowledging the identified issues, this approach focuses on times when things

are going well, or the available support has been effective. Using a solution-oriented lens is particularly important for the current study because of its person-centered focus (Harker et al., 2016). The solution-oriented principles (see Figure 1.2) highlight this, indicating how essential it is to involve key stakeholders to generate meaningful solutions. They also affirm the idea that practitioners should go beyond a within-child perspective when discussing pupils' wellbeing.

Figure 1.2

Principles Adopted by the Solution-Oriented Approach (Adapted from Glasgow Psychological Service, 2020)



1.4.2 Social-Ecological Model

Ungar and colleagues (2013) postulate that different multi-systemic processes contribute to one's wellbeing, and this has been supported by extensive empirical evidence (Theron, 2021). Based on their cross-cultural research, Ungar et al. (2007) proposed a social-ecological theory outlining seven aspects of people's environment that are in 'tension' and can maintain people's wellbeing during challenging times. These are as follows:

- **Material resources:** the availability of basic needs provisions (e.g. food), as well as structural resources (e.g. wellbeing support).
- **Identity:** sustaining a sense of identity, which can present as an individual or collective characteristic across different cultures.
- **Relationships:** interpersonal relationships with key people such as family members, members of one's community, peers, educators and others that provide access to resources promoting one's resilience.
- **Cohesion:** one's engagement with wider groups in a way that meets community and cultural expectations.
- **Power and control:** one's innate abilities and external resources that contribute to them experiencing power in a way that is meaningful within their context.
- **Cultural adherence:** how one relates to the global, or their local culture.
- **Social justice:** one's experiences of prejudice and opposing to oppression within key systems (e.g. their community).

In the context of this research, the social-ecological model acknowledges the way students' wellbeing can be supported or hindered by various systemic factors that present differently depending on pupils' individual context. Thus, this model not only opposes the within-child view of wellbeing, but also offers an understanding of how the interactions between the discussed 'tensions' contribute to students' resilience (Ungar & Theron, 2020). The next section explores the context within which wellbeing support for students is provided.

1.5 Context

1.5.1 National Context

The wellbeing of children and YP (CYP) has been a growing problem in the United Kingdom (UK; Pitchford et al., 2019). Rates of probable MH disorders have increased since 2017, with 16% of CYP displaying wellbeing difficulties (NHS, 2020). Black communities are at higher risk of wellbeing problems, especially following the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (Bamfort et al., 2021). This is concerning as wellbeing issues can have detrimental impact on key life outcomes such as educational achievement and employment (Colman et al., 2009; Healey et al., 2004). In comparison to other student groups, wellbeing difficulties of Black pupils have been associated with higher likelihood to enter the Justice System and to be excluded from school (Arday, 2018; Jessiman et al., 2022). Therefore, ensuring that there is effective wellbeing support available to all students is essential (Marques & Braidwood, 2021).

Whilst before 2010, systemic factors such as poverty were considered by wellbeing policy, the current legislative discourse emphasises an individualised approach to wellbeing provisions (Callaghan et al., 2016). Schools have been identified as the main setting where wellbeing support is to be provided as this increases students' access to early help (NHS England & Department of Health [DoH], 2016). The recent Green Paper on CYP's MH provisions (DoH & DfE, 2018) outlines the ways in which students' wellbeing will be promoted in schools. However, it does not mention how the wellbeing inequalities experienced by UK minority ethnic students (e.g. Black YP) can be resolved. For example, people from Black communities often struggle to access appropriate psychological services (Lamb et al., 2012), engage in help-seeking behaviours less (Shefer et al., 2012) and are underrepresented in the groups utilising counselling services (Cooper, 2009). Thus, it is essential to identify what helps Black

students to maintain their wellbeing and whether school provisions are inclusive enough (Simovska, 2018).

1.5.1.1 Systemic Barriers to Black Students' Wellbeing.

1.5.1.1.1 Cultural Sensitivity of Wellbeing Provisions. Western models of wellbeing are often utilised as part of universal school approaches (e.g. one-to-one support; Fernando, 2010). These might be culturally insensitive and can overlook key cultural discourses regarding wellbeing adopted by the Black community (Hughes, 2014; Jacobs, 2018). Thus, an individualistic approach can be imposed on collectivistic cultures, assuming that the 'Western worldview' is the right one (Burr, 2019). In community contexts, this has resulted in Black clients' disengagement, their feelings of being disrespected by professionals, and ultimately, in not having their needs met (Byrne et al, 2011; Rathod et al., 2005). Linking this with the MH inequalities discussed earlier, it seems pertinent to identify what school support is culturally sensitive, and hence effective in meeting the needs of Black students.

1.5.1.1.2 Racism. In 1971, Bernard Coard produced the first study to evidence the existence of structural racism in the UK. This finding was reinforced by other key documents such as the Macpherson report (Holdaway, 1999) and, more recently, by the global Black Lives Matter movement (Elliott-Cooper, 2021). While a recent governmental report rejected the existence of institutional racism in Britain (Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, 2021), this claim that has been widely refuted (Gilborn et al., 2021; Mohdin et al., 2021).

Statistics show that most Black students have been subject to racism at school (YMCA, 2020), which is highly concerning given its detrimental impact on their wellbeing (Priest et al., 2013). Racism has been linked with increased stress levels, low mood

(Edwards, 2006), and trauma (Daniel, 2000). Critical race theory stipulates that racialisation is the main factor impacting the lives of those of colour (Calmore, 1992). In line with the social-ecological view adopted in the current study, this shows that considering systemic factors such as racism is important when promoting Black students' wellbeing.

1.5.2 Local Context

Statistics demonstrate that at least half of the Black population in England lives in large urban areas (House of Commons Library, 2023). Previous UK-based research has shown that living in urban environments can have negative impact on one's wellbeing (e.g. Evered, 2016). The London-based LA, where this research was partially carried out, is one of the most diverse in the UK (for anonymity, this will remain unreferenced). Improving the academic attainment of Black YP is part of the borough's priority plan in addition to providing effective systemic support to Black communities. The council also recognised the importance of wellbeing on academic achievement. Thus, developing effective school wellbeing provisions has been increasingly important for this LA, especially because the borough is yet to improve students' access to Tier 2 and Tier 3 wellbeing services. Altogether, this suggests that this LA, alongside other councils incorporating large urban areas, will benefit from understanding how Black students' wellbeing can be supported effectively at school.

1.5.3 Pupil Voice

Listening to CYP's views has been emphasised within the field of education. This has been strongly highlighted in schools' and professionals' statutory responsibilities (DfE, 2015), and was acknowledged in recent guidance relating to schools' MH provisions (DoH & DfE, 2018). CYP's right to participate in decision-making related to

their lives (e.g. wellbeing support) was also recognised by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Cohen, 1989). However, while the need to promote students' voice is seen as uppermost, research shows that this is rarely done when developing school wellbeing interventions (Churchman et al., 2019). Spencer and colleagues (2022) urge new wellbeing research to obtain CYP's views, ensuring that needs-driven school support is implemented. Given the apparently limited evidence focusing on wellbeing provisions for Black students, promoting their voice appears pertinent (Clarke et al., 2021).

1.5.4 Critical Perspective

As will be discussed further in Section 2.3.2, the narratives around Black students' wellbeing have overwhelmingly focused on presenting issues. The barriers outlined in this section have led to identifying the Black student group as one that requires further research attention. Alas, the author acknowledges that this has likely contributed to the dominant problem-saturated discourses, which can be unhelpful when searching for solutions (Harker, 2001). There are exceptions to this narrative, with adolescents of colour reporting higher levels of wellbeing than their White peers in some studies (Maynard et al., 2007). This raises the question as to what aspects of their context had supported their wellbeing. It also further reinforces the need to explore 'what works' according to Black students as a focal point of the present study. Congruent with this, critical race theory postulates that people of colour should create counter-stories to the prevalent deficit narratives (Lee et al., 2016), which is highly relevant when exploring wellbeing support (Yoo et al., 2018).

1.6 Participatory Approach

The present study incorporates elements from participatory research approaches. Participatory research has been understood as showing appreciation for collaboration, community knowledge and social justice (McIntyre, 2007). As it will be explored further in Chapter 3, participatory research ensures that participants are involved in the research process itself (Bagnoli & Clark, 2010). Different levels and models of participation exist in research (Schratz & Walker, 1995; Wallace & Giles, 2019). The present study utilises an advisory (or reference) group, which is defined as collaborating with representatives from the researched community (Lewis et al., 2008). Previous research has demonstrated that employing an advisory committee has been effective in promoting the voice of students from racial minorities and in adopting culturally sensitive research practices (Maiter et al., 2017), which is congruent with the aims of the present study. The author felt that this was especially important because she identifies as a White woman and thus, can lack key insight into the researched community.

1.7 Relevance for EP Practice

Having discussed key contextual factors related to Black students' wellbeing, it is important to consider why this research is relevant for EPs.

EPs' practice is committed to the facilitation of both CYP's achievement and their wellbeing (Beaver, 2011). Given EPs' workload pressures, currently their involvement in wellbeing promotion is often restricted to signposting and general advice (Greig et al., 2019). Hence, being aware of best practice when supporting Black CYP is essential if EPs want to reinforce equal opportunities (Pollock & Barrow, 2021).

To be effective practitioners, EPs need to apply psychology at all systemic levels (Fallon et al., 2010) and thus, they are well-placed to recommend evidence-based, multi-systemic interventions to schools (Kelly, 2016). Focusing on systemic factors is particularly helpful when suggesting an alternative perspective to the commonly adopted within-child view of wellbeing difficulties (Afuape, 2020). Awareness of the social-ecological factors perceived as helpful by Black students will not only support this, but it will also allow EPs to fulfill their duty to promote the views of CYP when recommending interventions (DfE, 2015).

The importance of understanding 'what helps' YP has been emphasised by the Children and Families Act (2014), which extended EPs' statutory responsibilities to students aged 25 or below. Further statutory guidance also highlighted EPs' role in facilitating employment and independence skills during post-16 education (DfE, 2015). Given the previously discussed wellbeing inequalities and their implications for key life outcomes, having a good understanding of the factors contributing to young Black people's wellbeing is essential for EP practice.

Finally, the English population has become increasingly diverse (House of Commons Library, 2022). Governing bodies of EPs have stipulated their responsibility to understand the implications of culture for their practice (The Health and Care Professions Council [HCPC], 2016), with great emphasis being placed on intercultural competence and unbiased representation (British Psychological Society [BPS], 2021). Hence, identifying culturally sensitive approaches to supporting Black pupils' wellbeing would enable EPs to effectively fulfil these responsibilities. It will also support them when protecting the Black student group from discrimination at school, as advocated by the Equality Act (2010).

1.8 Unique Contribution

Despite the availability of UK-based research on the effectiveness of school wellbeing provisions, there is limited evidence of ‘what works’ for Black pupils (Clarke et al., 2021). Additionally, as discussed in more depth in Chapter 2, most up-to-date research has adopted a within-child, problematised view of wellbeing, with only few examples where pupils’ perceptions have been explored. The main finding of the literature review (see Section 2.3.2) was the lack of research that specifically focuses on young Black people’s views. Thus, the present study fills an evident literature gap, contributing to the knowledge of ‘what helps’ YP’s wellbeing at secondary school.

The following chapter discusses key empirical evidence regarding the wellbeing support available to Black students.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical review of the key empirical evidence in the chosen research area. It also outlines the search process and terms employed to investigate the studies on wellbeing provisions accessed by the Black student group.

As outlined in the previous chapter, employing a solution-oriented approach is central to this research and, hence, an integral part of Chapter 2 is to evaluate what has worked whilst also acknowledging any reported negative experiences (Rees, 2016). Additionally, this research adopts Ungar et al.'s (2007) perspective of resilience, which explicitly outlines the importance of culturally relevant resources, practices, and narratives for wellbeing promotion. Accordingly, 'wellbeing' is conceptualised through social-ecological lens, and as encompassing both difficulties and positive functioning (De Feo et al., 2014). To also reiterate from Chapter 1, 'wellbeing provision' is defined as any school intervention that promotes students' wellbeing, and thus, this literature review will focus on prevention and early help. Reflective of the author's value for social justice, this approach was selected because it results in better outcomes for students (Wells et al., 2003).

The literature review highlights the complex interplay between individual and systemic factors involved in school-based wellbeing provisions. The gathered empirical evidence is grouped and discussed using key themes that were identified during the systematic literature search. Building on Chapter 1, a rationale for the present study is provided alongside its guiding research questions.

2.2 Systematic Literature Review

A systematic literature review was conducted as it allows for an exhaustive summary of the best available evidence, which can guide future research (Booth et al., 2022). This is congruent with the goal of the present research; namely, to build on existing literature on what school-based wellbeing provisions are helpful to Black students. Importantly, international research findings on this topic are not generalisable to the UK educational system (Mahmud & Satchell, 2022; Mackenzie & Williams, 2018). Therefore, the question guiding this review was '*What does the literature tell us about the school wellbeing support available in the UK to students who identify as Black?'.*

Overall, this exploration revealed that most studies investigating the topic adopted a quantitative research design and were completed by clinical practitioners. Altogether, this highlighted how important it is to gain further qualitative evidence. It also made the author recognise how valuable EPs' contribution to this body of research can be given their knowledge of school systems, organisational change, and cultural sensitivity (Fallon et al., 2010).

2.2.1 Search Strategy

On 23.08.2022 and 24.08.2022, a systematic search for key literature was completed. The following electronic databases were chosen due to containing literature on wellbeing and educational practices: APA PsycINFO, Academic Search Ultimate, ERIC, British Education Index, Education Research Complete, and Scopus. The key terms used for this search were (well being OR mental health OR emotional) AND (primary school OR secondary school OR school based OR college based) AND (ethnic OR diverse OR Black OR racial) AND (intervention OR support OR promotion OR program*). Please, note that 'well being' was referred to differently in accordance with the databases used (e.g. 'well-being' in Academic Search Ultimate). Finally, additional

papers were also selected through manual searches and snowballing using Scopus and Google Scholar.

2.2.2 Systematic Literature Review Process

All searchers focused on peer-reviewed articles in English language, which had been published between 1999 and 2022. This starting point was chosen as, upon current knowledge, the first major 'Mental Health of children and young people in England' survey was carried out in 1999, showing an increased interest in the topic (Public Health England, 2019). Additionally, doctoral theses that have passed an examination review were also considered as they have been quality assured. Please, see the Prisma Flow diagram for a comprehensive outline of the systematic literature search findings (Moher et al., 2009; Figure 2.1).

2.2.2.1 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria. Studies were excluded if they were not based in mainstream school settings, did not focus on prevention or early help, did not employ, or discuss support for school-aged students from the Black ethnic group, and if they were not empirical articles. Additionally, papers that incorporated only one participant who identifies as Black were not included due to the limited conclusions that could be made about the target group. Please, see Table 1.1 and Appendix 1.1 for further information.

2578 study titles and abstracts were reviewed, applying the exclusion criteria. This resulted in 76 articles for full-text screening, and, subsequently, 56 further records were excluded (see Appendix 1.2). Notably, most of these studies were only excluded at the screening stages due to inherent search engine limitations; for example, it was not possible to limit the literature search to studies in the UK. Consequently, 15 research articles were included in the present review. Additional five papers were included

following snowballing and hand searches. This involved reviewing papers that had cited the key articles or scanning the references in the chosen papers.

A total of 20 papers were included in the systematic literature review. Five of the selected studies investigated the impact of preventative, targeted support (i.e., wellbeing workshops; Brown et al., 2019; Chisholm et al., 2016; Marques & Braidwood, 2021; McKeague et al., 2018; Patalay et al., 2017). An additional 11 studies concentrated on targeted, early help interventions including provisions for refugee children (Fazel et al., 2009; Fazel, 2015; Fazel et al., 2016; Hughes, 2014; O'Shea et al., 2000) and other student groups (Knowler & Frederickson, 2013; Lee et al., 2009; Messiou & Azaola, 2018; Pearce et al., 2017; Toth et al., 2022; Wolpert et al., 2015). Finally, four further papers focused on whole-school wellbeing approaches (Aston, 2014; Jessiman et al., 2022; Sharpe et al., 2017; Wigelsworth & Humphrey, 2013). Please, see Appendix 1.3 for detailed information about the selected studies.

Based on the identified themes, the papers were grouped in three categories: 1) targeted prevention, 2) targeted early help interventions, and 3) universal support. Given the focus on prevention and early help, it is not surprising that these themes are congruent with Tier 1 and Tier 2 wellbeing support currently offered in England (NHS, n.d.).

Figure 2.1

PRISMA 2009 Flow Diagram

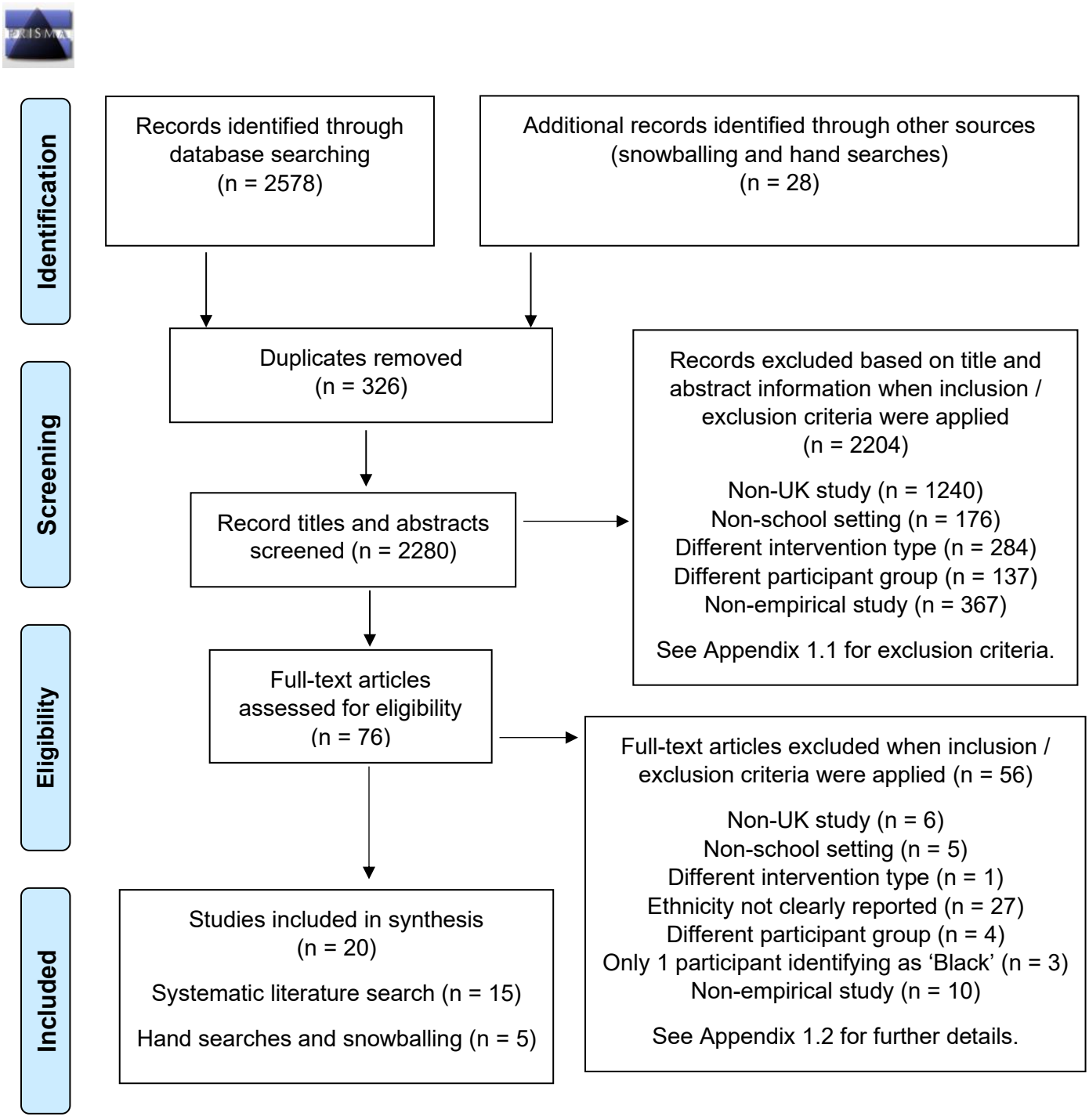


Table 1.1

Summary of Literature Search Strategy

Date of search	23.08.2022 – 24.08.2022
Period searched	1999 – 2022
Search terms	well being / well-being OR mental health OR emotional primary school OR secondary school OR school based OR college based ethnic OR diverse OR Black OR racial intervention OR support OR promotion OR program*
Search specification	peer reviewed or doctoral theses
Outcome	2578 of papers (duplicates removed) 2280 of papers
Inclusion criteria	• UK studies • Based in school settings • Focusing on school-aged children (4 – 18) • Focusing on school support, intervention or approach • Focusing on prevention or early intervention • Empirical studies • Sample includes students from the Black ethnic group
Exclusion criteria	• Based in clinical, community, or specialist settings • Non-UK studies • Studies that do not focus on prevention and early help (e.g. crisis interventions) • Ethnicity unreported, or when insufficient information about the sample's ethnic breakdown is provided (e.g. 'non-white') • Sample contains only 1 student from the Black ethnic group (e.g. in qualitative studies) • Editorials, reviews, or reports
Chosen papers	15 papers after systematic literature search Please, note that further 5 papers were identified following a hand search. Total number of articles chosen: 20

2.2.2.2 Critical Appraisal of Literature. Gough's (2007) approach to evaluating research was used when considering the relevance and quality of the 20 key studies. His Weight of Evidence (WoE) criteria focus on the following:

- **Coherence and integrity of study:** transparency, accuracy, and accessibility of the provided information, as well as study's methodological quality.
- **Appropriateness of study design:** suitability of the adopted research design and analysis for answering the review question.
- **Relevance of evidence:** suitability of the study's focus for addressing the review question.
- **Overall Weight of Evidence:** evaluation of the general WoE based on the first three criteria.

After these criteria were applied, one paper was rated as 'low / medium quality', 13 as 'medium quality', three as 'medium / high quality', and three studies as 'high quality'. Additionally, the key papers were critically appraised using the solution-oriented and social-ecological models. Namely, the author was interested in whether holistic, multi-systemic and culturally sensitive views of wellbeing and, in turn, wellbeing provisions were adopted. Further information is provided in Appendix 1.3 and 1.4, and in the following sections, which discuss the key papers in detail.

2.2.3 Targeted Prevention

Brown and colleagues (2019) collaborated with a teenage advisory group and adapted a one-day cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) workshop for YP (project 'DISCOVER'). 152 students aged 16-19 participated in this study, with 45% of the sample being from a British / Black African background. Results from a 3-month follow-up assessment indicated significant reductions in students' levels of depression ($p = 0.02$) and anxiety ($p = 0.02$), which is promising given the brevity of the intervention. A

strength of this study's design is the use of a control group and its large sample size. Moreover, the project was trialled within 10 schools and used a self-referral system, making the intervention more accessible to students. Notably, however, results were based on self-reports and, thus, could have been biased. Furthermore, the associated effect sizes were small-to-medium, suggesting a limited intervention impact. It is also important to highlight that 81% of the sample were females, which makes these findings difficult to generalise. Finally, the authors labelled the participants as 'hard to reach' and employed a within-person wellbeing intervention. Not only does such conceptualisation further marginalise this group, but it also undermines some of the contextual and cultural factors that potentially impact students' wellbeing (e.g. public stigma around wellbeing difficulties).

McKeague et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative follow-up to Brown et al.'s study. They interviewed 24 students, and an effort was made to ensure that Black and ethnic minority groups were represented in the sample. Findings indicated that the CBT workshop increased students' awareness of how to deal with stress. YP also reported a preference for interactive and group activities, tailored to their personal needs. While the intervention was 1-day long, some participants shared that they could not engage in it due to having very limited free time. This is an interesting finding as it implies that the intervention might not be accessible for all students. Clearly, the triangulation with Brown et al.'s quantitative findings, as well as utilising staff's (N = 10) and non-participants' (N = 9) views is a strength of this study. However, it should be noted that the data was gathered 4 months after the workshops. Thus, it is possible that participants had forgotten key intervention aspects they liked and found beneficial or unhelpful.

Similarly, part of Marques and Braidwood's study (2021) looked at the impact of the DISCOVER workshops on students' ability to manage their emotions during the

COVID-19 pandemic. 107 older adolescents completed surveys and open-ended questions about their experiences. This showed a dramatic increase in many students' perceived anxiety and low mood following the national lockdowns. However, it is promising that most participants reported having used the strategies and skills they learnt at the CBT workshops. A key strength of this study is the high proportion of pupils from the Black ethnic group (37%). However, the researchers did not separate their findings by students' ethnicity, which makes it uncertain if CBT workshops are helpful for this minority group. Furthermore, similarly to Brown et al.'s findings, self-report measures were used. To increase the robustness of the results, it would have been helpful to obtain feedback from students' families and / or teachers. Finally, while the study discusses systemic factors impacting students' wellbeing (e.g. ethnic inequalities), its focus on individual stress management disregards this.

Chisholm and colleagues (2016) also evaluated the impact of a one-day wellbeing literacy intervention. They aimed to identify if intergroup contact enhanced the impact of wellbeing education. Findings showed that students who only received psychoeducation scored higher than baseline on wellbeing literacy, emotional wellbeing and resilience measures. These results seem encouraging given the large sample employed (N = 769), and that the chosen schools were ethnically diverse. However, no significant differences were identified at a follow-up evaluation, suggesting that the produced impact was low. Moreover, the authors did not clearly report the outcomes for each individual ethnic group, which makes it hard to conclude if the intervention is effective for Black British, African, or Caribbean students. While one of the aims of this study was to reduce stigma associated with MH conditions, it solely targeted students' wellbeing literacy. This approach ignores key systemic and cultural factors, which, in turn, could have contributed to its limited impact.

Finally, Patalay et al. (2017) looked at wellbeing literacy workshops at secondary schools. These were designed and facilitated by university students, which, as argued by the authors, resulted in more relatable intervention content, and improved the sustainability of the programme. 234 adolescents participated, 15% of whom identified as Black. The results showed significant improvements in students' wellbeing literacy, knowledge, and attitudes. Additionally, most YP reportedly enjoyed the workshops, including being taught by undergraduates. However, the lack of control group limits the reliability of these results. Thus, it cannot be concluded that the findings are purely related to the intervention. Furthermore, there was limited information about the workshops' content, making it difficult to identify how culturally sensitive it was and if systemic factors contributing to wellbeing difficulties were discussed (e.g. institutional racism).

Overall, it appears that targeted support that has a preventative focus can result in better awareness of self-regulation strategies and wellbeing literacy (Chisholm et al., 2016; McKeague et al., 2018; Patalay et al., 2017). While some studies identified improvement in students' wellbeing (Brown et al., 2019), Chisholm and colleagues reported non-significant differences at a 2-week follow-up. Interestingly, Patalay et al. (2017) found that workshops may be perceived as an enjoyable intervention by diverse student groups. Alas, qualitative findings from McKeague et al.'s study (2018) showed that attending one-day workshops may not be feasible for students.

2.2.4 Targeted Early Help

The key papers included in this section have been split into support for students with a refugee status, and other student groups due to the different nature of the experiences of the participants.

2.2.4.1 Targeted Early Intervention for Students who are Refugees. O'Shea and colleagues (2000) investigated the effectiveness of weekly individual and, at times, family school-based wellbeing sessions. This targeted 14 refugee children in Key Stage 2, three of whom were from the Black ethnic group. There was a reduction in students' Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire scores (SDQ; Goodman, 1997), as reported by teachers; however, this was statistically insignificant. Given the small sample size and that information was only available for half of the students, the impact of this intervention is unclear. Further large-scale research employing qualitative findings are needed.

Fazel and colleagues (2009) evaluated a weekly school-based consultative service that was offered to staff and 47 pupils who were refugees. Additionally, some students and / or their families were invited to individual or group sessions with a key MH worker. Qualitative comments were gathered from link teachers and 11 school-aged children, including 3 students from Africa. Teachers also completed the SDQ pre- and post-intervention (Goodman et al., 2000). All students who received direct support rated the service as beneficial. Notwithstanding some methodological issues (e.g. lack of follow-up evaluations), the study resulted in statistically significant improvement in overall SDQ scores ($p = 0.002$). Only students that were seen by a MH worker reportedly had better peer relationships ($p = 0.005$).

Combined with its auspicious results, a clear strength of this investigation is the consultative and holistic approach to intervention. The authors claimed that by involving the key adults around the child, they were able to make important systemic changes contributing to students' wellbeing. However, this is contradicted by the evaluation measures employed and that only children with 'concerning behaviours' were selected for this intervention. Not only does this show a within-child, problem-saturated conceptualisation of wellbeing, but such an approach also potentially limits the access to

support that could be beneficial to many students. The authors did not directly discuss any cultural adaptations to the offered service. However, they reported that fewer ethnic minority students were referred following the intervention. Fazel et al. (2009) attributed this to an improved cultural understanding within the target schools. While it is difficult to evaluate this claim due its anecdotal nature and the lack of student voice, it is an interesting conclusion to consider.

In a subsequent qualitative investigation, Fazel and colleagues (2016) focused on asylum seekers' experiences of using school-based wellbeing services. The accounts of 40 adolescent participants (including 13 African refugees) were gathered via semi-structured interviews. Students preferred receiving wellbeing support at school as it is a familiar, safe environment. Overall, the intervention was perceived as beneficial for their emotional wellbeing. However, some disadvantages of school-based sessions were reported including the lack of privacy. Students appreciated teachers' support for accessing the offered wellbeing sessions (e.g. through referrals). Therefore, the authors concluded that it is important to develop positive, working relationships between schools and external agencies to increase students' uptake of such services.

However, this conclusion should be treated cautiously. In a further qualitative study with the same student cohort, Fazel (2015) found that teachers' support was not always perceived as valuable. Pupils reportedly would have liked more referral routes for the service, which questions its accessibility for those with poor relationships with staff. Several pupils said that it was the positive experiences they had with their peers that motivated them to seek wellbeing support. Unsurprisingly, then, peer support network was amongst participants' suggestions for service improvement, alongside the need for better awareness around refugees' experiences within the wider student population. Thus, in line with social-ecological conceptualisation of wellbeing (Ungar & Theron,

2020), cohesion with peers was associated with better functioning. Fazel (2015) interpreted these findings as students' need for belonging and for social acceptance. She concluded that describing refugees more positively (e.g. as 'resilient survivors') may facilitate social acceptance within the school community, which is an interesting systemic suggestion.

While lack of generalisability is an inherent limitation of qualitative findings, Fazel and colleagues (2015; 2016) provided a voice to a highly marginalised group, which is refreshing. However, some of the recommendations made do not stem directly from students' accounts, undermining the emancipatory nature of these studies. Moreover, it would have been beneficial to triangulate the reported findings with other students and staff, to identify any potential similarities and differences across ethnicities, and to minimise the potential bias associated with a predominantly male sample.

Following an initial pilot with Afghani mothers, Hughes (2014) investigated the impact of the 'Tree of Life' intervention (Ncube, 2006) on the wellbeing of secondary-aged refugee children. This included pupils from Congo and other African countries. Notably, key sample characteristics such as the number of participants, their gender and age were unreported, which limits the conclusions that can be made. A clear strength of this study is the use of a culturally sensitive approach, which reportedly minimised the potential stigma associated with using wellbeing services. Additionally, key reasonable adjustments were incorporated such as having members of participants' communities facilitating. Following the intervention, students' evaluations were triangulated with teachers' feedback, although the latter was not sought for all cases. Overall, it was identified that pupils improved in self-confidence and cultural pride, and their ability to manage daily stresses. However, the made claims would have been bolstered if the authors reported students' accounts in a transparent, systematic way (e.g. by listing

some of children's quotes). Additionally, the use of the teachers' account of behaviour as an evaluation suggests a deficit approach to wellbeing, which is incongruent with the strength-based focus of the intervention. Hughes (2014) discussed several systemic changes following the interventions, including the adoption of a more positive view of the participants by staff. However, these were not formally evaluated and, thus, should be considered with caution.

All in all, early help interventions aimed at students who are refugees seem to result in improvements in their wellbeing as indicated by quantitative (Fazel et al., 2009) and qualitative studies (Fazel, 2015; Fazel et al., 2016; Hughes, 2014). However, some studies showed insignificant differences in students' wellbeing following the targeted interventions (O'Shea et al., 2000). Interestingly, while teachers' support with accessing the intervention was viewed as helpful by Fazel et al.'s participants (2016), this is inconsistent with findings in Fazel'sS study (2015). Improvement in staff's cultural understanding and students' cultural pride following the interventions was identified in two papers (Fazel et al., 2009; Hughes, 2014).

2.2.4.2 Targeted Early Intervention for Other Student Groups. A study involving a large, primary-aged sample (N = 1864) investigated the effectiveness of Place2Be individual and group interventions (Lee et al., 2009). About one-fifth of the sample identified as Black. Teacher and parental ratings of pro-social behaviour, and emotional and behavioural difficulties indicated significant improvements following the intervention ($p < 0.001$), which is promising given the large scale of this study. However, gaining children's views about the session would have enriched the reported findings (e.g. by identifying what has helped). It was refreshing that part of this intervention transcended the within-child model of wellbeing and involved peer support. Alas, it would have been beneficial to gain more information about the impact of the group sessions.

Notably, neither follow-up assessments, nor a comparison group were employed, questioning the claims made regarding the identified impact.

In a more recent study, Toth and colleagues (2022) looked at the impact of individual Place2Be counselling sessions on school-aged students' wellbeing and exclusion rates. This indicated that weekly one-to-one meetings could lead to significant improvements in pupils' wellbeing ($p < 0.001$). The authors also identified that 56% of the intervention group have not been excluded from school throughout the duration of the study. Moreover, the exclusion sessions of two-thirds of the participants were significantly lower, which is highly promising given the large sample employed (N = 6712) and that a quarter of them identified as Black. This reaffirmed Toth et al.'s position that 'disruptive behaviour' indicates that students need further support, which is a welcome reframing of the narrative that students 'with challenging behaviours' are 'the problem'. However, given the individual nature of the intervention, this is incongruent with the within-child view of wellbeing employed by the authors. Furthermore, it would have been beneficial to obtain long-term follow-up evaluations, which could have strengthened this study's findings.

Pearce et al. (2017) explored how school-based humanistic counselling can support ethnically diverse secondary school students. 64 students, 81% of which were Black, participated in a 12-week-long intervention. A strength of this study is the use of longitudinal data, allowing for better understanding of the long-term intervention impact. Findings showed significant reductions in student distress and emotional symptoms, and improvement in their self-esteem. At 6- and 9-month follow-ups, these findings were only sustained for participants' emotional ratings. This raises the question as to whether within-child interventions can have long-lasting impact on students' confidence without any changes in the systems around them. Due to using an inappropriately matched

control condition, the authors were uncertain if the findings were related to non-counselling factors such as having a key adult to talk with. Combined with other methodological issues including the very small sample, this limits the reliability and generalisability of Pearce et al.'s findings. It is curious that most of the participants were female (90%), suggesting that this intervention might not be as accessible or attractive to males from the Black ethnic group.

Knowler and Frederickson (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of a 12-week emotional literacy (EL) programme on social behaviour and adjustment. This was conducted in conjunction with other universal wellbeing programmes, which is a strength of the study. It targeted 50 Year 3 students, 15% of whom identified as Black. Self-reported ratings on the SDQ (Goodman, 1997) did not show improved adjustment following the intervention. Additionally, only students who had significantly low EL scores increased their pro-social behaviour, as rated by peers. The authors suggested that children with high baseline EL scores from the comparison group could have benefited from the universal support offered at school, leading to non-significant differences with the intervention group. Significant associations between improved social adjustment and EL scores were found. However, as this study primarily used self-reports, it is plausible that students' ratings could have been biased. Thus, it would have been helpful to gather other sources of data to triangulate the shared findings. Moreover, the authors adopted a deficit model of wellbeing, segregating students from their peers. This undermines the importance of contextual influences on resilience and, in turn, on students' adjustment (Ungar & Theron, 2020).

Finally, Messiou and Azaola (2018) investigated the impact of a peer-mentoring scheme pilot in three schools. 16 secondary-aged students received mentoring training, and were subsequently paired with 15 mentees, who had just arrived in the country (e.g.

from Africa). The pairs met at least once weekly for 5 months. Qualitative findings indicated that mentees found the scheme helpful and, as a result, improved in their peer relationships and confidence. The pairs also reported increased levels of empathy and understanding of each other's cultures, which is encouraging. However, staff shared that coordinating the scheme was hard given their busy schedules, which questions the long-term sustainability of this intervention. It was concluded that peer mentoring had benefits for individual participants, but little systemic change was identified. The authors argued that mentees could have been further marginalised by such individual practices and recommended using a whole-school mentoring approach. Notably, this claim is incongruent with the study's design. Hence, it would have been helpful to involve or obtain the views of different key parties such as other students, teachers, and parents.

To sum up, studies evaluating the impact of targeted counselling interventions showed improvements in the social, emotional, and behavioural domains of wellbeing (Lee et al., 2009; Toth et al., 2022). However, Pearce et al. (2017) demonstrated that most benefits of counselling in their study were not sustained in the long-term. Other targeted early help interventions such as peer mentoring were viewed positively by pupils but lacked feasibility according to staff (Messiou & Azaola, 2018). Knowler and Frederickson (2013) did not identify significant changes in students' wellbeing following an EL intervention.

2.2.5 Universal Support

Wigelsworth and colleagues (2013) evaluated a large-scale social and emotional learning (SEL) programme delivered to secondary school pupils (N = 4443, 4.3% identified as Black). Findings from the SDQ (Goodman, 1997) showed no significant impact on conduct and emotional wellbeing for the general student population and 'at risk' pupils. The authors recommended that further SEL programmes emphasise the

importance of consistency of implementation, which reportedly was lacking in the study. Several methodological strengths such as the use of matched control schools, as well as the nationally representative and large sample should be noted. However, like most previously discussed papers, this study relied on self-report data, which is subject to bias, and thus, limits the conclusions that can be made regarding its findings.

Aston (2014) gained the views of 26 adolescents regarding their schools' wellbeing provisions using a Grounded Theory approach to analysis. Congruent with the social-ecological lens, her findings were organised into different systemic levels of support. Namely, participants reported the need for provisions to take individual factors into accounts (e.g. one's personality), as well as highlighted the importance of their school's environment for their wellbeing. It was also argued that societal and school cultures should enhance students' participation and allow them to be listened to. Students can be conceptualised as a marginalised group because, as attested by the other reviewed wellbeing papers, they are often 'done to' rather than 'done with'. Therefore, a clear strength of this study is that it utilises student voice to make recommendations about the design of wellbeing provisions. The study also accounts for the complex interplay between systems and its impact on student wellbeing, which is refreshing. However, it is problematic that while an ethnically diverse sample was employed, there was no mention of cultural competence or sensitivity. Essentially, no verbatim quote excerpts were presented, which questions the transparency of this research.

In a randomised control trial (RCT) in 266 primary schools, Wolpert et al. (2015) looked at the effectiveness of a nationally mandated wellbeing programme. This involved providing funding to be used for wellbeing interventions that suited schools' local needs. 8172 students rated their behavioural and emotional difficulties pre- and post-

intervention, which showed significant improvements in the former ($p < 0.01$). Another key finding was the systemic impact of the programme. Namely, it resulted in significantly more extracurricular and therapeutic activities offered to students, as well as support offered to parents and staff. Combined with its large, nationally representative sample, a strength of this study is the differential analysis based on participants' ethnicity. This indicated that students from the Black ethnic group reportedly had the greatest behavioural difficulties. However, it is questionable if this finding is confounded by the use of Western and potentially culturally insensitive measures of 'behavioural difficulties'. Additionally, a follow-up evaluation would have helped to detect any long-term changes in students' emotional wellbeing as there were no significant differences a year after the programme was established.

Similar to most reviewed papers, this study used a problem-based view of wellbeing interventions, with these aiming to improve the 'behavioural problems' of 'at risk' students. Such approach problematises wellbeing and, thus, is incongruent with the solution-oriented lens adopted in the present research (Rees, 2016); namely, it only focuses on students' difficulties.

Sharpe et al. (2017) also used a large-scale RCT (N = 8139) to investigate the impact of wellbeing information booklets on primary and secondary school students' wellbeing, quality of life and help seeking behaviours. Most students reported that the booklets were 'quite helpful' or 'very helpful'. However, there were no significant improvements in any of the investigated variables. The authors hypothesised that the intervention would have been more impactful if the booklets were introduced in a targeted way. Utilising qualitative feedback from students could have supported this claim. Moreover, while the intervention aims to address help seeking behaviour, it did

not actively obtain feedback from parents and staff, which could have contributed to its non-significant impact.

In their qualitative investigation, Jessiman and colleagues (2022) were interested in identifying how school culture can be adapted to facilitate students' wellbeing in three school settings. A positive of this study was its systemic focus as it encompassed the views of staff (N = 27), parents (N = 7) and students (N = 28). Four dimensions were identified as important for having a school culture that enhances pupils' wellbeing; namely, 1) structure and context, 2) academic and organisational, 3) community and 4) safety and support. Congruent with the social-ecological model of wellbeing (Ungar et al., 2007), student diversity, culture and relationships were often highlighted as key features that need consideration for improving school climate. Interestingly, there were differences in the way current school practices were evaluated, with students and parents perceiving some approaches to be 'tick box'. For example, pupils highlighted that their voice was not always considered by staff. The use of participatory action research method, therefore, has an emancipatory role as some of its recommendations were based on students' views. Notably, however, most of the quotes reported in the study belonged to staff members, which undermines the claim that parents' or YP's voice was effectively promoted.

To summarise, most studies focusing on universal wellbeing support identified its positive individual and systemic impact (e.g. on the school environment; Aston, 2014; Jessiman et al., 2022; Wolpert et al., 2015). However, Wigelsworth et al. (2013) and Sharpe et al. (2017) found no significant differences in students' wellbeing following SEL or literacy booklet interventions. Alas, this was attributed to the low consistency of intervention implementation in these studies, highlighting how important feasibility and staff's commitment are for the effectiveness of universal provisions.

2.2.6 *Overall Findings*

In a nutshell, the reviewed papers indicated that targeted (both preventative and early help) and universal school provisions can be associated with positive wellbeing outcomes for diverse student groups. However, in some studies these improvements were insignificant. Unlike targeted support, universal approaches were linked with both individual and systemic gains. The low feasibility of provisions was often discussed in the key papers as a barrier to success.

2.2.7 *Review Limitations*

There are several limitations associated with this literature review that are worth discussing. Firstly, school-based wellbeing approaches and programmes are impacted by the individual needs of educational settings (Humphrey et al., 2013). Most reviewed studies evaluated interventions in individual schools or cities, with only five papers employing nation-wide samples. Thus, it is important to apply caution when interpreting the reviewed outcomes and to consider the context within which these were generated.

Secondly, a within-child, problem-saturated view of wellbeing was widely adopted in the reviewed papers. As discussed, this is problematic as it does not consider key systemic factors such as societal and school climates (Aston, 2014). By only focusing on ‘at risk’ students, it also disregards that ‘wellbeing’ is a universal human experience that lies on a continuum (Prilleltensky, 2005).

Moreover, while six of the studies were RCTs, ‘gold standard’ interventions rarely support most students (Lee, 2019). Similarly, several papers investigated the impact of school-based counselling services, which have been found to be underutilised by Black and ethnic minorities and, thus, their results may lack ecological validity (Cooper et al., 2013).

Thirdly, given the methodological issues found in most studies, the conclusions that can be made are limited. Namely, many studies used student self-report data without triangulating this with other key sources (e.g. parents and staff). Additionally, most papers had unrepresentative or small samples, and did not employ a comparative group or longitudinal evaluations. Another literature gap was the lack of information given about how effective the reviewed interventions were for Black students. Thus, based on the reviewed data, it is difficult to ascertain what school-based provisions facilitate the wellbeing of pupils from the Black ethnic group.

Additionally, most of the discussed large-scale studies focused on primary school children. While more papers employed secondary-school aged samples, these often had a very high percentage of female participants, and incorporated a myriad of methodological issues. Therefore, it is still unclear what provisions students at this vulnerable age find helpful.

Furthermore, less than a half of the studies incorporated qualitative research findings, while only one paper outlined a participatory action research. These designs allowed for an effective, targeted approach and clear understanding of what was found helpful. Thus, an evident literature gap is the limited person-centred, systemic evidence on ‘what works’.

Finally, accounting for one’s biases is a key feature of systematic literature reviews (Booth et al., 2022). Hence, it is important to note that the author previously adopted the role of a wellbeing lead in an ethnically diverse college. This experience could have led to the wrong assumption that students from the Black ethnic background need different approach to wellbeing provisions, further marginalising this group. However, as discussed in Chapter 1, previous literature suggests that the Black ethnic group may not benefit from universal wellbeing interventions, which are often culturally

insensitive (Byrne et al., 2011; Spence & Shortt, 2007). Thus, this literature review was motivated by the author's value for social justice and was emancipatory at its core.

2.3 Rationale for the Present Study

2.3.1 Summary of Literature Review Findings

This systematic literature review included studies focusing on preventative and early wellbeing support at schools. The interventions that were discussed had varying degree of success, with more than one third of the papers showing low or no significant impact. While some of the investigated interventions appeared effective for facilitating the wellbeing of students, often these improvements were not evident at follow-up evaluations. It was difficult to identify how effective the reported programmes were for students from the Black ethnic background due to the reported methodological issues. However, a pattern that was noted throughout this review was the higher proportion of female participants in studies where this ethnic group was well-represented (e.g. Brown et al., 2019).

The systematic literature review highlighted different individual and environmental factors that are key for the effectiveness of school-based wellbeing interventions. These included being respected and listened to, having access to peer and teacher support, and being exposed to positive school and societal contexts. Additionally, the reviewed culturally appropriate interventions resulted in students' increased cultural pride and improved emotional wellbeing. Thus, adopting a social-ecological and culturally sensitive approach to interventions that incorporates students' voice can facilitate positive wellbeing outcomes (Jessiman et al., 2022).

2.3.2 Study's Purpose and Unique Contribution

Students' wellbeing difficulties have been associated with poor long-term outcomes (Joint Commissioning Panel for MH, 2012). The present systematic literature review has identified several literature gaps including the lack of person-centered, systemic findings regarding effective wellbeing provisions for Black students. There is also limited methodologically sound evidence about secondary-aged students from this ethnic group.

Given the problem-saturated narratives around Black pupils and their wellbeing, the purpose of the proposed research is to explore the views of young Black people regarding the school wellbeing provisions that have been helpful. In UK-based university contexts, it was identified that projects aimed at challenging and changing these unhelpful discourses have been supportive for Black students' wellbeing (Stoll et al., 2021). Linking this to MH statistics discussed in Chapter 1 (see Section 1.5.1), it is clear that the available problem-focused narratives have not resulted in improvements in Black communities' wellbeing (Bamfort et al., 2021). Thus, a 'what works' approach is needed for generating novel solutions (Harker, 2001). In line with the author's value for social justice, it was felt that this is highly important given the reported wellbeing inequalities experienced by students identifying as Black.

Additionally, this will have direct impact on the author's placement LA, an urban area in the UK where there is a higher proportion of students identifying as Black than the national average. Conceptually, the researcher will adopt a systemic view of wellbeing provisions, focusing on well-needed preventative practices (Clarke et al., 2021).

While Aston (2014) explored adolescents' views on the matter, upon current knowledge, no UK-based study has focused solely on the Black ethnic group, which is a clear

literature gap. Moreover, the author was inspired by the emancipatory nature of the reviewed participatory study. Therefore, this research will contribute to the limited participatory evidence by adopting elements of participatory approaches with Black YP living in urban UK areas (Wallace & Giles, 2019).

2.4 Conclusion

This review critically evaluated the existing body of literature on wellbeing provisions for pupils from the Black ethnic background. It was identified that very little is known about what school-based wellbeing provisions help this student group, especially for secondary-aged pupils. This systematic literature review also showed that there is a clear need for participatory, qualitative research that obtains the views of students identifying as Black. Altogether, the highlighted literature gaps contributed to the research questions for this research.

2.4.1 Research Questions (RQ)

Following the findings in the systematic literature review, it was decided that the following RQs will be explored:

- **RQ1:** *What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people?*
- **RQ2:** *How can school wellbeing support be improved according to young Black people?*

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

Following the review of key empirical evidence on school wellbeing support for Black students in the UK, this chapter outlines the methodological design used in the present study. To begin with, the author's ontological and epistemological positions are presented. The chapter continues by discussing how this has influenced the researcher's choice of methodology and, subsequently, by justifying the use of participatory research design elements. Key procedures are outlined, including the recruitment stage, the reference group involvement, and the data collection sessions. A rationale is provided for using data gathered through semi-structured interviews and for employing Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2022). Subsequently, an explanation of the data analysis process is given. At the end of Chapter 3, the trustworthiness and key ethical considerations related to this research are discussed.

3.2 Research Paradigm

One's paradigm informs their perceptions of what reality is, and how they can find about reality (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). In research, this incorporates four distinct elements: ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. Thus, a researcher's paradigm can lead to a choice of compatible methodology that aligns with the philosophical assumptions underpinning their work (Mertens, 2012). According to Creswell (2014), the main research paradigms are positivism, post-positivism, constructivism, pragmatic and critical (or transformative) worldview. The first four paradigms and their relevance for the present research are briefly explored, before discussing the critical paradigm, which was adopted in this study.

Positivism is characterised by the belief that there is an objective, 'true' reality, which is based on quantitative data and can be 'apprehended' through scientific inquiry (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Similarly, post-positivism, also known as critical realism,

accepts the existence of single reality, which, however, cannot be truly known due to people's subjective interpretation of situations (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). The post-positivist notion that all researchers need to carefully examine their biases whilst searching for the true reality has been acknowledged in this research (e.g. see Section 3.7; Creswell, 2014). Notably, while this project adopts a qualitative research methodology, some of the evidence that inspired it was quantitative (e.g. data on wellbeing difficulties experienced by students in the UK). It is the author's position that these statistics provide valuable information about the wellbeing support available to CYP.

Pragmatics also recognise that reality is undeniable yet based on one's subjective interpretation (Wicks & Freeman, 1998). This paradigm is not aligned with any research method, but rather focuses on the practical use of research and 'what works' (Creswell, 2014). As such, it is in accordance with the present research, which aims to identify what school wellbeing provisions are helpful in this time and historical, educational and social context for young Black people. Hence, the pragmatic worldview is acknowledged by the researcher, who agrees that 'actions cannot be separated from the situations and contexts in which they occur' (Morgan, 2013, p. 26).

Similarly, constructivism represents the idea that there are different ways of viewing reality based on one's experiences and social and historical constructions; however, aspects of it are often created and shared between people (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Importantly, the existence of a single, absolute reality is rejected in favour of the view that all knowledge is subjectively created (Crotty, 1998). Thus, constructivism is often adopted in qualitative methodology, where an emphasis is placed on analysing individual sense-making and comparing it to others' views to reach dialectical consensus (Dieronitou, 2014). Likewise, the current study also focuses on the views of a key group

of individuals (i.e. Black students) and, thus, their meaning making is an integral part of the research process.

3.2.1. Critical Paradigm

The transformative or critical philosophy was developed as the opposing worldview to the other dominating research paradigms (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2012). It postulates that reality is impacted by different factors such as one's cultural, social and ethnic values and experiences. Additionally, power issues are arguably ever-present in society and need to be addressed through research to bring about positive change (Mertens, 2007). In line with this, using a critical paradigm is reflected in research that has an emancipatory agenda (Mertens, 2012).

In Chapter 1, the author's values for social justice and autonomy were highlighted as strong motivators for the current study, which aims to give voice to a student group that is potentially marginalised. As stipulated by Mertens (2010), supporting marginalised communities is in line with the transformative philosophical stance adopted in this project. Upon reflection, the author acknowledges that her description of the target group as 'marginalised' likely problematises it. This label reflects the readily available Western narratives that surround young Black people (Afuape, 2020). However, it might not reflect the way that participants view themselves. The author was mindful of this and used it as an ongoing point for reflection throughout the research.

The importance of the transformative worldview is further acknowledged by the researcher as she aimed to collaborate with the Black community in a culturally responsive, transparent, and respectful way that advances their social agenda (Mertens, 2010). Namely, elements of the participatory research methodology, which are framed in a transformative way, were adopted (Whitmore, 1998). Overall, the transformation that the present study aimed to achieve included promoting YP's views, facilitating

meaningful changes in the available wellbeing provisions, as well as offering an alternative discourse to the problem-saturated narrative around Black students' wellbeing (see Section 3.2.3 for further details).

3.2.2 Ontology and Epistemology

A researcher's ontology determines their beliefs of what reality is (Tebes, 2005). The author believes that a critical realist position fits well with her worldview. It accepts that part of knowledge is subjective, and socially constructed (e.g. views on wellbeing provisions). While this is also postulated by social constructionism, critical realism proposes the existence of an 'authentic reality' (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Such an assumption is necessary if one wants to identify knowledge that could make a difference, which results in societal changes (House, 1991; Scott, 2013). Moreover, the assumption that all events (e.g. wellbeing provisions) are impacted by 'mechanisms' that hinder or help is central to critical realism (Hartwig, 2007). This idea fits with the current project, seeking to identify what wellbeing provisions are useful.

Secondly, one's epistemology is often underpinned by the adopted ontological position and informs the way in which knowledge can be obtained (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Critical realism accepts that people's accounts of a phenomenon can be used as valid data representing 'reality' (Bhaskar, 2014). However, it postulates that all explanations should be treated as fallible, which requires ongoing criticality (Sayer, 2004). Essentially, participants' accounts were filtered through the author's interpretation (Danermark, 2002), which can bring subjectivity. Please, see Section 3.8 for an account of how trustworthiness issues were managed.

3.2.3 Axiology

Axiology deals with the ethical considerations made in research such as respecting participants, treating them with dignity and causing no harm (Simons, 2006). The transformative axiological assumptions transcend these values to a systemic level,

where minimising any inherent power imbalances and improving inclusivity are paramount (House, 1993). Similarly, it is hoped that this study's outcomes will facilitate positive changes in the school wellbeing provisions offered to young Black pupils; namely, one of its objectives is to share the identified outcomes with key school professionals supporting diverse student populations. This, in turn, aims to ameliorate the wellbeing inequalities evident in the UK (Shefer et al., 2013; Spence & Shortt, 2007) and, subsequently, to improve the educational and employability prospects of Black pupils (Sadler et al., 2015). Additionally, it is hoped that this would result in creating a more positive narrative around Black students' wellbeing.

Furthermore, Chilisa (2005) advocated for using community knowledge, including that of those less powerful, as a benchmark for how legitimate one's research is. By employing elements from participatory methodology, the current research will include local understanding of how to best obtain participants' views. Such approach promotes voices that may be traditionally silenced (e.g. young people; Fielding, 2008) and, hence, allows them to be equally acknowledged during the research process (Mertens, 1995). Ultimately, this leads to outcomes that reinforce the promotion of social justice and results in social action (i.e. facilitating best practice; Mertens, 2008).

3.3 Research Purpose

In line with the employed paradigm, ontology and epistemology, the current study has two purposes; namely exploratory, as well as emancipatory and transformative.

Firstly, exploratory research aims to 'discover something new and interesting' (Swedberg, 2020, p. 17). As identified in Chapter 2, the empirical evidence regarding the school wellbeing support offered to young Black people is largely problem-saturated, within-child focused and insufficient. The literature review demonstrated that there was no published study that focused only on young Black people's views. Thus, it is aimed to contribute to the existing pool of literature and, in turn, to EP practice by providing insight

into what wellbeing support is deemed helpful by Black secondary-aged students. Ultimately, this project aims to bring a more balanced knowledge base by identifying person-centred, systemic evidence on ‘what works’.

Secondly, Chapter 2 indicated that interventions outlined in previous research were often ‘done to’ rather ‘done with’ students. This highlights the need for employing an emancipatory agenda or empowering the researched community in a way that benefits them (Lynch, 2000). Congruent with this, the critical paradigm adopted by the author is arguably emancipatory at its core (Mertens, 2012). Emancipatory research aims to promote anti-oppressive practice at all systemic levels (Oliver, 1992). In the context of the present study, this is completed by utilising the voice of the researched community through the adoption of a reference group, alongside the promotion of young Black people’s views.

This study also has a transformative purpose, which aligns with the adopted critical paradigm. As discussed in Section 3.2.1, this involves adhering to key cultural norms, as well as advocating for the rights of the researched community through the promotion of social justice (Mertens, 2010). The author aims to do so by identifying wellbeing provisions that can reduce the wellbeing inequalities experienced by Black students in the UK.

3.4 Research Design

The aim of this research was to gain the views of young Black people regarding the wellbeing support offered at school. Thus, a qualitative research design was chosen because it allows for the collection of students’ perspectives (Busetto et al., 2020).

Essentially, there needs to be a good ‘fit’ between the chosen research method and the set RQs (Russell & Gregory, 2003). While pupils’ views could be gathered in different ways, it was felt that the utilised approach had to be harmonious with this study’s emancipatory and transformative agendas. In line with this, the author decided to

use participatory research elements when key decisions about the research design were made (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

3.4.1 Participatory Research Methodology

As discussed in Chapter 1, participatory approaches to research place emphasis on participants' collaboration and active involvement in the research process (Kindon et al., 2007). This enables researchers to reduce any potential power imbalances by increasing the control that the participants have over the way the investigation takes place (Bagnoli & Clark, 2010). As such, participatory approaches are coherent with the transformative worldview employed in the current study (Creswell & Poth, 2016; Mertens, 2007). Previously, this methodology has been successfully utilised in wellbeing research with students, which highlights its suitability for the present project (Berg et al., 2018).

The research was completed partially 'with' rather than 'on' or 'to' the researched community (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995) and, thus, aimed to empower participants to enact social change that is meaningful to them (Kemmis & Wilkinson, 1998). Nevertheless, the process, including this study's focus, was still researcher-initiated (Hart, 1992, as cited in Wallace & Giles, p. 2), which is an acknowledged design limitation (see Chapter 5).

From a practical point of view, Kellet (2005) highlights several issues such as allowing young co-researchers to choose the methods of data collection, which are 'based on an adult way of looking at the world' (p. 7). Linking this to the present project, it was hoped that young Black people would make key decisions about the study's design, including creating their own data collection method if they wanted to. However, this was not possible due to difficulties associated with recruitment.

Overall, it has been argued that the advantages of participatory research outweigh its pitfalls as long as the researcher is prepared for the problems it can

potentially bring (Titterton & Smart, 2006). Hence, the author decided to employ this methodology as she agrees with Spyrou's argument (2011) that the participatory approach is the most ethical way of conducting research when reflexivity is carefully employed. Please, see Sections 3.4.2.2 and 3.7 for key reflections and details around the way potential issues were managed.

3.4.1.1 Reference Group. To reiterate from Chapter 1, reference (or advisory) groups are often used in participatory studies, which seek to employ co-researchers that are part of the context under investigation (Goodley & Clough, 2004). This can encompass both participants, and / or a wider group of stakeholders (e.g. parents and professionals), who can advise on the research process (Lewis et al., 2008). Previous literature has shown that parents of Black students want to participate in the decision-making about services accessed by their children (Page et al., 2007). Similarly, it has been argued that Black professionals can bring valuable insight into research involving Black students (Alderson, 2001). Consequently, given the emancipatory ambition of this research, it seemed appropriate that the reference group could be joined by young Black people, their parents and Black professionals supporting them. This arguably facilitates cultural responsivity and, thus is congruent with the social-ecological approach adopted by the author (Ungar & Theron, 2020).

Researchers should consider how the contribution of reference group members can be rewarded (Lewis et al., 2008; Northway, 2000). The anticipated benefits for the study's co-researchers included listening to them as advocates for, and representatives of their communities (Robson et al., 2003; Walmsley, 2001), as well as ensuring they find their participation enjoyable and worthwhile (Riddell et al., 2001). The study is also intended to bring dividends to the researched community through the facilitation of positive systemic changes that support the wellbeing of Black students, and by using

their community knowledge to contribute to the existing literature (Lewis & Lindsay, 1999).

3.4.2 Reference Group's Aims and Recruitment

The main role of the reference group employed in the present research was to ascertain what data collection method would be used. This aimed to promote cultural responsivity and a more age-appropriate approach to gathering data, allowing for a better understanding of the topic under investigation (Cochran et al., 2008). Additionally, it was possible for the reference group members to be involved in the dissemination stage.

3.4.2.1 Recruitment of Reference Group Members. The inclusion criteria used during the reference group recruitment were as follows:

- (1) being a young person aged between 11 – 21 years, or (2) being a family member of a young Black person aged 11 – 21 years, or (3) being a professional from the Black ethnic group with experience of supporting young Black people;
- living in an urban area in England;
- (1) working with or (2) having a child identifying as Black that attends an urban secondary school or (3) attending or having attended a secondary school in an urban area in England;
- identifying as Black (Caribbean, African or British);
- speaking English at a conversational level.

As discussed in Chapter 1, 'urban area' was defined as a settlement with more than 10, 000 residents (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, n.d.). Additionally, the Census 2021 ethnic group classification was employed in the eligibility questionnaire used during the recruitment stage (GOV.UK, n.d.).

Considering the short time frame and the demands linked with the completion of a doctoral research project, it was concluded that the author had capacity to recruit a small reference group. Hence, it was decided that the selection process would be stopped once at least three people show interest in participating.

The reference group recruitment was initiated in June 2022. A research invitation email was sent to five non-governmental organisations based in the author's placement LA, which directly support CYP and families from the Black ethnic ground. Likewise, 24 England-based charities working with the Black community were contacted. Furthermore, eight teams, 12 secondary schools, 16 community settings in the same LA were emailed, alongside professionals and community centres from 31 other LAs based in urban areas in England. Finally, 14 existing advisory groups that represent people from the Black community were also contacted.

The invitation email outlined information about the researcher, the current study, and its selection criteria, as well as what the role of a reference group member would entail. It was requested that this information was shared with any parents, professionals and YP who might want to take part.

One organisation supporting children and young people in a highly diverse London borough offered to collaborate on this project. It was agreed that 10 parents of young Black people would be invited to a reference group meeting at the organisation's premises on 2 September 2022. Unfortunately, however, the researcher tested positive for COVID-19 and was not able to meet the group in-person. While meeting online was offered as an alternative, parents voiced a preference for doing so face-to-face. Despite efforts to re-organise the meeting on several occasions, this was not possible. Upon reflection, the author wondered if this outcome was related to the potential for scepticism the Black and minority ethnic communities may have regarding research (Giuliano et al. 2000; Yancey et al. 2006). This is congruent with anecdotal information shared in

informal discussions with representatives from the Black community during the recruitment stages of the research.

Subsequently, after having advertised the study to other EPs in training, three professionals that also met the selection criteria agreed to collaborate with the researcher via email in December 2022. All three trainee EPs were known to the author and, thus, had an existing relationship with her. Notably, however, the researcher met only with two of them as the third member was not able to attend due to sickness. Given the members' capacity and the limited timescales of this project, the researcher decided to go ahead with the meeting as planned. Please, see Table 2.1 for more information about the reference group members.

Table 2.1

Reference Group Members' Characteristics

Member (pseudonym)	**Reason for Inclusion**
Reference group member 1 (Kaleisha)	Identifies as Black British / Caribbean Professional working with Black YP in London
Reference group member 2 (Dembe)	Identifies as Black British / African Professional working with Black YP in London

3.4.2.2 Reference Group Meeting. The involvement of reference group members required careful planning, including key practical considerations such as deciding what demands were to be placed on the group members (Department of Health, 2006). To make participation more accessible to people from different parts of England, it was decided that both in-person and online modes of communication would be offered for the group meeting; namely, Microsoft Teams and / or a telephone conference. The author was mindful of the potential time constraints placed on members and, thus, it was decided that the meeting would last for an hour. However, to make the

experience more meaningful, members were offered additional time after the meeting when they could discuss any questions and comments they had.

The reference group meeting encompassed several stages, as advocated in participatory research literature (Kellett, 2005; Knox et al., 2000; Lewis et al., 2008; Oliver, 1997). Please, see Table 2.2 for more information.

Table 2.2

Outline of Reference Group Meeting

Meeting stage outline	Justification
Initial discussion with the researcher focusing on the study's purpose and the different ways of participating (5 minutes)	As advocated by Bennett and Roberts (2004), this can increase volunteers' participation in the project.
Contracting (10 minutes). This included: • introductions. • gaining co-researchers' consent. • agreeing on pseudonyms. • agreeing on meeting rules. • adjusting the proposed meeting agenda. • distributing meeting tasks (e.g. notetaking).	Building rapport and gaining participants' informed consent is essential when conducting research with human participants (BPS, 2021). There should be specific ground rules utilised by the reference group (Lewis et al., 2008). The use of a clear meeting agenda and notetaking have been suggested as useful tools for keeping participants on task and giving them a sense of purpose (Knox et al., 2000).
Choice of data collection method (45 minutes). This included: • discussing the proposed research methods, including co-researchers' own ideas. • agreeing on a data collection method. Please, note that research training was not needed due to co-researchers' pre-existing academic knowledge.	Research training should be offered as advisory group members make important research decisions (Kellett, 2005). CYP use a variety of research methods (Alderson, 2012); hence, it is essential to allow the reference group members to be creative in their role as co-researchers (e.g. by creating their own method; Smith et al., 2002).

Evaluation of session (5 minutes). This included: • gaining feedback from co-researchers about the meeting. • checking with members how representative their views were of the researched community.	As practitioner-researchers, EPs need to continuously evaluate their practice (Edwards, 2002). Asking members if they are confident to speak on behalf of others in their community facilitates the credibility of participatory research findings (Rhodes et al., 2002).
Discussing participants' perceptions of being co-researchers and study debrief (10 minutes)	While participation can be 'empowering', it is not passed on by those 'in power'; participants have chosen to be 'empowered' themselves (Oliver, 1997). Offering informal reflective opportunities to all co-researchers enables them to consider if the reference group meeting has supported this process.
Check-in with reference group participants (throughout the meeting)	Regular check-ins with the group members should be completed to ensure that everyone's needs are fulfilled during the research process (Lewis et al., 2008).

At the end of the reference group meeting, it was identified that the co-researchers enjoyed the utilised process. They discussed feeling listened to by the researcher, who reportedly was checking out ideas sensitively and without imposing her own viewpoint. Thus, it was concluded that catalytic validity was achieved (Lather, 1986).

3.5 Research Participants

3.5.1 Recruitment of Participants

Purposive sampling (Etikan et al., 2016) was used during participant recruitment as this allowed the author 'to satisfy their specific needs in the project' (Robson & McCartan, 2016, p. 281). The inclusion criteria encompassed the following:

- being aged 11-21;
- identifying as Black (Caribbean, African or British);

- attending or having attended a mainstream secondary school in an urban area in England;
- speaking English at a conversational level.

Additionally, YP's participation was not restricted by their gender, religious affiliation or any potential additional needs as the author wanted to identify a 'real-life' portrayal of young people from the Black community. Please, note that initially only secondary-aged students were invited to participate. Due to long-term difficulties with recruitment, this was extended to the age of 21 as it was believed that slightly older participants would still be able to recall and suggest good practices from their time at secondary school (Morina Diez, 2010). Additionally, to further incentivise young people's interest in this project, all participants received a £10 voucher for taking part.

As this is a small doctoral project, the author aimed to recruit between six and 10 participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The same recruitment strategy outlined in Section 3.4.2.1 was employed when looking for participants. 34 YP showed an interest in taking part in this research, 10 of whom met the inclusion criteria and gave consent to participate. Parental consent was also obtained for seven students, who were below the age of 18. Consent and debrief forms were shared via email with parents, who contacted the researcher directly. For YP, who were recruited through their educational settings, this was completed via participants' schools.

3.5.2 Participants' Characteristics

Overall, 10 participants took part in this research, five of whom were students from the author's placement LA. Three YP were from other London boroughs and two lived and studied in urban areas near London. The mean age of participants was 16.9 years. To provide the reader with some context, a brief outline of participants' characteristics can be found in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3

Research Participants' Characteristics

Young Person (pseudonym)	**Age**	**Ethnicity** (as identified by the participant)	**Sex**	**Educational stage**	**Interview information**
Pilot interview: Participant 1 (Derek)	20	Black British	Male	Further education	Online interview (25 minutes)
Participant 2 (Walt)	21	Black African	Male	Further education	Online interview (39 minutes)
Participant 3 (Amadi)	20	Black African	Male	Further education	Online interview (42 minutes)
Participant 4 (Alesha)	14	Black British	Female	Secondary school (Year 9)	Online interview (36 minutes)
Participant 5 (Rose)	13	Black British	Female	Secondary School (Year 8)	Online interview (37 minutes)
Participant 6 (Summer)	15	Black African / British	Female	Secondary school (Year 11)	Face-to-face interview (35 minutes)
Participant 7 (Zofia)	16	Black British	Female	Secondary School (Year 11)	Face-to-face interview (41 minutes)
Participant 8 (Eduardo)	17	Black British / African	Male	Secondary School (Year 12)	Face-to-face interview (34 minutes)
Participant 9 (Kevin)	16	Black Caribbean	Male	Secondary School (Year 12)	Face-to-face interview (32 minutes)
Participant 10 (Ben)	17	Black African / Caribbean	Male	Secondary School (Year 12)	Face-to-face interview (30 minutes)

3.6 Procedure

One reference group meeting was carried out via Microsoft Teams on 2 December 2022, following volunteers' consent to participate. Please, see Table 2.2 for a detailed outline of the meeting and Appendix 2.1 for the presentation slides used during

this session. A summary of the group discussion, which informed the next stages of the research project, was compiled on a Microsoft Word document (Appendix 2.2). Notably, reference group members agreed that this accurately represented the reference group discussion (Appendix 2.3). It was remarked by group members that their social class may limit the universality of their responses. However, overall, the reference group members felt that their views were representative of their community, which boosted the credibility of the chosen approach.

As for this study's participants, they were given the opportunity to take part in several stages within this project. Please, see Table 5 for further details on the participatory activities offered to participants.

Table 2.4

Outline of Participants' Involvement in the Research Process

Research stage & duration	Who participated	Participatory activity
Stage 1: Data collection session (up to an hour)	All participants	Introduction, consent, and interview
	Two participants (Derek and Alesha)	Suggesting ideas for dissemination
Stage 2 (optional): Data analysis (up to an hour)	One participant (Walt) shared his feedback via email.	Member checking of analysed data, which involved: • emailing a list of themes with participants' corresponding quotes. • offering a meeting to discuss findings.
Stage 3 (optional): Dissemination	To be confirmed	Checking dissemination content
	To be confirmed	Participating in dissemination activities

3.6.1 Data Collection

Five methods of data collection were discussed during the reference group meeting, alongside the opportunity to create a new one (Appendix 2.2). The two co-

researchers suggested that participants should take part in either focus groups or semi-structured interviews, depending on whether they were from the same school. As YP were recruited from different urban areas in England, data was collected by conducting interviews. These took place between December 2022 and January 2023. Based on YP's preferences, half of the interviews were held via Microsoft Teams, while the other half took place in-person, at students' schools. Notably, audio or video recordings were completed face-to-face or via Microsoft Teams, respectively.

3.6.1.1 Interviews. Interviews are often used as the main data collection method by psychologists when qualitative design is adopted (Potter & Hepburn, 2005). This method is particularly helpful for exploring participants' perceptions when they are personally implicated in an issue (e.g. wellbeing support received at school; Braun & Clarke, 2013). There are different interview styles, but often these are differentiated by how standardised the utilised approach is. As suggested by the reference group members, a semi-structured style was adopted in this research. This involved using a list with pre-written and organised questions that was modified depending on the flow of the conversation (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

Employing a semi-structured approach provided flexibility when participants answered the set questions, with the researcher probing their responses where appropriate (Berg, 1989). Such an approach is praised for being responsive to participants' accounts whilst maintaining relatedness to the investigated topic (Bartholomew et al., 2000). Hence, information gathered in this way cannot be derived by using other methods such as observations (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

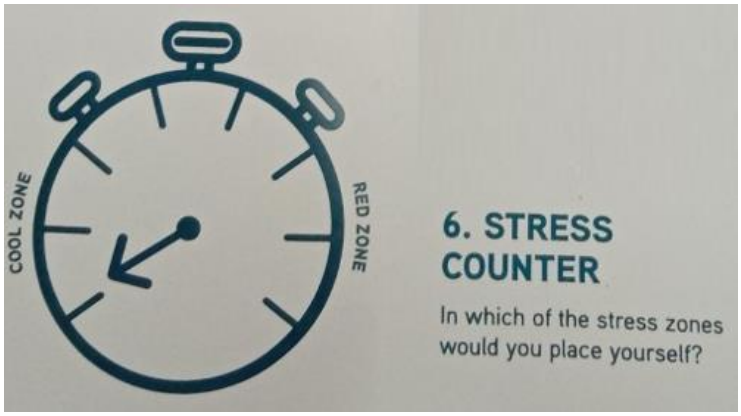
3.6.1.2 Interview Schedule Design. The reference group members were consulted regarding the choice of interview questions. This involved discussing five pre-written questions that could be reworded, expanded, re-organised, removed, or added to. Using draft questions ensured that the interview schedule incorporated the solution-

oriented and socio-ecological perspectives adopted in this study (Rees, 2016; Ungar et al., 2007). While it could be argued that such approach could have limited members' influence over the interview process, the researcher actively encouraged the co-researchers to voice their opinions and alter the questions in any way they found appropriate.

This is attested by the fact that while the initial questions focused on 'emotional wellbeing', this evolved from the reference group discussions. Consequently, the final questions asked participants to elaborate on the aspects of wellbeing they personally found important. Additionally, as suggested by the reference group, interviews started with a warm-up activity based on the Integrated Well-being Dashboard that explores scientifically validated indicators of wellbeing (e.g. energy levels; Boniwell, 2016; see Figure 3.1). Finally, congruent with the solution-oriented approach employed in this study, the co-researchers were given the opportunity to create questions that potentially tap into students' views about what school wellbeing support has not worked well. Please, see the agreed interview schedule in Appendix 2.4.

Figure 3.1

An Example of Wellbeing Indicator Employed in the Integrated Well-being Dashboard (Boniwell, 2016)



3.6.1.3 Pilot Interview. A pilot interview was completed via Microsoft Teams with Derek (pseudonym) on 19 December 2022. This helped the researcher to fully

familiarise herself with the interview schedule, as well as to practise her interview skills. Ultimately, feedback was requested regarding Derek's experience and the employed interview schedule. Derek reported that he found the meeting enjoyable and described the researcher as 'friendly'. He made no suggestions about how to improve the interview process.

The author reflected on ways in which she could further develop her skills as an interviewer. Namely, it was decided that (1) participants should be explicitly asked to choose at least one of the Integrated Well-being Dashboard indicators (Boniwell, 2016) during the warm-up activity (as opposed to simply being told to use the Dashboard) and that (2) verbal prompts should be utilised more often. Subsequently, it was noted the richness and the length of the interviews increased (i.e. by at least 5 minutes).

It was decided that the pilot interview data was to be used during the analysis stage of this project. Not only did it add another person's perspective on the explored issues, but it was also in line with the emancipatory agenda and the ethical values adopted in the current study (e.g. social justice; Fox, 2015).

3.6.2 Thematic Analysis (TA)

Several qualitative analysis approaches were considered, including Narrative Analysis (Mishler, 1995), Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Shinebourne, 2017) and Reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA; Clarke & Braun, 2022). Reflexive TA was chosen due to its epistemological flexibility and unrelatedness to a particular theoretical position unlike Narrative Analysis and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Additionally, given that the aim of this research was to generate pupils' views rather than to understand their lived experiences or stories, it was felt that Narrative Analysis and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis were unsuitable (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

The 6-phase process of TA was used (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Qualitative research design is commonly criticised for lacking clear guidelines (Antaki et al., 2002) and, thus, the TA process provided the well-needed structure to this research.

Previous literature looking at perceived strengths of interventions has effectively utilised TA (e.g. see Akhtar & Boniwell, 2010). While the present study aimed to answer similar RQs, the analysis of participants' accounts was inductive, or guided by the data (Hayes, 2000). The author was mindful that TA can often lead to inconsistency and limited coherence of themes. Consistency and cohesion were facilitated through using closely aligned epistemological position and data gathering methods (see Section 3.4; Holloway & Todres, 2003).

While TA lacks dialectical analysis, the author believes that this approach is appropriate for the employed research procedures. Namely, it is a helpful method to use when participants check over their analysed data (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Furthermore, TA allows for outcomes to be easily communicated to a variety of audiences (Braun & Clarke, 2012), which fits with this project's ambition to disseminate the identified good practice.

3.6.2.1 Phase 1: Familiarisation with the Data. Information collected during the individual interviews was transcribed verbatim using Microsoft Word and was subsequently anonymised by the researcher. This process allowed for the initial familiarisation with the data, whereby the author noted down her emergent thoughts about participants' accounts and potential initial themes (see Appendix 2.5 and Appendix 2.6). As argued by Braun and Clarke (2006), such an approach enabled the researcher to actively immerse herself in the data and to get to know its depth and breadth.

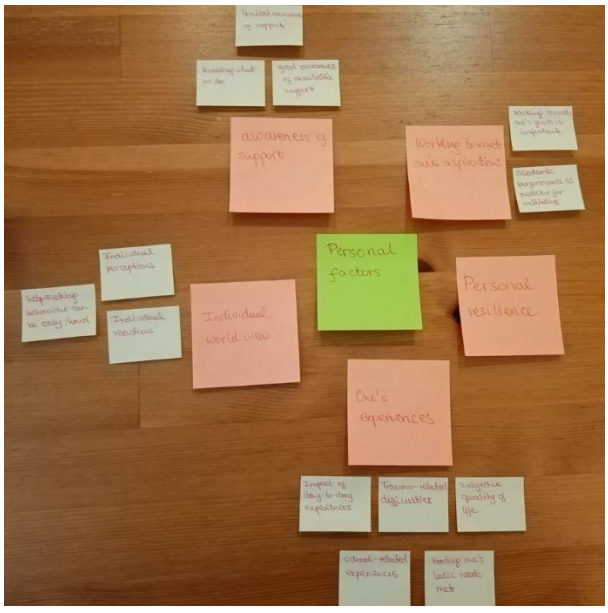
3.6.2.2 Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes. This stage involved creating different initial codes from the transcribed data and subsequently organising them into

groups (Tuckett, 2005). The coding process was initially completed manually, and then, by using Microsoft Word (see Appendix 2.7; Seale, 2000). Both approaches were adopted because this assisted the researcher to familiarise herself with the data in different ways, adding to the richness of the analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2022). It also helped the author to identify any similar or contrasting codes. For example, she used coloured highlighters when any similarities were noted at both coding stages. The 'insert comment' function was used to add any initial codes on Microsoft Word, while post-it notes were utilised during manual coding.

3.6.2.3 Phase 3: Searching for Themes. After initially coding and collating the data, all codes were allocated to potential themes. This encompassed making links between codes and identifying how they could be broadly related through overarching themes. As suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006), visual representations (i.e. post-it notes) were used to organise the different codes into themes as part of a mind-map (see Figure 3.2). This approach facilitated the identification of the main and the sub-themes and, in turn, the creation of the initial thematic map.

Figure 3.2

An Example of Visually Organising a Theme



3.6.2.4 Phase 4: Reviewing Themes. This stage involved refining the initial thematic map by checking if there is sufficient data to support all themes and if some of them could be split further (see Appendix 2.8). Patton's (1990) dual criteria approach to theme creation was applied; namely, the author checked if the data within themes was coherent and whether the chosen themes were clearly distinct from one another. Ultimately, a final thematic map was produced (see Appendix 2.9). Following this, all transcripts were read again to make sure that the created map appropriately reflected the generated data, and to add potentially omitted codes.

3.6.2.5 Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes. When all themes and sub-themes were identified, they were defined, named, and given a written description. At this stage, the author considered the way the chosen themes and sub-themes were related to the study's RQs. Please, see Chapter 4 for direct quotations linked with each level of the thematic map and an in-depth outline of the analysed data.

3.7 Reflexivity

Given the complex and socially constructed nature of qualitative inquiries, ongoing reflexivity throughout the project was essential (Patnaik, 2013). This involved engaging in "a thoughtful, conscious self-awareness that encompasses continual evaluation of subjective responses, intersubjective dynamics and the research process itself" (Finlay, 2002b, p. 532). Olmos-Vega and colleagues (2022) postulated that reflexive processes should focus on personal, interpersonal, methodological, and contextual aspects of the research. Thus, to facilitate reflexive validity during this study, their framework was utilised.

3.7.1 Personal Reflexivity

It was important for the author to acknowledge potential biases that could impact the research (Merriam, 1988). Having previously been a wellbeing lead, the author is highly passionate about facilitating CYP's wellbeing and, in turn, about completing this

research. However, as part of this previous role, she had supported the wellbeing of young Black people and, hence, had certain preconceptions about what school wellbeing provisions are helpful for the chosen target group. These experiences could hinder the research process, impacting how data is interpreted (Russell & Kelly, 2002). Therefore, the author engaged in ongoing critical reflection around her own assumptions and biases during tutorials and by using a reflective diary (Watt, 2007). As advocated by Tobin and Begley (2004), this touched on the researchers' internal and external dialogue during all research stages. Interestingly, the author's understanding of the investigated topic changed throughout the research, which highlighted how personal reflexivity can facilitate the inquiry process (Watt, 2007; see Appendix 2.10).

3.7.2 Interpersonal Reflexivity

Braun and Clarke (2013) argue that being reflexive about one's positioning is essential when working with potentially marginalised groups (e.g. YP). Thus, the author continuously reflected on her relationships with the reference group members and the participants, and how this could have influenced this study's outcomes (Watt, 2007). The author's position as a White and educated professional could reinforce the inherent power dynamics in the researcher-participant dyad (Alderson, 1995). Hence, particular attention was paid to the issues of power during reflective diary entries to ensure that these were effectively planned for and managed. Additionally, the use of reference group was a central factor in mitigating power-related issues.

Essentially, as discussed elsewhere (see Section 3.4.1), the use of participatory approaches also aimed to empower the volunteers taking part in this research. While it was hoped that YP would join the reference group to increase their power as 'knowledge producers' (Florio et al., 2020), this was not possible due to recruitment difficulties. Upon reflection, the author recognised that the data collection methods were chosen by professionals, and hence, the design is susceptible to adultcentrism-related biases (Petr,

1992). To ameliorate this, the co-researchers were encouraged to base their views on past experiences when they have successfully obtained young Black people's views.

Similarly, it has been argued that CYP's views can be impacted by dominant discourses and the way they are positioned in society (Thomson, 2009). Having reflected on this, the researcher made efforts to build rapport with participants and to carefully unpick their views by using follow-up prompts. This aimed to help YP to be at ease during their individual interviews and to enable an accurate understanding of participants' thoughts (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

3.7.3 Methodological Reflexivity

Being aware of how one's values and worldview may impact their choice of research methodology is important (Olmos-Vega et al., 2022; Patnaik, 2013). This can ensure that standardised and rigorous research processes have been followed. As previously outlined, the author's values for autonomy and social justice motivated her to adopt an emancipatory lens and, in turn, to use a participatory research approach. The practical and ethical implications for employing such methodology have been outlined in Section 3.4.1.

Additionally, the author reflected on the way that other methodological aspects could have impacted the research process. For example, YP were able to meet with the researcher via Microsoft Teams, which may be a preferred data collection method when sensitive topics (e.g. wellbeing) are explored (DiLillo et al., 2006). However, it was recognised that the author might have not picked up on subtle non-verbal cues during the online interviews, which could have led to YP feeling uncomfortable (Halek et al., 2005). Thus, participants were asked if they could have their cameras on during the interviews, which allowed for attuned interactions (Kennedy et al., 2016). This also supported the credibility of the present study, ensuring that a consistent study protocol was followed (e.g. that no other person was present during the discussion).

3.7.4 Contextual Reflexivity

As discussed in Chapter 1, the author was mindful of the recent Black Lives Matter movement, including the public's increased interest in topics such as systemic racism (Elliott-Cooper, 2021; Mohdin et al., 2021). Consideration was given to how exposure to the prevalent discourses validating the discriminatory experiences of Black people can impact Black students' wellbeing. It was also acknowledged that potentially talking about issues such as racial discrimination in this study could have also impacted participants' wellbeing negatively. Accordingly, the YP were signposted to relevant charity organisations as part of the employed debriefing procedures.

Additionally, at the time when the research was carried out, the cost-of-living crisis was prominent in the UK (Keith Neal, 2022). The author was acutely aware of the implications this could have for the participating YP. Hence, to minimise any costs associated with taking part in the current study, the researcher allowed participants to choose if data was to be collected in person or via Microsoft Teams (de Leeuw, 2002). Moreover, the author reflected on other ways of thanking YP and co-researchers for their participation. For example, as advised by a parent of one of the participants, interviewees received a £10 voucher for their participation. This aimed to ensure that the current study narrowed the socioeconomic and health inequalities by making participation more accessible to all YP (Taylor-Robinson et al., 2019). In line with this, at least half of the participants were students in a socially deprived area.

3.8 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research, reliability and validity are established by investigating its trustworthiness (Golafshani, 2003). Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criteria for evaluating trustworthiness are widely accepted (Nowell et al., 2017) and were utilised in this research. This encompasses transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability.

‘Dependability’ mirrors the notion of reliability used in quantitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1989). Dependable research incorporates a detailed audit trail documenting its process and outcomes to allow for consistency (Hoepfl, 1997). Therefore, clearly documented processes were employed by using process notes. To increase this project’s transparency, the author also made an excerpt of the obtained raw data available (see Appendix 2.11), allowing for any possible erroneous interpretations can be identified (Aguinis & Solarino, 2019). Furthermore, anonymised data related to one of the identified themes was reviewed by the author’s academic tutor, which indicated that the generated codes were appropriate.

As this research incorporated the views of a small group of participants, which were not triangulated, there was a limit to the conclusions that could be made about the wider group of Black YP aged 11-21. Nevertheless, detailed contextual descriptions were used whilst collecting, analysing and outlining the data (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this way, the reader can decide if the generated findings are applicable to their context or not (Lincoln & Guba, 1989).

Notably, Houtkoop-Steenstra et al. (2000) question the validity of data gathered through interviews, arguing that they represent a product of the interview situation rather than the participants’ true opinions. Furthermore, Mason (2002) argues that interviewees’ responses depend on their verbal and communicative ability, as well as their memory. Thinking about interviews with children, Spyrou (2011) highlights that their accounts are often limited by ‘the social languages and speech genres’ they have been taught (p. 159). Thus, caution was adopted when analysing and making conclusions based on interviewees’ accounts.

To ensure credibility, the author contacted all participants to check if the analysed information accurately represented their views (Stiles, 1993). Furthermore, individual data analysis meetings were offered to YP. Participants were told that should

they disagree with the way their views were represented, the author would adjust the analysis accordingly. Importantly, whilst all participants showed an interest in checking their analysed data, only one YP replied to the researcher's email. He indicated that the generated themes were accurate, which suggests that the analysis authentically represented at least some participants' views (Appendix 2.12). Upon reflection, participants' limited engagement with the member checking process could have been related to the timing of this research stage; namely, many participants could have been preparing for their upcoming exams, which would have made it difficult to dedicate time to the analysis. Given that Clarke and Braun (2022) stipulate that member checking is not necessary to ensure the robustness of data analysed when using Reflexive TA, it was concluded that the generated findings were credible (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Overall, the author concluded that dependability, transferability, and credibility of the analysed data were achieved. Therefore, it is argued that the findings outlined in Chapter 4 reflect YP's perceptions (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

3.9. Ethical Considerations

This research adhered to the BPS, HCPC and University of East London (UEL) guidelines for ethical research (BPS, 2021; HCPC, 2016; UEL, 2015). Therefore, key documents such as HCPC Code of Conduct, Performance and Ethics (HCPC, 2016), BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2021), BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2021), as well as the UEL Code of Practice for Research Ethics (2015) directly informed the way this study was conducted. Additionally, this research commenced after an ethical approval was obtained from UEL's Ethics Committee (see Appendix 2.13).

Research involving CYP can have detrimental impact on their wellbeing (Bird et al., 2015). However, as argued by Lee and Renzetti (1990, p.252), 'we cannot safeguard people by avoiding sensitive or controversial research' as this reduces their opportunities

to share their voice (Tisdall, 2017). Thus, careful considerations were made to safeguard participants and reference group members, ensuring that this research was ethical.

3.9.1 Informed Consent

Obtaining informed consent is an essential part in ethical research (BPS, 2021). All participants, their parents and the reference group members were sent a study advert, an information sheet, as well as a consent form (Appendix 2.14) that provided a clear outline of what consenting to participate meant. Additionally, all three parties were invited for an informal discussion should they wished to discuss the research further. One student took this opportunity, whereby questions around sustaining participants' anonymity were raised. Prior to the study, consent was gained from all participants, the reference group members, as well as parents of any young people under the age of 18.

3.9.1.1 Reference Group Members. Flewitt (2005) advocates for obtaining temporary consent and reviewing this at later research stages to ensure that participatory research is ethically sounds. Thus, ongoing, 'forward critical reflexivity' was pivotal when planning the reference group's participation (Renold et al., 2008, p.430). Namely, the author utilised her research diary, reflecting on the ways in which consent would be revisited during the reference group meeting.

As planned, the researcher employed both formal and informal processes of checking members' consent. This involved reminding the co-researchers about their right to withdraw, that their participation was voluntary, as well as completing check-ins throughout the meeting.

3.9.1.2 Participants. Similar ethical considerations were employed throughout this study's data collection stage. Participants' right to withdraw from the research without any repercussions was reiterated both via email and verbally prior to and during YP's participation in the interviews. Namely, it was clearly explained that should participants or their parents withdraw their consent, all data related to them would be

securely destroyed. Nevertheless, they were also made aware that this would not be possible if requests were made 3 weeks after the data was collected. This was also clearly outlined in the study's debrief sheet given to both participants and parents (see Appendix 2.14).

3.9.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

In line with participants' right for privacy (BPS, 2021; HCPC, 2016), careful considerations were made to ensure their confidentiality and anonymity. Participants, participants' parents, and reference group members were not asked to provide any personal details (apart from those needed to ensure that they met the eligibility criteria; see Appendix 2.14). However, if any identifiable information was shared (e.g. a school's name), this was removed or anonymised. To protect their identity, participants and reference group members either created their own pseudonyms or were given one by the researcher. All transcription files were pseudonymised. Finally, audio recordings were solely transcribed and anonymised by the researcher, who was the only person with access to the raw study data. These considerations were clearly outlined to key parties during the recruitment process (e.g. via the information sheet and verbally prior to the interview). Additionally, the researcher explained both in the consent form and verbally that confidentiality would be broken should participants (or other individuals) be in significant risk of harm.

3.9.2.1 Storage of Data. This research adhered to guidelines from the Data Protection Act (2018). Additionally, Data Management Plan regarding the storage and maintenance of all collected information approved by the UEL was followed.

To maintain confidentiality, participants' personal information, as well as the study's raw and transcribed data were stored securely on the author's OneDrive for Business account. Confidential information (e.g. participants' contact details) was located separately from the transcribed data on documents that were password-

protected and stored in password-protected files. All video and audio recordings were deleted after having been transcribed. Similarly, the signed paper copies of the consent forms were firstly scanned and then uploaded on the author's drive; subsequently, these were securely destroyed. All working data was backed up weekly on an encrypted storage device, ensuring that no information was lost.

It was clearly outlined to participants and their parents that analysed and anonymised information would be stored for up to 3 years after completion of the research. They were explained that this was to allow the researcher to disseminate the study findings (e.g. at research conferences).

3.9.3 Managing Potential Negative Impact of Research

This research took place at a time when societal inequalities were frequently highlighted in the media (Mohdin et al., 2021) and the author was sensitive to the potential negative implications this could have had on participants' wellbeing. It is acknowledged that investigating a sensitive topic such as wellbeing support at school could cause distress to participants, especially if they had experienced significant MH difficulties. Before the data collection sessions commenced, participants were reminded that they could request a break at any point. To reduce any potential detrimental impact, all YP and their parents were also provided a debrief sheet outlining different avenues for wellbeing support.

During the project, all YP were treated with respect and dignity. While there are inherent power issues in all research projects, the use of participatory design seeks to reduce this power imbalance (Wallace & Giles, 2019). However, it has been highlighted that participatory approaches could be imposed on (rather than sought by) CYP (Birch & Miller, 2002) and may lead to exploitation for marginalised groups (Smith et al., 2002). To overcome these problems, the author made specific efforts to ensure that students

had the autonomy to decide what the nature of their participation would be (e.g. by checking-in prior to their involvement).

The researcher also engaged in ongoing reflections around issues of power. To minimise any risk of harm, she checked in with participants and monitored their emotional wellbeing during every session. Additionally, information about confidential wellbeing support was shared with YP (e.g. ChildLine). At the end of the study, participants were offered a debrief on the nature of the project. Essentially, the HCPC (2016) safeguarding and duty of care procedures were followed.

3.9.4 Emancipatory Research Considerations

The key emancipatory principles of accountability, empowerment, and reciprocity were applied throughout this study (Hollins, 2013). To begin with, the author was accountable to the participants (Barnes, 2002). For example, analysed data was shared with each participant to demonstrate how their information was used and to adjust the author's interpretation if needed. Additionally, given the author's ambition to use the generated knowledge to promote best practice in schools, it is anticipated that the outcomes of this research will be submitted for publication in academic literature.

Furthermore, the research process aimed to facilitate participants' empowerment (Oliver, 1992). By utilising a participatory methodology, the current study gave partial control over the research process to the reference group members and the participants. Subsequently, implicit power imbalances between the author and the researched group were reduced (Lynch, 2000). For example, the dissemination of this study's findings was planned in accordance with participants' suggestions. Hence, the participants were in the position to make key decisions about this study and, in turn, to 'begin to control the naming of their own world' (Lynch, 2000, p.89). This ensured that the reciprocity principle was achieved (Hollins, 2013).

3.10 Chapter Summary

Chapter 3 discussed the paradigm, and the ontological and epistemological position utilised in the current study. A rationale and critique were provided for using qualitative research methodology and elements from the participatory research design. The employed reference group, data collection and data analysis processes were outlined and justified. Finally, this chapter explored the validity, reliability and ethical considerations linked with the present research.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter demonstrates the findings generated through the individual interviews completed with the participants. Overarching themes and sub-themes identified through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) are presented. These data are employed to answer the following RQs:

- ***RQ1:*** *What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people?*
- ***RQ2:*** *How can school wellbeing support be improved according to young Black people?*

Participants' accounts were analysed inductively and by employing an emancipatory lens. Thus, additional information that seemed pertinent to the interviewed YP is included, even if this was not originally considered through the RQs. Namely, personal factors were commonly identified as helpful by participants and, thus, are presented as a theme. The generated themes and sub-themes, alongside their associated links, are visually presented using a thematic map (see Appendix 2.9).

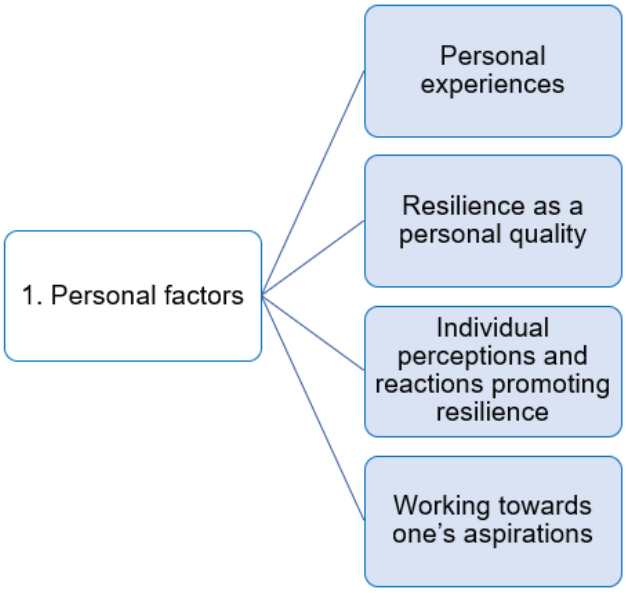
The solution-oriented approach utilised in the present research argues that practitioners should 'keep one foot in pain, one in possibility' (Rees, 2016, p. 227). Thus, this chapter also incorporates several important examples shared by the YP of when the school wellbeing support was perceived as unhelpful. However, the data is ultimately used to facilitate change through understanding of 'what works'. As discussed in Chapter 1, at times the term MH is used to signify subjective wellbeing, or students' direct evaluation of their wellbeing (De Feo et al., 2012).

4.2 Theme 1: Personal Factors

Personal factors were a consistent theme across the interviews, with frequent remarks highlighting the importance of individual resilience, which was perceived as a within-person characteristic. Additionally, most YP also spoke about how their wellbeing was enhanced or hindered by the way they viewed and reacted to situations, their opportunities to work towards their goals, as well as their personal experiences. Please, see Figure 4.1 for a visual representation of this theme.

Figure 4.1

Theme 1 and Associated Sub-themes



4.2.1 Personal Experiences

Most students discussed how day-to-day experiences could impact their wellbeing. Kevin expressed, 'I *think, I've not had really nothing to worry about'* (Kevin, line 150), which had reportedly helped him to feel positive. By contrast, Alesha described the negative implications of the difficult experiences some students have at home, '*their parents aren't always around, to support them and be there for them, and, like, they are*

not doing great' (Alesha, line 136 – 137). Others such as Amadi highlighted that enjoyable experiences can improve their wellbeing, '*going out makes you happy and you are distracted so your emotional wellbeing will be distracted'* (Amadi, lines 39-40). Altogether, students' accounts indicated that YP can have disparate daily experiences, resulting in correspondingly varying wellbeing.

In line with this, several students mentioned how school-based experiences were related to changes in their MH. To illustrate, exams completion was associated with a sense of relief by Kevin, '*my stress currently, I'd say, it's low. I've already done each test'* (Kevin, lines 15-16). Similarly, some YP often implied that exam times can be a source of stress. Zofia expressed, '*I was revising for English, but when I was revising for English, I was stressed about Maths and Science'* (Zofia, lines 177 – 178). This suggested that some school experiences can contribute to students' wellbeing difficulties, which seemed to be especially the case during exam times. Nevertheless, it appeared that once students' assessment periods are finished, their wellbeing can readily improve.

Most participants also discussed experiences related to meeting their basic needs. Talking about students who may be homeless, Walt said, '*An individual [...] it's been satisfied only if he or she has that apartment*.' (Walt, line 31). This indicated that some experiences impacting students' wellbeing can be out of their direct control. Rose also discussed some basic needs that must be met to maintain one's wellbeing, *'It could be about how much exercise you're getting [...] Eating well'* (Rose, lines 40 – 42). Others spoke about desirable experiences that are in their locus of control such as personal self-care, '*My emotions are positive […] today is Friday, so there'll be, like, a 'me' time after school'* (Summer, lines 11 – 13). This implied that having control over one's experiences enables students to enhance their wellbeing. Conversely, it appeared that

circumstances that diminish YP's ability to change their situation might put them in a vulnerable position emotionally. Overall, it was recognised that events that are enjoyable, reduce students' stress levels, or support YP to meet their basic needs can facilitate their wellbeing.

4.2.2 Resilience as a Personal Quality

The accounts of most participants suggested that their resilience, which they perceived as an individual characteristic, played an important role in managing difficult situations. This, in turn, reportedly helped or hindered their wellbeing. Ben explained, '*I can say, that, I don't really, like, get affected by stress that much'* (Ben, line 83). He also presented his personal resilience as a relatively stable personal trait, '*And that's how I just stay, like, just not being negative'* (Ben, line 177). However, Ben recognised that he was able to nurture this through his choices such as making friends with other positive peers. This highlighted that, according to some YP, there are ways to improve their individual ability to bounce back from difficult situations. Conversely, Rose perceived herself as an individual with lower resilience, which reportedly had negative impact on her wellbeing, *'I tend to get overwhelmed very easily, and, let situations, um, affect me'* (Rose, line 156). To illustrate this, she described a difficult day she had at school, resulting in her getting progressively upset and going home. Rose's account suggested that students' perception of their own resilience is an important predictor of their wellbeing during challenging situations.

Reflecting on the time when he was supported by a counsellor, Amadi concluded that, '*improving your mental health, your wellbeing, I think it's your inner you. It's not some external energy'* (Amadi, lines 268 - 269). This highlighted that some YP placed more importance on their individual ability to bounce back from difficult life events than on the accessed support. It also suggested that students may need to tap into their individual

resilience for wellbeing support to be effective. Overall, YP commonly conceptualised their ability to adjust easily to misfortune as a personal characteristic, which enhanced their wellbeing when available.

4.2.3 Individual Perceptions and Reactions Promoting Resilience

Many participants discussed the way they think about different situations and how this can affect their wellbeing by making them more resilient. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Resilience as a personal quality' (see Section 4.2.2). Eduardo recounted a time when he realised that there was no point in worrying about situations that are out of his control, '*before, like, little things would just get to me [...] It just got to a point where I started thinking, even when there's [...] something small, there's not really much that I can do.'* (Eduardo, lines 168 - 169). He added that this way of thinking had been useful during challenging times such as when his Maths performance had been poor. Eduardo later described that his ability to reframe situations positively benefited his overall wellbeing by improving his resilience, '*it just really helped me to understand that sometimes you fail and get back up'* (Eduardo, lines 170 – 171). Likewise, Zofia reported that it helped her to *'think rationally, and not be, like, not block out the whole day obsessing about one thought'* (Zofia, lines 106 - 107). She also said that this kept her calm and, thus, enabled her to find solutions to problems and to withstand adversity, adding '*it helped me not to be too stressed about certain things and* (accept) *that things are happening for a reason'* (Zofia, lines 106 – 107). Several other participants also indicated that rational and positive thinking supported them bounce back during difficult times and, thus, was supportive for their wellbeing. Altogether, this suggested that YP can learn to adapt the way they think about stressful situations, which enhances their resilience and leads to optimal resolution of their problems.

Reactions to difficult situations were also viewed as helpful for students' resilience and, subsequently, for their wellbeing. Rose discussed how planning her reactions to events supported her to prevent situations from escalating, '*being able to talk about it, or, find a solution, or manage yourself, so you don't get overwhelmed'* (Rose, line 61). She said that adopting a preventative approach can have positive implications for one's ability to maintain their wellbeing, by minimising the chance of having a panic attack, for example. Other ways of reacting to challenging events such as taking initiative to seek help were also consistently discussed as a useful approach for coping with adversity. Namely, many participants spoke about their inclination, or lack of, to request wellbeing support when they were struggling, which seemed to require a degree of self-confidence. Summer appeared secure when requesting help, '*If I am stressed, then I'd say, 'I don't know how to do this' to my teacher'* (Summer, lines 206 – 207). She described a situation of how seeking help had supported her emotionally when she struggled with her learning. Eduardo also presented as self-assured when saying, '*I'd approach anyone. [...] But, maybe other students, you don't know how they would be*' (Eduardo, lines 143 – 144). This suggested that many YP may lack the confidence to request support and, thus, can find this hard. Alesha reaffirmed this idea saying, '*not everyone wants to stay and tell the school that they need someone*' (Alesha, lines 153). She elaborated that this often resulted in available support not being used. This highlighted that one's self-confidence and inclination to request help can determine how effective the school's wellbeing provisions are. Altogether, students' accounts implied that while help-seeking behaviour may not be easy, it can be beneficial for their ability to withstand adversity and to maintain their wellbeing. All in all, YP felt that the way they perceive their ability to react to situations, including whether they can confidently seek wellbeing support, could enhance or hinder their resilience and, in turn, their wellbeing.

4.2.4 Working Towards One's Aspirations

Meeting one's goals and achieving well academically were often directly associated with one's positive wellbeing. Derek explicitly said that YP may feel depressed if they do not perform well at school, '*You might withdraw you know, you are not progressing'* (Derek, line 48). He gave a contrasting example of how he managed to meet his goal and was able to advance academically, which brought him feelings of joy and pride. Walt also felt that achieving one's objectives was helpful for their wellbeing, '*you'll be very happy if you attend a certain goal that you set'* (Walt, line 26). This implied that setting and working towards objectives that are meaningful to YP is important for them and has implications for their wellbeing. In line with this, several participants, for whom going to university was a key future aspiration, expressed satisfaction when steps were taken to achieve this goal. For example, when asked about what has supported her wellbeing, Summer discussed a school trip to key colleges she attended, '*going to university to see like, what, like, future students are taking, or what they wanna be […] which is good'* (Summer, lines 329 - 330). Overall, this sub-theme suggested that YP's fulfilment and goals are viewed as essential for their wellbeing.

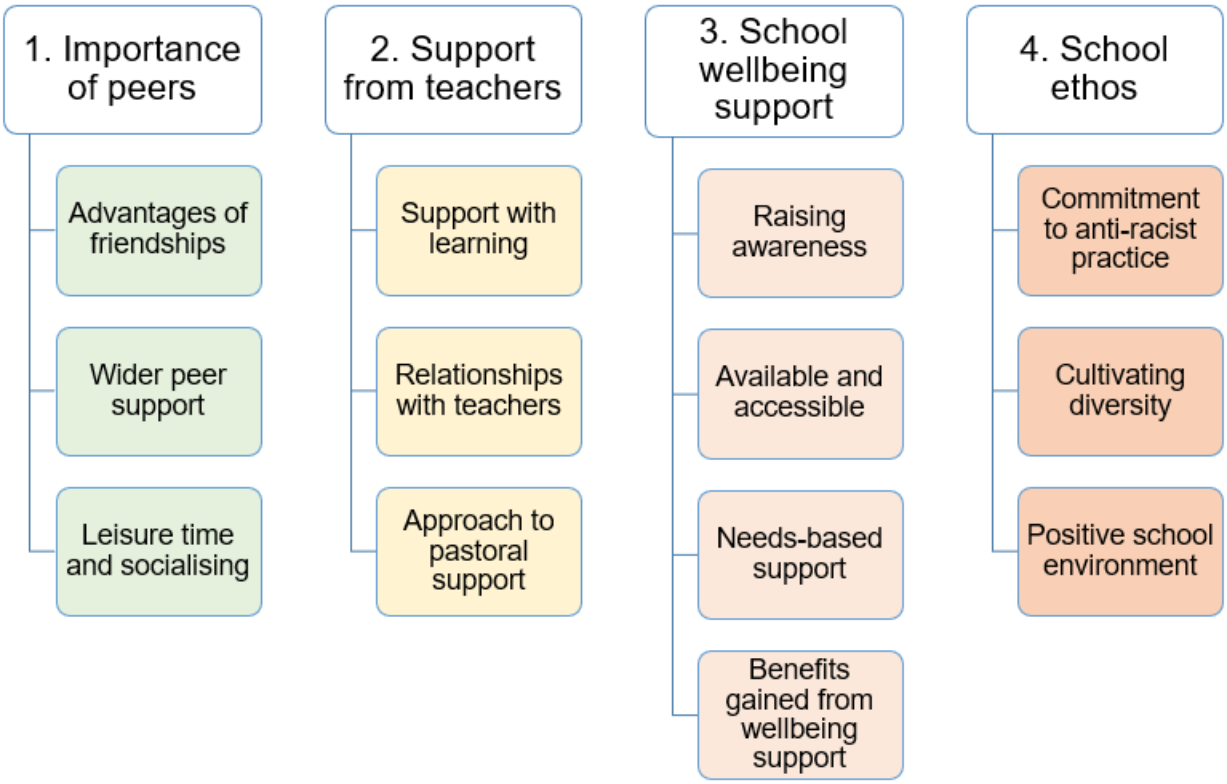
To conclude, the analysis related to the first theme showed that YP identified several personal factors to be important for their wellbeing, including their resilience, which was perceived as a within-person characteristic, their individual perceptions and reactions to situations, their ability to reach their aspirations, as well as their personal experiences.

4. 3 What Has Been Helpful

RQ1: What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people?

Figure 4.2

Themes and Sub-themes Related to YP's Perceptions on What Wellbeing Support Has Been Helpful

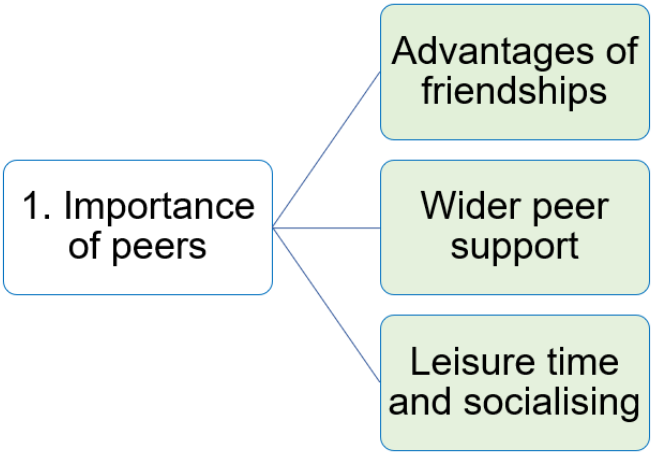


4.3.1 Theme 1: Importance of Peers

Peers were represented as a key factor associated with positive wellbeing. Most participants spoke about their peers in different contexts during the interviews. Namely, peers, including YP's friends, were commonly described as helpful, supportive and an enjoyable company during non-academic activities.

Figure 4.3

Theme 1 and Associated Sub-themes



4.3.1.1 Advantages of Friendships. Having friends was associated with a variety of benefits by many YP. Amadi felt that his friends helped him to manage the stressors he had experienced, '*I think by creating friends it helped cope up with the toxic environment outside*' (Amadi, lines 291- 292). He then spoke about the time when he had no friends and how this made him depressed and lonely. Several other YP also discussed their friends as supportive for their emotional wellbeing. Zofia explained how she could easily share her emotions within her friendship group, '*when you're with friends, you feel comfortable around and you don't have to pretend to be someone else'* (Zofia, line 246). She highlighted that this made her feel less pressured as she did not have to mask her difficulties. Altogether, this suggested that friends were viewed as a protective factor for YP's wellbeing, supporting their resilience to cope in challenging situations. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Resilience as a personal quality' (see Section 4.2.2). It also illustrated that one's friends may provide a psychologically safe space for students, so they can offload any challenging emotions.

Other YP spoke about the advisory role of their friends, who often provided instrumental support. Derek discussed the help he received from his friends prior to

applying to university, '*I talked to my friends [...] before I finally made a decision to enrol for the Science class'* (Derek, lines 204 – 205). He expressed his satisfaction with the course, suggesting that friends can provide good advice. Likewise, Summer felt that '*a friend can help you with anything'* (Summer, line 70), implying that friends are an important and reliable source of emotional and practical support. During the interview, she discussed the different support roles that friends could have, for example, saying that she would approach them for learning guidance or if stressed. This suggested the support YP access from their friends is well-rounded and, thus, can be utilised in many situations. Overall, friendships were described as beneficial for YP's wellbeing by most participants.

4.3.1.2 Wider Peer Support. Other systems of peer support than one's friends were commonly identified as helpful for YP's wellbeing. Derek felt that his peer mentor helped him to make important changes in his life, '*I was given a companion [...] And I was able to adjust some part of my lifestyle'* (Derek, lines 56 – 58). Derek often spoke about him, detailing the practical support he was given and how this led to him achieving his goals and, in turn, his improved wellbeing. This indicated that peer mentorship was viewed as an effective source of support that can facilitate positive changes in YP's lives, including their welfare. Interestingly, Derek emphasised that his mentor was of a similar age as him on several occasions, which suggested that perceived similarity may play role in one's satisfaction when help is accessed.

Some YP mentioned the practical benefits that peer support groups brought. When asked about activities that enhanced his welfare, Amadi spoke about attending different school clubs. He explained how this helped him with key practicalities when settling into his new school, '*you don't know anything about the school [...] so you're meeting different forms [...] you just talk about the school in general, where you can go*

get food...' (Amadi, lines 55 – 57). This highlighted that being in the same situation with other students and resolving it together can be reassuring for YP. As such, it also implied that peer support can be a two-way process, whereby students do not only receive but also give help to others. All in all, most participants discussed different examples of when accessing wider peer support led to improvements in their wellbeing.

4.3.1.3 Leisure Time and Socialising. Alongside the instrumental peer support discussed in the previous sub-theme, most participants also mentioned the leisure and social time spent with other YP when talking about what has enhanced their wellbeing. Eduardo expressed, '*wellbeing-wise, you know, it's good to talk to someone else*' (Eduardo, line 303). He later explained how attending football sessions benefited his wellbeing because he not only engaged in an enjoyable activity but was also able to socialise with other peers. This indicated that part of the reason why YP complete group leisure activities might be because it provides the social stimulation they need, reinforcing the idea that social time is beneficial for their wellbeing.

Some YP discussed how socialising with peers can provide respite. Zofia described how talking to her friends during lunchtime gave her the needed break from the stress experienced at school, '*We talk about videos we see online, or games we play, or plans for the weekend [...] and not think about school'* (Zofia, lines 240 – 241). From Zofia's account, it seemed that socialising with peers can not only serve as a distraction, but it can also be perceived as entertaining. Similarly, when recounting her past school trips, Summer explained how beneficial being with her peers was for her enjoyment, '*you can be close and comfortable, and have a good time*.' (Summer, line 354). Summer often spoke about socialising with other YP during her interview, suggesting that this was an important protective factor for some students' wellbeing.

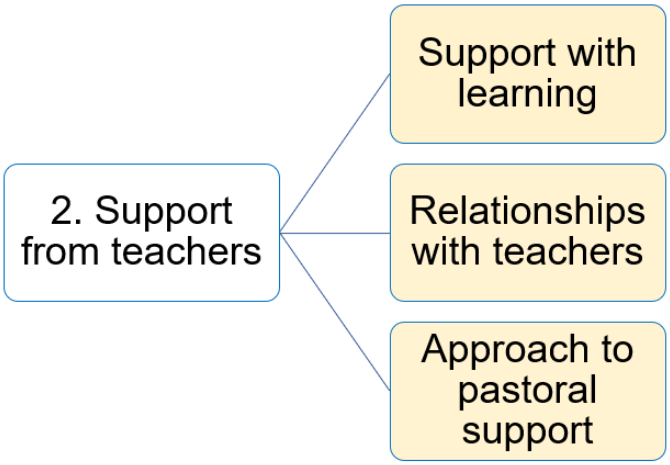
Overall, most participants identified ways in which socialising or engaging in non-academic activities with their peers supported their wellbeing.

4.3.2 Theme 2: Support from Teachers

The help provided by teachers was consistently perceived as valuable. Learning and pastoral support were often mentioned as beneficial for YP's wellbeing. Many participants also seemed to place great importance on the quality of their student-teacher relationships and interactions, which, according to some YP, underpinned the effectiveness of the received in-class support.

Figure 4.4

Theme 2 and Associated Sub-themes



4.3.2.1 Support with Learning. Learning support was a consistent theme throughout most interviews, often associated with feelings of calm and ease. Several YP discussed the importance of quality first teaching and how this facilitated their wellbeing. Speaking about Miss Gomez (pseudonym), Zofia explained how teaching at the students' pace was helpful, '*if we have to take five lessons to understand one thing, then, she'll take the five lessons to understand it before we actually move on, instead of leaving us clueless*' (Zofia, lines 300 – 302). Zofia often discussed different aspects of

Miss Gomez's approach to teaching that had facilitated her enjoyment of learning and, hence, made her happier. These included incorporating pupil voice, reducing students' workload, and using 'fun activities'. Zofia concluded that her school-related stress had reduced as a result. Several other participants shared a similar view. Kevin also discussed how particular adjustments made during long lessons had been supportive, '*they will give you a few minutes break, and you could just settle in a bit'* (Kevin, lines 235 – 236). Kevin felt that this was helpful to all students as double lessons were often 'overwhelming'. Altogether, this highlighted that effective class support can promote students' wellbeing by increasing their positive experiences at school, or by decreasing given academic pressures.

Like other YP, Kevin discussed how teachers provided continuous motivation and guidance, which had been particularly helpful when he was 'stuck'. He stated, '*It helped me in the long run cuz' I know actually how to do it'* (Kevin, line 211). Likewise, Eduardo described a moment of a realisation when his teacher's support increased his desire to do well with his learning, '*It was a driving force [...] How can someone else want something that I am supposed to have more than me?*'. Altogether, it appeared that extrinsic motivation provided by teachers can transfer into students' intrinsic motivation to improve academically. Eduardo felt that this helped him to persist despite 'failing' on multiple occasions and, subsequently, to experience success in his learning.

Other participants also perceived help from teachers as beneficial because it led to improved academic performance. Derek vividly described the benefits for his emotional wellbeing, '*at that moment I felt so happy [...] achieving my purpose [...] Cool breeze sensation all over me'* (Derek, lines 191 – 192). He seemed to value the learning support that had enhanced his academic progress because he reportedly had been concerned about his attainment. This is in line with the findings outlined in section 4.2.4,

suggesting that teacher support that facilitates the fulfilment of students' academic goals can be a powerful way to boost their wellbeing. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Working towards one's aspirations' (see Section 4.2.4).

Several YP also expressed the value of practical study tips provided by teachers. When asked about what supported her wellbeing, Summer stated, '*they give us advice on how to revise every day, and it makes you feel at ease'* (Summer, line 169). Kevin also explained how his stress decreased when his teachers limited the demands placed on him by providing exam revision resources. Altogether, this showed that being provided with additional guidance on how to effectively prepare for assessments can help students feel contained and well-supported.

Overall, YP's accounts indicated that help with both the emotional and academic side of learning have been perceived as valuable for their wellbeing. This often seemed to result in reduction in stress and increase in students' positive emotions. Interestingly, most participants discussing this topic were about to or had just sat their exams, suggesting that learning support could be perceived as more valuable when the academic pressures placed on students are high.

4.3.2.2 Relationships with Teachers. The majority of YP discussed the importance of student-teacher relationships for their wellbeing. Relatability was mentioned by some participants as a key factor for building a good relationship with staff. When talking about the age of her young head of year, Rose said, '*she's probably had more similar experiences to you, so already people like her as a teacher and feel able to talk to her'* (Rose, lines 117 – 119). Rose compared that to the relationship she had with another teacher, whose contrasting opinions and reactions to situations made Rose reluctant to engage with her. Zofia also discussed how easy it is to relate to Miss Gomez, stating that '*she shares stories where she has past experiences and that makes*

it relatable' (Zofia, lines 260 – 261). Zofia described the value of her special relationship with Miss Gomez, which had meant that she had found it easy to request help when her wellbeing was compromised. Overall, it appeared that finding teachers relatable makes it easier for YP to build positive relationships with them. Moreover, the quality of their student-teacher relationships seemed to be an important predictor of whether staff's help would be sought.

Ben also discussed an occasion when he requested help from staff, '*because of the relationship I had with that teacher [...] I felt comfortable*' (Ben, lines 163 – 165). This highlighted that it easier for students to seek support from teachers, with whom they have a positive attachment. Describing the support he had received, Walt also emphasised the importance of his relationships with staff, '*What really helped me was the composure and interaction between the both parties, which was me and the relationship initiated at that particular point'* (Walt, lines 120 – 121). Walt's comment suggested that having helpful interactions with teachers can enhance the relationships students have with them. All in all, relationships with teachers were perceived as a valuable source of support by many YP. This sub-theme links with 'Individual perceptions and reactions promoting resilience' (see Section 4.2.3).

4.3.2.3 Approach to Pastoral Support. Most participants reported that the way pastoral support offered by some teachers had facilitated their wellbeing at school. Several YP discussed the value of emotional safety provided by staff. Zofia stated, '*it's all about having a safe space to show your emotions cuz' sometimes you may feel like pushing too much'* (Zofia, lines 41 – 42). This indicated that some YP need to feel emotionally safe before opening up to staff. Walt's account suggested he shared this view. Initially, he said, '*to lean on their shoulder [...] it wasn't that easy for me'* (Walt, lines 152). However, as he continued, Walt expressed how the emotional warmth

provided by teachers helped him to talk about his difficulties. This reinforced the idea that feeling psychologically safe was viewed as a pre-requisite for showing vulnerability to staff.

Other aspects of the pastoral care provided such as staff's attunement were also identified as crucial for students' wellbeing. Several participants spoke about the need to feel listened to by teachers. Kevin expressed, '*if you really had to speak to them [...], they would listen'* (Kevin, lines 79 – 80). He explained that while this was only communicated covertly by staff, the fact that his teachers were approachable reassured him during stressful times such as his exams. This implied that even when support is not utilised by students, they can still feel contained knowing that staff would readily attune to their needs. Ben also expressed how feeling listened to helped him when an incident happened at school, saying, '*you speak to that teacher cuz' you know that they will listen to you and trust you*' (Ben, lines 138 – 139).

Similarly, Zofia said that she has found talking with Miss Gomez helpful because '*she listened to the actual problem and how I felt about it'* (Zofia, lines 127 – 128). However, she added that being understood was more important. Correspondingly, Rose stated, '*that's what helped me, being able to talk to someone I know would understand'* (Rose, lines 127 – 128). She elaborated that when teachers allowed enough time to discuss her problems, they were able to understand her and, subsequently, to give her helpful advice. Walt also mentioned the pastoral support he received was enhanced when staff attempted to understand his experience. He said, '*they tried to put themself in the shoe that I'm facing'* (Walt, lines 150 – 151). Altogether, this indicated that feeling heard and understood by teachers were perceived as key features of good, effective pastoral support. However, there appeared to be a perceived hierarchy between these two attunement principles, whereby feeling understood was viewed as uppermost.

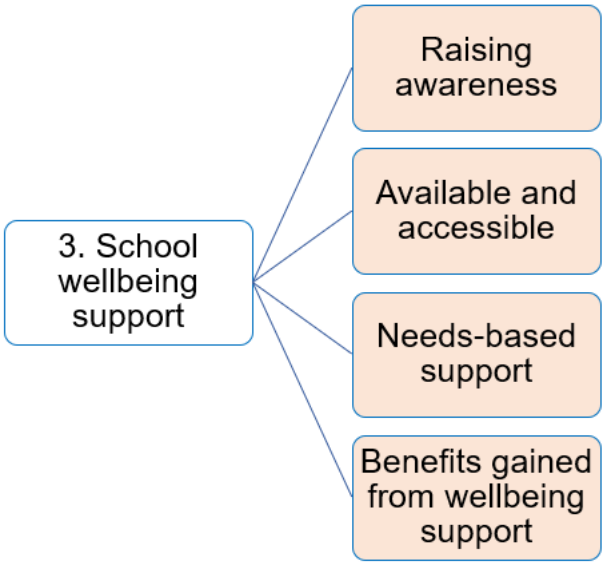
Being helped to reframe difficult situations was also viewed as a helpful aspect of teachers' wellbeing support. Several participants gave individual examples of how staff offered alternative ways of thinking about their challenges. Discussing a PSHE lessons, Alesha said, '*It was just talking about how sometimes it's just good to let go [...], and I thought that was quite interesting*.' (Alesha, lines 174 – 176). She explained that this advice helped her to re-think how she managed tension in her peer relationships. Alesha concluded that relatable advice like this is helpful to many YP and their wellbeing. Likewise, Kevin described a time when his teachers changed his mindset about his academic performance, '*So, they, they just let me know that it's possible'* (Kevin, line 200). Kevin also added that, consequently, he felt less worried about his academic results. From Alesha's and Kevin's accounts, it seemed that students feel well-supported when they are helped to see difficult situations from a new perspective. This appeared to result in having more balanced emotional experiences and, thus, benefited their wellbeing. Overall, some teachers' approach to pastoral care was perceived as helpful for YP's wellbeing. This included the provision of emotional safety, engaging in attuned interactions and support with reframing difficult situations.

4.3.3 Theme 3: School Wellbeing Support

The wellbeing support offered at school was consistently discussed throughout the interviews. Most students expressed general satisfaction with the available support, associating it with different benefits for their wellbeing.

Figure 4.5

Theme 3 and Associated Sub-themes



4.3.3.1 Raising Awareness. Most participants spoke about the ways in which their schools increased students' awareness around MH issues and the available wellbeing support. As reported by the majority of YP, schools' universal support often incorporated wellbeing discussions. Eduardo expressed, '*they would get us to assembly and they would talk about mental health, physical, mental illnesses*' (Eduardo, lines 101 – 102). He added that these discussions were often reinforced during form time, concluding that this was useful. Similarly, Rose also said that having regular MH discussions during wellbeing lessons helped, '*the fact that we talk about, um, it quite often [...] It normalises it more'* (Rose, lines 143 – 145). She further elaborated that this, in turn, reassures YP that it is okay to seek wellbeing support. Alesha stated, '*they do do assemblies quite a lot [...] I think that [...] helpful things to think about and how you can feel better when something goes wrong'* (Alesha, lines 69 – 75). Alesha's account suggested that she valued the preventative nature of having frequent wellbeing discussions. In line with this, she spoke about how this left her feeling better equipped to deal with potential MH difficulties in the future.

Essentially, many participants also discussed their schools' efforts to raise awareness of the available support. Summer expressed that in her school both internal and external support were advertised, '*there'll be, like, an assembly for, like, what help is there […] which is good. […] they say who can help you […] Like ChildLine, or there's Kooth, like, posters of apps to use*.' (Summer, lines 58 – 65). Ben also stated, '*at every assembly, at the end of it, they usually explain, [...] there are people you can talk to in case you're feeling down'* (Ben, lines 94 – 95). Ben later added that it had been helpful knowing the support was there. At Rose's school, the available support was advertised through their weekly wellbeing lessons, '*depending on the topic we are talking about, how we can get help or support. [...] Yeah, there's awareness*' (Rose, lines 91 – 96). She explicitly acknowledged the school's success in making students aware of the support. In line with this, the majority of YP showed good awareness of what the wellbeing provisions are in their schools, with only one participant stating otherwise. This was perceived as helpful by the participants because it reportedly gave them reassurance that they could use the support if need be.

Overall, this sub-theme highlighted that whole-school discussions around MH-related difficulties and the available wellbeing provisions were perceived as helpful. Students felt that this reduced MH stigma and increased their awareness of ways to deal with potential future problems, which was reassuring.

4.3.3.2 Available and Accessible. Accessibility and availability of support were commonly discussed themes during the interviews. Most participants seemed to value having easy access to help. Eduardo said, '*I feel I can just go and talk to them*.' (Eduardo, line 142), which highlighted that he could get support from staff at any time. Ben reaffirmed this idea, saying, '*if you need a teacher to talk to, then, there's obviously, there's enough teachers to talk to'* (Ben, lines 69 – 70). Rose shared an example of

when she accessed staff's support easily, '*I was [...] overwhelmed, so I had to go to my head of year's office*' (Rose, lines 167 – 168). She then added that this was one of the times when she felt well supported by her school. All in all, this suggested that easy access to pastoral support reassured participants that they would receive help should they need to, as well as ensured that they are contained at times of crisis.

Moreover, some participants discussed that knowing wellbeing support is available helps students feel that they do not need to deal with issues on their own. Alesha explained that YP cannot always approach their parents if they have concerns, adding, '*it's important that they [...] feel like they can talk to someone if they can't at home'* (Alesha, lines 271 – 272). Similarly, when talking about the possibility to get pastoral support at school, Ben said, *'you don't feel alone. You don't feel that trapped or anything, so you think you can express your feelings*' (Ben, lines 149 – 150). Thus, it seemed that the availability of support helps students to feel settled, knowing that there is someone else who they can talk to, share their problems with and express how they truly feel.

Some participants' comments also suggested that it is key to have access to wellbeing support that is reliable. Kevin discussed how students at his school could seek support by using a 'help box', adding '*They'll make sure they contact you and speak with you about it'* (Kevin, line 95). He later expressed his satisfaction with the wellbeing support at school because staff followed through with what was promised. When talking about wellbeing workshops at his school, Amadi also said, *'most of the time they did talk about what I needed them to talk about [...] I felt like it's a good thing*.' (Amadi, lines 259 – 261). This indicated that trusting that support would be provided and would meet one's expectations was important for YP.

The interview discussions also suggested that YP knew how to access school support for their wellbeing. Derek explained that students at his school could obtain specialist help if they have significant difficulties, '*If anyone was feeling depressed [...] there is always a section like counselling unit that will always talk to you*.' (Derek, lines 45 – 49). Several other YP indicated they could approach school staff for help. For example, Kevin described a discreet way of doing so, '*You can write [...] anything you are concerned about and put it at this box and the teacher will look at it*.' (Kevin, lines 92 – 93). This implied that some students may feel more comfortable to access support indirectly. Summer also shared that she was able to approach her teachers and / or other specialists for help, adding '*maybe, some teachers, I knew them since year seven, or they are specialised in, like, safeguarding'* (Summer, line 258). Summer's emphasis on the longevity of her relationship with teachers suggested that accessing pastoral care from well-known staff members may be easier. Overall, it seemed that YP knew the different support systems that are available in their schools.

Altogether, most participants identified avenues for wellbeing support they could access and having easy access to reliable pastoral support appeared to be reassuring. This resulted in them feeling less alone and helped them when their wellbeing was compromised.

4.3.3.3 Needs-Based Support. Participants often said that it was important that school support met their needs. Some YP spoke about reasonable adjustments that preserved their wellbeing. For example, Rose discussed the time when she had been given a 'time out' card after she had experienced a family bereavement, '*so if you get overwhelmed, you can leave the classroom for, like, 5 minutes, or whatever, just to, like, cool down and recollect yourself*' (Rose, lines 75 – 76). She further elaborated that this approach accommodated her emotional needs well and, thus, helped her to remain in

school at a very challenging time. Several other participants highlighted how universal support effectively responded to their needs. Discussing the social clubs he accessed at his school, Amadi said, '*I think, mostly, when I needed friends, I felt like I'm well-supported*' (Amadi, line 120). This indicated that he was satisfied with this provision because it provided the friendships he had been missing.

Another example of this was given by Walt, whose family struggled financially after the loss of his brother. However, he explained that he had found schools' pastoral support to be sufficiently helpful, saying, '*I didn't need funding support. What I really needed was someone to talk to, someone to tell me what I need to know.*' (Walt, line 260 - 261). This suggested that some of YP's needs may take precedence and ensuring these are accommodated is important. Walt's account also indicated that having access to general life advice was valuable. This idea was reinforced by other participants such as Zofia, who said, '*We just need advice in certain situations'* (Zofia, line 86 – 87). Likewise, Derek expressed that he felt his wellbeing was well-supported at school when he needed guidance regarding his future career from staff, '*He talked to me, advised me, and I had to hear to all his advice and that's how I kept on going higher'* (Derek, lines 211 – 212). Overall, participants' accounts indicated that YP may need and, thus, value receiving general life advice from school staff, which, in turn, can result in their improved wellbeing.

While many YP mentioned universally available provisions, some participants discussed how students' wellbeing needs were met through specialist help. When Amadi spoke about his transition to secondary school, he said, '*so most of the time, I felt like I'm low and just needed some counselling [...] to cope up with the stress*.' (Amadi, lines 105 – 107). Correspondingly, Walt spoke about accessing specialist support following a bereavement, '*at that point, I needed to consult a counsellor*' (Walt, lines 71 – 72).

Similarly, Alesha stated, '*Obviously, there are people that are struggling, and they would want to go to a counsellor*.' (Alesha, lines 150 – 151). From participants' comments, it appeared that some YP need access to specialist support. Their accounts also suggested that this may be utilised at times when students display prolonged and significant wellbeing difficulties, and, hence, access to counselling may help them to get better.

To sum up, most participants highlighted the importance of accessing needs-based support for their wellbeing. Some YP discussed universal provisions and the value of general life advice, whilst others expressed how specialist support accommodated their wellbeing needs.

4.3.3.4 Benefits Gained from Wellbeing Support. The advantages of the available wellbeing support were a common theme across the interviews. Some YP highlighted the benefits of being explicitly taught how to self-regulate. When talking about the wellbeing workshops he accessed, Amadi stated, '*it helped me, you know, they provided some materials, resources, to help me manage my stress'* (Amadi, 263 – 264). Similarly, Alesha reflected on the learning from her weekly wellbeing lessons, '*I think some of the things they've talked about are quite helpful. Like, when you're feeling sad, what to do to feel better*' (Alesha, lines 65 - 66). Amadi and Alesha's accounts suggested that learning about self-regulation can support students to both deal with current wellbeing difficulties, and to feel prepared to do so in the future.

For several YP, some of the accrued advantages of the available wellbeing provisions involved learning from others' experiences. Walt discussed aspects of the effective bereavement support he had received at school, saying '*They talked to me [...], giving me scenarios of situations that people do overcome, why do people stand firm*' (Walt, lines 145 – 146). This implied that YP may benefit from being given examples of

how others have managed and withstood the situations students face. In a similar vein, Alesha discussed her insights from her school's wellbeing assemblies, *'they usually have someone come in and talk about [...] their struggles, and [...] things they've done to overcome it. And I think that's quite helpful.'* (Alesha, lines 70 – 71). She added that hearing about the ways others had successfully dealt with their MH difficulties is highly beneficial as it helps YP think about how to manage their reactions in similar situations in the future. This indicated that providing real-life examples is a powerful way to promote YP's ability to deal with adversity, also highlighting the idea that challenges are a normal part of life. Hence, this sub-theme links with 'Individual perceptions and reactions promoting resilience' (see Section 4.2.3).

Interestingly, the accounts of several participants suggested that certain school provisions implicitly promoted students' self-regulation. To illustrate, Kevin spoke about the benefits of non-academic subjects during the stressful exam times, '*so people use that as, like, it's a time, when they can just have fun [...] So, I think that helps.*' (Kevin, lines 288 – 289). This highlighted that offering fun activities (eg as part of a varied curriculum) allows YP to remain emotionally balanced during stressful times. Ben's account also suggested that the available pastoral support facilitated students' emotional regulation, '*they'd have, like, a session at the school, where you can ask for help and express your feelings*' (Ben, lines 70 – 72). His comment implied that school staff can co-regulate YP by giving them opportunities to discuss key emotions, or by assisting students with their issues. To sum up, it appeared that certain school provisions benefited students' wellbeing and promoted their feelings of containment.

Overall, this sub-theme highlighted the advantages associated with schools' wellbeing provisions. Some YP valued being explicitly taught or being given real-life

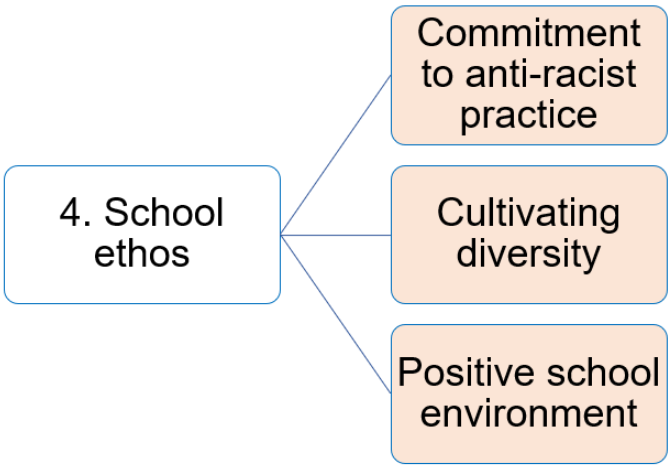
examples of how to deal with challenging situations, whilst others have benefited from school provisions directly enhancing their wellbeing.

4.3.4 Theme 4: School Ethos

Most participants discussed the importance of whole-school ethos. Some YP spoke highly of their schools' anti-racist approach, value for cultural diversity, and the positive school environment.

Figure 4.6

Theme 4 and Associated Sub-themes



4.3.4.1 Commitment to Anti-Racist Practice. Several YP highlighted the importance of anti-racist practice for their wellbeing. When describing his experience as a Black student in a London-based secondary school, Derek stated, '*They said 'No' to racism [...] That was part of the support that we benefitted, especially we the Black*' (Derek, lines 99 – 102). He highlighted that he had not been discriminated against because of the school's anti-racism policy. This, as reported by Derek, protected him from developing significant MH difficulties such as depression. Derek emphasised how essential schools' commitment to anti-racist practice is, adding '*There are some schools that have no policies against racism, they may not be serious about it.'* (Derek, lines 152

– 153). This indicated that some Black YP may feel well-supported within their school only when key policies and procedures targeting racial discrimination are adopted.

This idea was also attested by Amadi, who expressed, '*the school was creating [...] a safe environment for everyone. You [...] won't feel like you are alone [...] by addressing discrimination and microaggressions [...] the school [...] welcome everyone to that environment'* (Amadi, lines 178 – 180). His account implied that anti-racist practice at his school helped him to feel safe and included there, knowing that he would not be treated unfairly. It also suggested that this approach can facilitate Black students' sense of belonging. Amadi further elaborated on this, explaining how anti-racist practice supported him to endure stressful experiences at school. He added, '*by advocating for students to stop discrimination. I think it helped me motivate myself, 'Yes, I can do it. Yes, can do this.*' (Amadi, 278 – 279). This highlighted that embedding racial equality can increase Black students' feelings of self-efficacy and, in turn, can make them more resilient. Overall, schools' commitment to anti-racist practice was consistently mentioned by several participants as a protective factor to their wellbeing.

4.3.4.2 Cultivating Diversity. Some participants perceived their schools' value for cultural diversity as a crucial aspect of their ethos. This sometimes involved having an environment made up of different cultures, but also providing spaces specifically for Black students. Several YP highlighted the benefits of school groups supporting Black students. Speaking about a new school club, Alesha said, '*it's [...] a Black [...] society [...] they sit in a circle and all share their experiences they have had as Black people [...] Black people do need [...] their own time.*' (Alesha, lines 294 – 299). Alesha's comment suggested that having a space for Black YP, where everyone is equal, can relate to each other's experiences and feels understood is essential. Likewise, Amadi expressed, '*I'm Black, so the school has groups and communities that involve Black people. So, when*

you join the groups, you're welcome, your values are welcome, and [...] you feel like you're at home' (Amadi, lines 114 – 116). Amadi, subsequently, concluded that his wellbeing was well-supported within these groups. This implied that some Black YP may feel accepted, respected and at ease when they are amongst other Black students, with whom they feel they can relate on a deeper level. It also suggested that being part of groups supporting Black students promotes a sense of belonging, which was attested by Amadi.

Other YP felt that being in culturally diverse environments facilitated their sense of security and connectedness. Derek explained, '*I was totally mixed with people of various colours [...] I moved on so easily with them. [...] everything was so cool with them*.' (Derek, lines 91 – 94). From his account, it appeared that Derek found his exposure to diversity at school to promote social inclusion. His comments suggested that he not only made friendships with students from different racial backgrounds, but he was also comfortable to be himself. This seemed to have been further facilitated by having a diverse staff team at school as Derek added*, 'we also had a mixture of the staff, you know, mixture of Black and white'* (Derek, lines 103 – 104). Derek felt that in the long run this had supported his wellbeing, which suggested that students benefit when schools promote staff representation that reflects the ethnic diversity of their student community.

Overall, some participants valued the steps taken by their schools that cultivated cultural diversity. Being part of diverse school communities and participating in groups supporting Black students were both highlighted as beneficial for students' wellbeing.

4.3.4.3 Positive School Environment. Positive school environments were identified as helpful by some YP. Several participants spoke favourably about the positive staff culture in their schools. When describing the pastoral and learning support he had received, Kevin expressed, '*they're always positive about everything [...] I mean,*

all the teachers and the school, everything' (Kevin, lines 152 – 156). He further elaborated that this had been conducive to his positive wellbeing. Kevin's comments also suggested that staff at his school had consistently showed positive reactions towards him and other students, which, in turn, seemed to have led to him feeling contained. It also implied that positive emotional contagion could be induced in favourable school environments, whereby students' positive feelings were facilitated when staff responded positively. This idea was attested by Amadi's comment regarding the wellbeing support accessed at his school, '*the energy was positive, everything they did, I think, was helpful to me'* (Amadi, lines 295 – 296). His account indicated that support may be perceived as more effective when the staff team relate positively to students. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Approach to pastoral support' (see Section 4.3.2.3).

Walt also spoke highly of the people who supported him following a bereavement, '*with the love I see with the psychologist, the teachers, and a few of the other students over there, it was amazing*' (Walt, lines 130 – 132). Walt's description showed that he received care and affection not only from the staff team but also from the students. This suggested that schools with positive ethos can promote fulfilling relationships amongst everyone in the school community. Interestingly, Ben implied that schools that had built a positive environment also protected students from certain negative experiences, '*I think the school's doing good. Bullying as well, I reckon is at low.*' (Ben, line 217). Overall, being part of positive school environments was viewed as helpful. Some of the implied benefits included experiencing positive wellbeing, satisfaction with the supplied wellbeing support, and limited exposure to negative school experiences such as bullying.

4.3.5 Research Question 1: Summary of Findings

This section presented the findings related to RQ1, namely '*What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people?'*. Peers were highlighted as helpful to participants' wellbeing, with friendships, peer support and leisure time spent with other students being commonly discussed. Additionally, YP often mentioned teachers as a source of support in the context of learning, emotional wellbeing and through their student-teacher relationships. School wellbeing provisions were a consistently discussed theme, which involved raising awareness around wellbeing-related topics and support, providing easily accessible wellbeing provisions, as well as ensuring that support met students' needs and promoted their self-regulation. Lastly, schools' ethos was often mentioned as helpful for students' wellbeing, with some students emphasising the importance of anti-racist practice, the cultivation of cultural diversity and their exposure to a positive school environment.

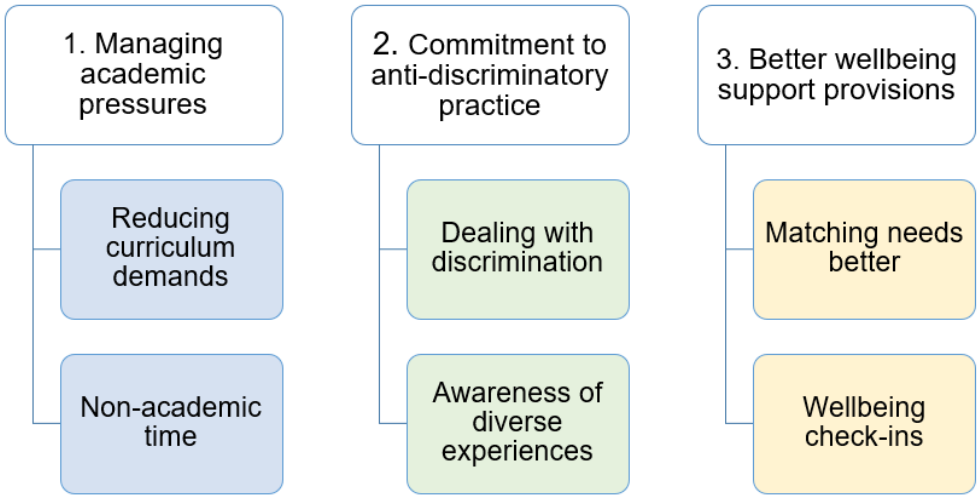
4.4 How Can Support be Improved

RQ2: How can school wellbeing support be improved according to young Black people?

Please, see Figure 4.7 for a visual representation of the themes and sub-themes related to RQ2.

Figure 4.7

Themes and Sub-themes Related to YP's Perceptions on How School Wellbeing Support Can Improve

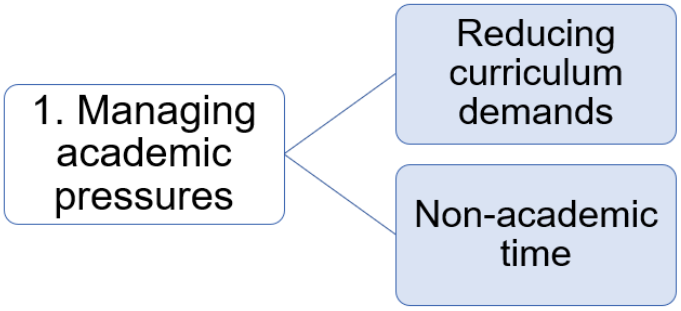


4.4.1 Theme 1: Managing Academic Pressures

Academic pressures were commonly mentioned by YP. Participants felt that their wellbeing could be better supported if curriculum demands were lowered and more opportunities for non-academic activities were given.

Figure 4.8

Theme 1 and Associated Sub-themes



4.4.1.1 Reducing Curriculum Demands. Many YP spoke about the curriculum demands they currently (or had previously) faced. Academic pressure was consistently associated with feeling overwhelmed. Eduardo spoke about the educational system, stating, *'so much subjects [...] I don't know if the environment does it on purpose for kids to, like, know exactly what they want to do [...] but I just think it's a bit too much.'* (Eduardo, lines 231 – 233). This highlighted that Eduardo recognised the potential benefits of having many subjects, whilst also expressing that the academic expectations were too demanding. Similarly, Zofia explained that staff's high aspirations for students can increase YP's stress, adding '*all teachers want us to succeed in their subjects, but they are not really mindful of the fact that we have other subjects as well'* (Zofia, lines 151 – 152). This suggested that staff are perceived to have some control over the demands they place on students. In fact, Zofia suggested a practical solution to this problem, '*The maximum should be, like, doing two homeworks, one homework for each subject'* (Zofia, 187 – 188). She further elaborated that teachers could negotiate with each other when homework is due, so students do not feel overloaded at any given time. Eduardo also argued, '*There's this thing called Hegarty Maths [...] It had too many tasks, way too many tasks. Teachers, they should make homework, like, manageable'* (Eduardo, lines 365 – 370). From Eduardo's account, it seemed that YP would benefit from having less homework, so they can complete it without feeling pressured. Overall, this sub-theme highlighted that there are different adaptations that teachers could make to ensure that students do not feel overwhelmed by the amount of schoolwork they are required to complete. This seemed to have direct implications for YP's wellbeing, whereby lower curriculum demands were associated with reduced stress levels. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Support with learning' (see Section 4.3.2.1).

4.4.1.2 Non-Academic Time. Some students highlighted how key engaging in more leisure activities at school was for their wellbeing. Derek reflected on his secondary school experience, stating, '*The school I went to was fully academics. [...] We did not really have enough time to have non-academic activities [...] To get the mental [...] health of the young people'* (Derek, lines 126 – 131). He suggested that his school should have offered more activities such as sports, including outdoor events, social clubs, debates, and games, which can promote social connections within the student population and allow them to exercise. This, he said, would support both students' mental and physical health. When asked about how the current wellbeing support could be better, Summer also said that she would appreciate more non-academic activities such as '*going to museums, and everywhere […] It's changing the surroundings, it's good*.' (Summer, lines 343 – 347). She suggested that would make YP at her school happier. Eduardo also suggested a way that would ensure that students have a more balanced experience at school, saying, '*I feel there needs to be something like that, like a little, like a stoppish period, between every lesson'* (Eduardo, 277 – 278). He explained that adopting such an approach at school would allow students to have a short break when they would be able to refresh their mind and get mentally ready for the next lesson, '*there's [...] switching off a little bit, and relaxing, and coming back so you're ready to learn*' (Eduardo, lines 284-286). Altogether, some participants' accounts suggested that having more opportunities for non-academic activities and breaks would facilitate their wellbeing. Hence, this sub-theme links with 'Leisure time and socialising' (see Section 4.3.1.3).

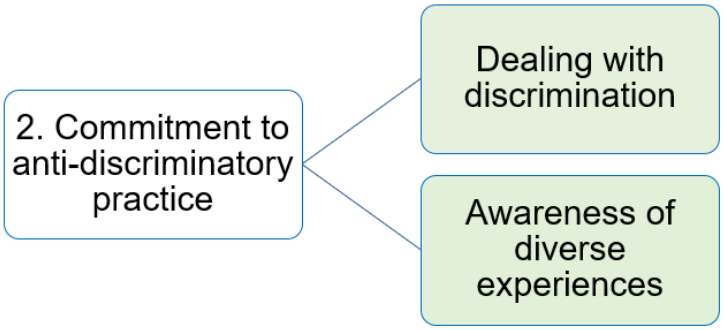
4.4.2 Theme 2: Commitment to Anti-Discriminatory Practice

Several YP emphasised the importance of schools' commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. They explained that this would involve increased awareness of the experiences that diverse communities have. It was also suggested that certain

discriminatory practices should be challenged more effectively by school staff. This theme links with 'School ethos' (see Section 4.3.4).

Figure 4.9

Theme 2 and Associated Sub-themes



4.4.2.1 Dealing with Discrimination. Overcoming discriminatory practices was commonly mentioned by some participants, who felt strongly about this issue. YP's accounts often went beyond the topic of discrimination, also highlighting the importance of inclusive practice.

Discriminatory practices witnessed at school were discussed by several YP. When talking about the different ability groupings in her class, Zofia said, '*I get frustrated about the fact that some teachers prioritise a certain group of students'* (Zofia, 298 – 299). This suggested that YP may feel discontent with staff's unfair treatment and perceived favouritism based on students' ability. Walt also explained that staff should ensure being even-handed with students regardless of their gender, racial background, or other characteristics. In fact, when listing his non-negotiables for effective wellbeing support, Walt highlighted, '*We treat who as who. We should avoid discrimination'* (Walt, lines 170 – 171). From this quote, it appeared that inclusion and anti-discriminatory practice are both seen as important approaches that would help students to feel well-supported. This idea seems to be corroborated by other YP. Amadi also felt that the

discrimination that he had experienced at his school's wellbeing workshop could be overcome '*by helping everyone, by engaging with everyone*' (Amadi, line 231). This suggested that involving and offering support to all parties accessing the available provisions was viewed as essential. Overall, some participants' accounts suggested that YP valued being treated fairly, and being included within their school. This seemed to be key for their emotional wellbeing, as well as their satisfaction with the available support.

Some YP spoke about discriminatory practices in the context of racial inequalities. Rose described her experiences as a Black student in the outskirts of London, sharing an emotive personal example, '*the same teachers, are calling Black students by other Black students' name, and they don't do that to other white students [...] it's just, offensive, but it also comes across as if you're too lazy to learn*' (Rose, lines 304 – 307). Rose's account highlighted that discriminatory practices can be subtle, yet hurtful and damaging to YP's wellbeing. It also suggested that staff have the capacity to change their behaviour, which is attested by the fact that Rose advocated for more training for staff. She said, '*I think, there needs to be [...] specific training for the teachers, about [...] what is not acceptable to do or say'* (Rose, lines 315-318). This implied that staff's commitment to anti-discriminatory practice involves being aware of how discrimination can present in real-life situations.

To sum up, this sub-theme showed that anti-discriminatory practices were viewed as important by participants. In their accounts, YP focused on both inclusion of all pupils and anti-racist practice.

4.4.2.2 Awareness of Diverse Experiences. Some participants felt that having a good awareness of the experiences of diverse communities is non-negotiable. It was highlighted that this has significant implications for Black students' wellbeing. As such, some YP felt that it is an essential learning need of both staff and students alike.

Rose emphasised the need for better awareness amongst teachers and students around the impact of Black students' experiences on their wellbeing, adding '*I say, particularly on microaggressions cuz' that's the thing that I see most'* (Rose, lines 302 – 303). She added that microaggressions are the most significant factor that adversely affects Black YP's wellbeing and attested this by providing several personal examples, which reportedly had led her to feel upset. Rose felt that staff are often dismissive of the impact of microaggressions when these are reported because of the subtle nature of the behaviours involved, explaining that this can '*make Black people not feeling heard, or seen*.' (Rose, line 256). Altogether, Rose's comments corroborated that there needs to be good awareness of the impact that key issues faced by young Black people may have on their wellbeing. This would appear to enable staff and students to spot and stop microaggressions, and, subsequently, to validate Black YP's experiences. From Rose's account, it also seemed that such approach may inspire the provision of more effective wellbeing support for Black students.

This idea seemed to be supported by other YP's comments. When talking about the wellbeing coaches in her school, Alesha stated, '*they can teach them to be a bit more relatable to kids. I think they can [...] try and understand everyone's experience,'* (Alesha, 210 – 212). She elaborated that the staff at her school lived in a predominantly White area and, thus, may not have been fully aware of diverse students' lives. This suggested that staff's lived experiences (e.g. their residence) can hinder or facilitate their understanding of issues faced by diverse populations. Alesha emphasised that this served as a barrier for students of colour to seek help. Her account suggested that diverse students' willingness to utilise the available support may increase when teachers' understanding of their experiences improves.

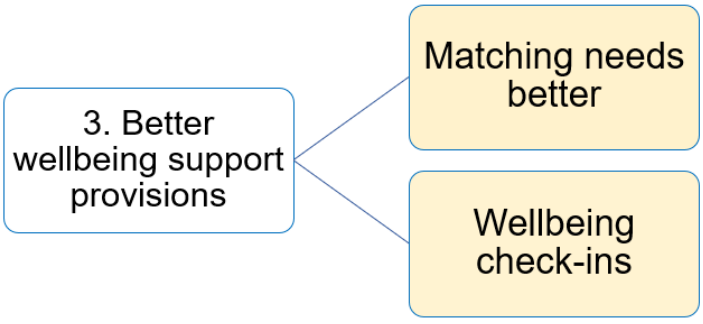
Some participants also implied that awareness could be promoted by incorporating diverse voices into the curriculum. When asked about how her school's support could be improved, Rose expressed, '*I think, having different outside opinions when the teacher is creating the curriculum for wellbeing, having [...] a Black teacher put input'* (Rose, lines 276 – 279). Rose further elaborated that this approach would ensure that the wellbeing topics discussed at her school would fully reflect the challenges that are meaningful to Black YP. Her account also suggested the benefits of diverse staff, who have corresponding lived experiences. All in all, this sub-theme indicated that staff's understanding of the struggles that diverse students have may have implications for the effectiveness of the available wellbeing support.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Better Wellbeing Support Provisions

Many YP felt that their schools' wellbeing provisions could and need to be improved. It was argued that the available support should be a better match to students' needs. Some participants also felt that wellbeing check-ins should be provided to students. This theme links with 'School wellbeing support' (see Section 4.3.3).

Figure 4.10

Theme 3 and Associated Sub-themes



4.4.3.1 Matching Needs Better. It was argued that the available support could match students' needs better. Students discussed this idea in regard to both universal

and specialist support. Additionally, some YP felt that the problems that students had should be appropriately dealt with by staff.

Several participants mentioned that their schools' universal provisions did not meet students' needs. Rose said, '*there's not enough focus on issues that [...] affect young people and their mental health right now'* (Rose, lines 238). Subsequently, she suggested that schools can utilise YP's views around what provisions would better match their needs. This highlighted that a student-centred approach to support was perceived as valuable by YP because it would lead to provisions that are more meaningful to them. Likewise, Alesha discussed how the available support at her school may not effectively match everyone's needs, suggesting, '*I think that could help, if they did group sessions, instead of just, like, one-to-one, cuz' that feels, you know, quite restrictive'* (Alesha, lines 285 - 287). She elaborated that students need someone they can relate to and have similar experiences with to feel well-supported, which is not always the case when only few staff members are the nominated wellbeing champions in the school.

The need for better specialist provisions was also discussed by participants. Zofia suggested that specialist support may be preferrable due to its confidential nature, '*A psychotherapist [...] having the reassurance that what we speak about really stays [...] doesn't, you know, go out.'* (Zofia, lines 383 - 384). This highlighted that discretion is valued by YP, allowing them to truly express how they feel. When talking about support from counsellors, Walt stated, '*I believe the time frame for students should be properly managed by them [...] they, kind of, employ more hands to help when the situation rises'* (Walt, lines 187 – 188). His comment indicated that more specialist staff need to be recruited by schools to ensure that the waiting times for accessing counselling meet the wellbeing pressures experienced by students.

Other YP felt that their wellbeing problems were assessed inaccurately by staff. Zofia expressed, '*if I were to have family issues, and go to the Safeguarding team, I feel, like, they would try to listen to the warnings, so they can call Social Care'* (Zofia, lines 128 – 130). She argued against that, discussing that such approach matches the Safeguarding Team's professional needs rather than students' needs, and results in consequences that are out of proportion. Conversely, Alesha described the times when support did not meet students' needs effectively, '*they think 'Oh, their issues are not that big a deal'* (Alesha, 271 – 272). She argued that staff always need to listen to and validate students' concerns, which, in turn, would result in YP's needs being effectively met.

Overall, it was highlighted that the available wellbeing provisions should accommodate YP's needs more effectively. Thus, this sub-theme links with 'Needs-based support' (see Section 4.3.3.3). Using student-centred approaches, ensuring students have someone relatable to talk to, employing more specialists and dealing with students' issues appropriately were discussed as helpful adaptations to the available support.

4.4.3.2 Wellbeing Check-ins. Many participants expressed that the pastoral care within their schools could be improved by having wellbeing check-ins. This, in turn, would reportedly facilitate staff's understanding of how students feel. This sub-theme links with 'Approach to pastoral support' (see Section 4.3.2.3).

Kevin suggested that having regular wellbeing check-ins during form time may be helpful, adding, '*you can just speak to a teacher [...] to find out, like, what problems students have gone through this week [...] So, it's [...] a way to offload'* (Kevin, lines 259 – 264). This highlighted that embedding pastoral check-ins in students' timetables may benefit their ability to reflect on challenging experiences and release difficult emotions.

Eduardo also felt that staff should know how students are doing emotionally, '*maybe, like a questionnaire to see if you're actually good, that, that would be a good idea*.' (Eduardo, lines 249 - 250). Altogether, Kevin's and Eduardo's comments implied that students may not necessarily share how they feel with their teachers, unless they are explicitly asked to do so. As such, it appeared that staff might increase their help-seeking behaviours by offering check-in opportunities.

Similarly, Summer also stated, '*maybe, if the students are not doing enough work, and the teacher's, like, concerned or worried, she could talk to them […] and see if they're okay'* (Summer, lines 289 - 291). This implied that teachers should monitor students' behaviours and approach them if signs of wellbeing issues are noted. From Summer's account, it also appeared that academic output can be viewed as a reliable way for identifying potential wellbeing difficulties. Subsequently, Summer highlighted the importance of discreet pastoral care, expressing that check-ins with students should take place in private environments.

To sum up, many participants shared that the offered pastoral care could be improved through the provision of wellbeing check-ins.

4.4.4 Research Question 2: Summary of Findings

This section showed the findings related to RQ2, namely '*How can school wellbeing support be improved according to young Black people?'*. From the analysis, it appeared that YP felt the wellbeing provisions could be improved by reducing the academic pressures faced by students. This included limiting the demands of schoolwork and offering non-academic time to students. Some participants also highlighted the importance of schools' commitment to anti-discriminatory practice. YP argued that this could be achieved by increasing staff and student awareness of diverse

groups' experiences, as well as by overcoming discrimination. Finally, several students thought that their schools' wellbeing provisions could be improved by better matching the available support to student's needs, as well as by providing wellbeing check-ins.

4.5 Summary of Findings

This chapter outlined the findings generated from 10 thematically analysed interviews. The first theme presented was unrelated to the RQs, as it focused on personal factors that YP found important for their wellbeing. The two RQs were then answered in turn. All sections began with a presentation of the themes and sub-themes relevant for each research question. The themes answering the first RQ, namely '*What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people?*', were as follows: importance of peers; support from teachers; school wellbeing support; and school ethos. The second RQ, or '*How can school wellbeing support be improved according to young Black people?'*, was answered by the following themes: managing academic pressures; commitment to anti-discriminatory practice; and better wellbeing support provisions. The next chapter will talk about how the findings relate to the available empirical evidence and will outline their implications for future practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this transformative, participatory research was to identify what school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful by young Black people. Chapter 5 consolidates the generated findings related to personal factors explored by the participants and the two RQs, which are presented in the context of previous literature and by adopting social-ecological theoretical lens (Ungar et al., 2007). After this, the strengths and limitations of the present research are outlined, followed by a discussion on its implications for EP practice, and a dissemination plan. Finally, the author's personal reflections in relation to her research journey are outlined before a conclusion of this thesis is provided.

5.2 Personal Factors

Many participants ascribed having good wellbeing to their resilience, which was viewed as an individual predisposition that protected them during adversity. Hence, YP often reported that they did not need to use the available wellbeing provisions at their schools. Likewise, some students from McKeague et al.'s study (2017) also felt that they could deal with their stress by themselves. In line with this, the Black male participants in Meechan and colleagues' study (2021) discussed the importance of being strong and coping with difficulties independently. The authors attributed this to the cultural stigma around MH in some Black communities, which is congruent with the discussion held at this study's reference group meeting (see Appendix 2.2). As White and Epston (1990) emphasise, this poses the question as to whether the participants in the present research had internalised the dominant discourses around MH. Interestingly, Fazel et al. (2016) and Jessiman and colleagues (2022) identified that MH stigma has made

participants from minoritised groups reluctant to talk about any associated difficulties. This was also suggested by several YP in the present study, who implied that taking initiative to seek wellbeing support can be hard.

While some resilience literature promotes the idea of it being a personal trait (Ahern et al., 2008; Tarter & Vanyukov, 2002), cross-cultural research overwhelmingly supports a social-ecological view of resilience (Ungar et al., 2007; see Section 5.5). Nevertheless, several personal factors that were emphasised by the participants have been associated with one's ability to sustain their wellbeing. YP's accounts implied that one's positive temperament (Fogany et al., 1994), cognitive coping strategies (Marques & Braidwood, 2021), optimism (Seligman et al., 1995), self-control (Gillham et al., 2013) and problem-solving skills (Gillham et al., 2007) led to them being more resilient. Participants also often spoke about how progress made towards their personal goals contributed to their positive wellbeing. In line with this, having a sense of purpose has been previously associated with one's improved resilience (Howard et al., 1999). Aston's (2014), Brown et al.'s (2019) and Jessiman et al.'s (2022) findings also demonstrated the importance of academic attainment for some YP, including those from Black and minority ethnic families. Similarly, Wolpert and colleagues (2015) found that academic progress was inversely related to students' emotional difficulties, which is consistent with the findings presented in this research.

Furthermore, the participants often spoke about how individual factors such as their daily experiences may facilitate or hinder their wellbeing. Likewise, YP interviewed by Aston (2014) and Fazel (2015) also identified different situations and life experiences that could impact their wellbeing and made them vulnerable. In the present study, while exam stress was often associated with compromised wellbeing, participants' wellbeing reportedly improved once the adverse assessment period was over. Previous empirical

evidence on exam stress is consistent with this (e.g. see Roome & Soan, 2019), reinforcing the idea that school-based experiences can be an important predictor of YP's wellbeing.

The findings highlighted in the present study go beyond the detrimental impact of challenging life situations, also indicating that positive daily experiences can facilitate YP's wellbeing. Congruent with this, Gilligan (2000) completed a review of literature which highlighted the protective nature of positive experiences. Having one's basic needs met was also linked with positive wellbeing in the present research. Similarly, Marques and Braidwood (2021) identified that YP whose sleep improved during COVID-19 lockdowns had better wellbeing. Maslow (1948) argued that one's physiological needs must be satisfied before optimal functioning is achieved, which is consistent with participants' accounts. Importantly, some of the given examples suggested that having control over their basic needs enhanced YP's wellbeing. A recent London-based study with young Black males also showed that perceived control was an important contributor to their wellbeing (Meechan et al., 2021). This is consistent with Ryan and Deci's (2013) conclusion that people's autonomy in given situations facilitates their wellbeing.

5.3 RQ1: What Aspects of Current School Wellbeing Provisions Are Viewed as Helpful by Young Black People?

5.3.1 Importance of Peers

Wider peer support, friendships and socialising were viewed as a significant factor enhancing YP's resilience. Building good peer relationships is a key aspect of effective adolescent development (Masten & Coatsworth, 1998). Combined with this, the social aspects of school are commonly associated with students' positive emotions

(Goswami, 2012; Holder & Coleman, 2009; Jessiman et al., 2022), which is in line with the present findings.

The young Black people in this study also conceptualised friends as a key source of assistance during challenging times. Likewise, the Black Caribbean YP interviewed by Reynolds (2007) felt that their friends would reliably help them when they struggled emotionally. This is consistent with evidence showing that social support can ameliorate the impact of negative experiences, reducing the chances of developing wellbeing difficulties (Kawachi & Berkman, 2001). Other discussed advantages of friendships included being advised on important life matters. Similar findings were identified in research involving diverse university samples (Brown, 2009; Wilcox et al., 2005). Given participants' age, this suggests that to older YP, who may be more likely to make key life decisions, receiving instrumental support can be an essential aspect of their friendships and, in turn, their wellbeing.

Accessing practical support from the wider student community such as through peer mentoring was also viewed as a predictor for YP's positive wellbeing. In a similar vein, Beattie and Holden's (1994) outcomes showed that being mentored led to improved confidence, better understanding of one's future aspirations and satisfaction with school. Previous literature suggested that wider peer support can be desirable to secondary-aged students because they can readily relate to other YP (Fazel, 2015; Patalay et al., 2016) and due to it being easily accessible (Messiou & Azola, 2018), which is congruent with the present outcomes. Additionally, the participants spoke about the different ways in which they were supported by their wider peer networks. In line with this, Cowie and Wallace (2000) split peer support into two categories, namely emotional and practical, which fits the descriptions of this study's participants. Given how well-rounded peer support schemes are and their impact on students' wellbeing, it is not

surprising that Pugh and Statham (2006) stated that all secondary schools should aim to have one. The accounts of this study's participants agree with this (see Section 5.4.3).

Alongside being a source of instrumental support, peers were viewed as companions during leisure activities, providing the essential social stimulation that YP need. Similarly, spending time with peers and engaging in one's hobbies was perceived as a positive aspect of COVID-19 lockdown by ethnically diverse groups of YP (Marques & Braindwood, 2021). Hartas (2021) also found that social play was an important predictor of YP's wellbeing, including their life satisfaction, and their positive emotions. This is congruent with the present research findings, whereby non-academic social time was highlighted as a distraction from everyday stress, protecting students' wellbeing. Socialisation can be interpreted as a natural contributor to building resilience for CYP (Brown, 2015). Messiou and Azola's (2018) participants described that this is because it reduces feelings of isolation, which is consistent with this study's findings.

5.3.2 Support from Teachers

The participants viewed their teachers as a key source of support, both with their learning and pastorally. The importance of this dual role of teachers, especially for the more vulnerable students, is commonly discussed in UK-based studies (e.g. see Fazel et al., 2014).

Teachers were often conceptualised as knowledge providers, who can contribute to students' feelings of calm by effectively facilitating their learning in class. Incorporating opportunities for fun alongside making key reasonable adjustments during lessons were mentioned as mediating factors by the participants. Likewise, Aston (2014) identified that diverse student groups valued educators' creative and needs-driven approach to teaching. Howard and colleagues (1999) also argued that effective teaching practices

such as the provision of a relevant, relatable curriculum that is tailored to students' needs facilitates their academic achievement and, in turn, their resilience. This is line with the present study's findings that teachers' encouragement to persist with challenging tasks can support students' tolerance of failure, increasing their intrinsic motivation as part of the process.

Boekaerts's dual processing learning model (2010) can explain these findings. Namely, it postulates that learners have both cognitive and wellbeing goals that need to be fulfilled to meet the demands of given learning tasks. Thus, students' motivation appears to be a key factor in their academic success. As discussed, this helps to improve or maintains their wellbeing (see Section 5.2; Harden et al., 2001; Wolpert et al., 2015). The cognitive aspect of Boaekaert's model was also reflected in the present study's results as YP often mentioned the benefits of receiving practical learning tips. Study skills have been previously perceived as a facilitator of positive wellbeing by British undergraduate students (Aristeidou & Cross, 2021; Barrable et al., 2018; Lister et al., 2023). Given that most of the participants were aged 16 or above, this parallel with findings from university groups suggests that study skills may be viewed as helpful for their wellbeing when students do more independent learning (e.g. to prepare for exams).

Having positive teacher-student relationships was also perceived as helpful for participants' wellbeing, which is consistent with previous research (Bonell et al., 2013; Calear & Christensen, 2010; Roorda et al., 2011; Wigelsworth et al., 2013). The young Black people viewed relatability as an important predictor of positive attachments with teachers. Similarly, Keane et al.'s (2020) participants argued that building quality relationships with students goes beyond 'the ethnic matching' approach as it involves teachers sharing other aspects of themselves that make them more relatable. Booker's findings (2021) also suggested that when teachers reveal parts of their personality and

relate to students on their level, their classroom becomes a psychologically safe space. This is congruent with the accounts shared in the present study. The extended attachment perspective (Heard, 2017) provides an insight into these findings. It extends Bowlby's (1988) idea that relationships with caregivers promote feelings of security to other significant adults, also describing how seeking help from attachment figures maintains one's wellbeing. In the context of this research, it indicates that having a quality teacher-student relationship can promote feelings of security and enhance YP's wellbeing when help is sought.

Congruent with this, good student-teacher relationships were viewed as a predictor for help-seeking behaviour by the participants of the current study. Importantly, educators' attunement during these interactions was also perceived as key for students' wellbeing, including listening to and showing an understanding of YP's problems. Oliver and colleagues (2007) also concluded that feeling heard and understood by staff was perceived as key to feeling well-supported for diverse groups of students. Similar findings were also identified in British studies with secondary-aged participants from ethnic minorities (Aston, 2014; Jessiman et al., 2022). This is unsurprising when interpreted through the lens of attunement principles, which are strong predictors for building effective relationships and reinforcing students' resilience (Silhanova et al., 2011).

Another key finding from this study was that teachers can reportedly support students' wellbeing by reframing difficult situations. Correspondingly, Kibe and Boniwell (2015) reviewed key literature on wellbeing promotion at schools and concluded that teacher's ability to use techniques based on cognitive-behavioural approaches promotes CYP's resilience. Stallard and Buck (2013) also showed that teacher support with reframing difficult situations was perceived as helpful by students.

5.3.3 School Wellbeing Support

The universal wellbeing provisions at participants' schools were often positively discussed by the YP, who reported satisfaction with the offered support. Previous literature agrees with these findings, demonstrating that whole-school wellbeing interventions can be optimal for enhancing the wellbeing of most students (Horowitz & Garber, 2006; Wigglesworth et al., 2013).

Importantly, the participants commonly discussed how school support improved their awareness of wellbeing difficulties and the corresponding available support, which was perceived as helpful in the long-term. Similarly, Woolfson and colleagues (2007) also discovered that YP want to learn about a wide range of wellbeing topics at school. Other studies have shown that better understanding of MH problems is related to students' help-seeking behaviour (Fazel et al., 2014; Kelly et al., 2007; Patalay et al., 2017). This was not directly discussed in the current study, yet participants often said they knew what they would do if their wellbeing deteriorated. The YP also argued that their good awareness of the available support provided reassurance that key provisions can be accessed if needed. Enhancing students' knowledge of wellbeing difficulties and the wellbeing provisions at hand was viewed as essential by school staff in Jessiman et al.'s study (2022). Reportedly, this supported students' understanding of when to seek help, which is consistent with the present research.

School-based provisions arguably make wellbeing interventions more easily accessible to students (Baruch, 2001; Kavanagh et al., 2009; Masia-Warner et al., 2006). This availability and accessibility of wellbeing support was discussed as beneficial by the current study's participants. Likewise, the YP interviewed by Fazel and colleagues (2016) also felt that having someone to discuss their MH difficulties with was needed for the positive wellbeing of vulnerable students. Having an 'open door' policy for YP has

also been highlighted as important for promoting students' wellbeing (Jessiman et al., 2022), which was also mentioned by several participants in the current study. Notably, access to targeted wellbeing support should complement but not substitute universal provisions (Knowler et al., 2013), which was attested by most participants, who had only utilised the whole-school wellbeing provisions.

Correspondingly, the YP praised the needs-driven approach to wellbeing support employed in their schools. Some researchers have also stipulated that customising wellbeing provisions based on students' difficulties is needed for effective school support (Aston, 2014; Humphrey et al., 2020). Knowing which students struggle with their MH and adapting one's approach accordingly has been discussed as part of staff's role to promote YP's wellbeing (Jessiman et al., 2022), which is congruent with data from the current study.

While specialist provisions are commonly discussed as a helpful approach to supporting students' wellbeing, including within minoritised groups (Fazel et al., 2009; McKeague et al., 2017; O'Shea et al., 2000; Pearce et al., 2017; Toth et al., 2022), the participants in the present study rarely framed external agencies' support as helpful for their wellbeing. Congruent with this, previous research has shown that YP from Black and other minority groups are underrepresented in students accessing counselling services at British schools (Cooper, 2009; Hill et al., 2011). The information shared by the reference group highlighted that this may be because of stigma around MH in some Black communities, which is also evidenced in the wellbeing literature (e.g. Mantovani et al., 2017). It is important to note that none of the YP disclosed having additional MH needs, which may be another reason why they had not used much specialist support. However, the accounts of some participants, who had accessed counselling, suggested that such provisions 'put a plaster on' rather than targeted their needs. Conversely,

accessing the school-wide support was often associated with a variety of benefits such as improving one's self-regulation skills. Similarly, there is mounting evidence showing that universal wellbeing provisions can enhance diverse students' understanding of stress and increase their awareness of how to manage their emotions (Brown et al., 2019; Chisholm et al., 2016; Marques & Braidwood, 2021; McKeague et al., 2017). Altogether, the present study's findings strongly suggest that when universal provisions are effective, access to specialist support may be rarely required for YP without additional MH needs.

5.3.4 School Ethos

Whole-school ethos was a significant factor contributing to YP's resilience and supporting their wellbeing. Previous literature agrees with this finding, referring to ethos as an important aspect of effective school wellbeing provisions (Cowie et al., 2004; Hornby & Atkinson, 2003).

Commitment to anti-racist practice, including the implementation of a corresponding policy, was discussed as an aspect of the provision that indirectly supported young Black people's wellbeing. In line with this, Barley (2019) argued that it is insufficient to be non-racist; an anti-racist school policy is needed to ensure that all students feel valued, included and respected at their educational settings. School leaders' dedication to racial equality has been shown to effectively promote anti-racist practice (Mcduff et al., 2018; Miller, 2020), resulting in opportunities for the whole school community to tackle racial discrimination. In the present study, involvement of different parts of the community at school appeared essential; the participants discussed that it was when students said '*No to racism'* (Derek, line 99) and staff '*addressed discrimination and microaggressions'* (Amadi, line 178) that YP felt able to cultivate their resilience, and that their wellbeing was well-supported.

Additionally, a school's value for cultural diversity was also highlighted as a helpful aspect of its ethos. Participants spoke fondly about the available clubs for Black student groups, which reportedly contributed to their positive wellbeing. Congruent with this, previous empirical evidence on wellbeing support has shown that opportunities to socialise with others from similar cultural and ethnic backgrounds was valued by ethnic minority students (Fazel, 2015), facilitated their confidence (Hughes, 2014) and feelings of connectedness (Reynolds, 2007). In the present study, being part of an inclusive, culturally diverse school community also increased students' sense of belonging and, hence, was perceived as a facilitator of good wellbeing. Baumeister and Leary (1995)'s idea of belonging argues that it is a key psychological need, which, when met, contributes to one's wellbeing. In this train of thought, young Black people's levels of belonging seem to be enhanced when their schools cultivate diversity and, thus, makes them feel included. In fact, some authors argued that cultural inclusion is only fully embedded when a whole-school approach to diversity is adopted and multiculturism is viewed as an asset (Miravet & Garcia, 2013; Walton et al., 2013). In line with this, diverse representation amongst staff, who can be positive role models for ethnic minority students, had positive implications for pupils' wellbeing (Jessiman et al. 2022), which is also consistent with the present findings.

Likewise, being part of a positive school environment was perceived as a precursor for good emotional wellbeing. Previous evidence has also made links between the positive culture at school and students' sense of belonging (Glazzard, 2018), positive development (Van Houtte & Van Maele, 2011) and good MH (Aldridge & McChesney, 2018). A recent survey in England with an ethnically diverse sample further reinforced this idea, identifying that school climate accounted for the largest proportion of wellbeing variation amongst students (Patalay et al., 2020). In the current study, great emphasis

was placed on positive staff responses, which reportedly led to positive school experiences and appreciation of wellbeing support. Similarly, Bonell and colleagues (2013) argued that positively engaging with students enhances the impact of wellbeing interventions. For example, being greeted in the morning by senior staff has been reportedly viewed as a valuable part of school culture facilitating students' wellbeing (Jessiman et al., 2022). This is consistent with this study's finding that positive interactions with the school staff team are important and can facilitate students' positive emotions. Participants' accounts suggested a process of emotional contagion, which is in line with cross-cultural findings that perceived staff enjoyment is related to student enjoyment (Xie et al., 2022).

5.4 RQ2: How Can School Wellbeing Support be Improved According to Young Black People?

5.4.1 Managing Academic Pressures

The participants associated academic pressures with feelings of overwhelm and stress, which has been supported by previous UK-based evidence (Connor, 2003; Hall et al., 2004; Putwain & Symes, 2011). Jessiman and colleagues (2022) found that when teachers focus on students' academic performance, this can lead to overlooking their anxiety or stress, which is consistent with what was reported by YP. The authors also identified that there were differences in the academic pressures put on students depending on how 'academic' their school was, which had direct implications for YP's wellbeing. Making a parallel to the current study, the participants discussing the academic demands placed on them were all reportedly from academically-focused schools. For example, Derek stated, '*The school I went to was fully academics'* (Derek, Line 126). This suggests that academic pressures may be more prevalent in schools where one's academic aspirations are seen as uppermost. In line with these findings,

Harden et al. (2001) argued that schools' approach to improving academic attainment should be balanced with students' workload and experiences of stress. In fact, previous school-based stress prevention programmes have been found to be ineffective (Feiss et al., 2019), which was accounted to not addressing the school environmental aspects that are conducive to compromised wellbeing, such as academic pressures (Caldwell et al., 2019).

In the present study, different practical ways of minimising academic-related stress were suggested, including the reduction of student workload. This is supported by previous research that shows the link between having less homework and better overall wellbeing of students (Galloway et al., 2013), lower stress levels (Kouzma & Kennedy, 2002), and lower levels of fatigue (Cheung & Leung Ngai, 1992). However, to the author's knowledge, the present study is the first UK-based research to suggest that reducing academic stress could support YP's wellbeing. In line with this, having dedicated non-academic time was also mentioned as a suitable approach to managing educational pressures. The opportunity to engage in different leisure activities such as debate clubs was highlighted as important for students' positive wellbeing. Similarly, Fazel (2015)'s participants argued that being offered extracurricular activities would effectively meet their wellbeing needs. This reportedly would allow YP to have fun and can serve as a distraction from their difficult experiences as refugees (Fazel, 2015), which is consistent with the present study's findings.

Other factors that could potentially contribute to YP's wellbeing were also discussed in the present research; namely, having non-academic subjects and more opportunities for socialisation. Likewise, Patel (2013) also postulated that facilitating social engagement amongst YP and offering non-academic activities was crucial for students' wellbeing. Additionally, non-core subjects were conceptualised by students

and staff in Jessiman et al.'s study (2022) as facilitators of positive wellbeing. The participants of the present study also suggested that having more breaks during the busy school day could reduce their feelings of overwhelm and support their wellbeing. In line with this, the recommendation made by the Department of Education and Science (1990) for given school breaks was to 'be long enough to refresh pupils' (section 22). It is, therefore, concerning that a review of how the school day has changed for adolescents in England indicated a reduction in students' breaks (Symonds & Hagell, 2011). The present findings highlighted that this is a key aspect of the learning day contributing to students' wellbeing and, thus, needs to be considered by school leaders.

5.4.2 Commitment to Anti-Discriminatory Practice

The participants emphasised how important it is for schools to be dedicated to their anti-discriminatory approach, based on the principles of equality. This finding is important given the detrimental impact of discrimination on their overall development and wellbeing (e.g. see Wright et al., 2013). A similar view was held by YP from ethnic minorities in Fazel's study (2015). Findings from other research (Jessiman et al., 2022) also highlighted that inclusion was perceived as an essential factor contributing to students' feelings of safety and security at school. Similarly, Honneth (2004) argued that being the target of warmth, affection and equal treatment is key for one's wellbeing. On the other end of the spectrum, discrimination has been viewed as a structural barrier to students' wellbeing, which needs to be reduced to ensure their optimal functioning (Harden et al., 2001; Henze et al., 2002). This is in line with critical race theory, which stipulates that racial stratification at all systems levels can be a significant contributor to wellbeing difficulties (Brown, 2003). The views outlined in the current study are congruent with this, suggesting that anti-discriminatory practice should be promoted at a school level, rather than in individual cases, to ensure consistency.

Participants spoke about the steps that staff need to take to promote this process such as gaining further training. Interestingly, Pearce (2012) also found that a high proportion of newly qualified teachers are not confident to work with diverse student groups and may require further input. In their study, staff that were described as progressive practitioners identified factors that supported classroom appreciation of diversity, including being committed to change, being curious about different cultures and understanding diverse communities. These findings reinforce the view that showing awareness of the backgrounds of all students is key, which was presented in the current research. Jessiman et al.'s findings (2022) build on this, highlighting that knowledge of and confidence in dealing with discriminatory behaviours is also essential.

Another suggestion made by the participants of the present study was the incorporation of the views of diverse student groups. In her participatory research targeting oppressive practice at schools, Afuape (2020) worked with students from various ethnic backgrounds. This reportedly led to a whole-school intervention, whereby students reviewed the anti-discrimination policy ensuring that it was helpful to students of colour. Interestingly, in contrast to the current study, YP in Afuape's research felt that students also should be involved in challenging discrimination.

5.4.3 Better Wellbeing Support

While students expressed their general satisfaction with the available provisions, they felt it could match their needs better. This involved discussing topics that are relevant for students' wellbeing, which has also been evidenced in other research (Jessiman et al., 2022). Utilising students' voice was suggested as an appropriate way to effectively plan school wellbeing support. Aston (2014) agreed with this, arguing that the employed approaches to wellbeing support should reflect students' views. Sadly, previous UK-based research has shown that YP's involvement when planning key

interventions is limited (Churchman et al., 2019; Skryabina et al., 2016), which is congruent with the present findings. Thus, this is a key point for reflection for school leaders when developing school-based wellbeing provisions.

Moreover, peer group interventions were identified as more effective in meeting students' wellbeing needs as YP can easily relate to other adolescents. Fazel's (2015) participants also suggested peer support groups as a way to improve the available wellbeing service as teachers were not always perceived as effective providers of pastoral care. In line with this, McKeague and colleagues (2017) found that participants appreciated their group-based workshop because of being reassured when others shared the same emotional experiences as them. Patalay et al. (2017) noted that peer-led interventions result in the use of more relevant approaches, which is also attested by this study's findings. The views shared by the participants of the current study can be explained by the previously highlighted benefits of peer support. These included being equal to other group members, engaging in collaborative interactions (Rusch et al., 2015) and learning from each other (Wilson & Refson, 2007).

Importantly, some YP felt that better access to specialist support was needed, which is consistent with previous work (e.g. Oliver et al., 2007). However, wellbeing statistics show that most CYP with significant MH difficulties have limited access to support from external services (Young Minds, 2021). Given that the aims of the recent government initiatives regarding school MH support (DoH & DfE, 2018), the author is hopeful that all students in England will have easy access to school-based specialist services by 2025.

Additionally, the participants felt that the pastoral care in their schools could be improved by the provision of regular wellbeing check-ins. Likewise, the YP from McKeague et al.'s (2017) study perceived follow-up 'check-up' phone calls from staff

favourably as this provided access to further wellbeing support. As discussed by Hughes (2014), teachers play an important part in identifying CYP's wellbeing difficulties and referring them for further wellbeing support. This reinforces the idea that routine wellbeing check-ins may support early identification of wellbeing needs and access to appropriate support. Privacy of check-ins was, however, emphasised as essential by some participants. This is corroborated by empirical evidence showing students' preference for confidential access to wellbeing support (Kidger et al., 2009; McKeague et al., 2018). Reportedly, this reduces the embarrassment associated with help-seeking (Jessiman et al., 2022), which was also highlighted as an important aspect of effective support in the current study.

Having outlined the links between the current study's findings with previous literature, it appears that some of YP's suggestions can be applied to all students, irrespective of their ethnicity. These incorporate the discussed personal factors, the promotion of work-life balance, the creation of a positive school environment and the help accessed from peers, teachers and via the school wellbeing provisions. However, from an equity point of view, the present study indicates that certain school-based provisions are needed to ensure the wellbeing of Black YP, including schools' commitment to anti-racist and anti-discriminatory practices, and a school ethos that values cultural diversity.

5.5 Application to Social-Ecological Theory (Ungar et al., 2007)

The present research illustrates the way 'what works' to support the wellbeing of young Black people at school can be conceptualised when looking at different social-ecological factors. Ungar and colleagues' (2007) culturally sensitive model of resilience is used in this section to summarise the outcomes of the present research. Please, see

Appendix 3.1 for a visual outline of how the identified sub-themes were related to the seven factors (or tensions) in the social-ecological model.

5.5.1 Access to Material Resources

Having access to structural and material resources, as well as having one's basic needs met all play a key role in enhancing people's resilience (Ungar et al., 2007). Interestingly, most of this study's findings regarding what facilitates students' wellbeing at school relate to this social-ecological tension. However, given that this research mainly focused on school provisions, which in essence are available structural resources, this is somewhat unsurprising. Overall, the generated findings suggested that access to effective educational and pastoral support from teachers, peers, and other school and specialist staff enhanced students' ability to withstand experiences they found challenging and, thus, was helpful for their wellbeing. Moreover, some intangible sources of support such as having a positive work-life balance and access to non-academic activities were viewed as factors that would further facilitate this process.

5.5.2 Relationships

In line with the social-ecological model, in the present study relationships were conceptualised as a key resource needed by YP when dealing with given challenges. While attachments were mentioned in the context of students' friendships and when discussing teacher support, none of the YP spoke about their relationships with their relatives or local community groups. This is a curious finding given the importance placed on Black community networks in literature involving Black youth (e.g. see Wright et al., 2009). However, some authors argue that peers are more important than key adults for YP's wellbeing (Laible et al., 2000). Hence, it is possible that the participants

placed less emphasis on their local community or their parents when it came to their wellbeing.

5.5.3 Identity, Power and Control

In this study, resilience was internalised as a personal strength that enhanced YP's wellbeing. Importantly, students' responses strongly reflected other aspects of the social-ecological model contributing to individual resilience; namely, fulfilling one's aspirations, framing, and reacting to situations in a positive manner, as well as having a sense of control over meeting one's needs (e.g. through self-care).

5.5.4 Cultural Adherence, Social Justice and Cohesion

The present research demonstrated that YP placed importance on their schools' commitment to anti-racist and non-discriminatory practice, which involved appreciating cultural diversity and understanding all students' experiences. Overall, a positive school culture, where everyone feels accepted and appreciated was perceived as a strong contributing factor for students' resilience, facilitating positive emotional contagion and students' help-seeking behaviours.

To summarise, this model of resilience was employed to outline the outcomes of the current study, highlighting many social-ecological factors that have been previously identified by Ungar et al. (2007) as wellbeing enhancers. At its core, it was shown that a multi-faceted and culturally sensitive approach to supporting young Black people's wellbeing at school is needed.

5.6 Limitations of the Research

While this research has advanced the understanding of what school wellbeing support is helpful to young Black people, it is important to acknowledge its associated limitations.

5.6.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design was adopted, which resulted in employing a small sample of participants. This has implications for the generalisation of the generated findings, an aspect of qualitative research that is often criticised (Ayres et al., 2003). However, Clarke and Braun (2022) argue that qualitative studies should not be caveated for this, highlighting that such approach puts statistical generalisation on a pedestal as 'the ideal'. Instead, transferability to other contexts is proposed as an important alternative (Polit & Beck, 2010). This view is in line with the author's ontological position, whereby she accepts that subjective knowledge exists in parallel to an 'authentic reality' within a specific social context (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Thus, to promote the wider application of the presented findings, the author provided rich, relevant contextual information. To illustrate, in Chapter 3, key details regarding participants' background and characteristics (e.g. age and gender) were provided. Overall, it is hoped that by doing this, the author has enabled the readers to identify the 'fit' between the analysed data and other key contexts they are focusing on.

Furthermore, having employed a qualitative research design, the author's subjective interpretation of the data has undoubtedly impacted the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). While it has been argued that researchers' subjectivity should not be limited or managed when completing Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Gough & Madill, 2012), it was felt that this is incoherent with the transformative agenda adopted in this

study (Mertens, 2012). This is especially the case due to the ‘outsider perspective’ of the researcher, which could have moved the meaning away from what was intended by the participants. To overcome this, the researcher contacted all participants to member check her interpretation of their views (Robson & McCartan, 2016). As part of this, the YP were encouraged to challenge any interpretations that did not accurately reflect their views (see Appendix 2.12). However, only one participant has responded thus far, which is an acknowledged limitation.

As discussed in Chapter 3, another recognised weakness is the limited control that the research community had over the research design. For example, the present study’s focus was researcher-initiated (Hart, 1992, as cited in Wallace & Giles, p. 2). However, this study was completed as part of a time-bound doctoral research, which impacted its flexibility. To the best of the author’s knowledge, there has been no participatory research investigating the chosen topic. Hence, despite the limited levels of participation employed, it is argued that the current study brings valuable empirical contribution.

5.6.2 Participant Group

Given the paucity of UK-based wellbeing support literature on diverse students (Clarke et al., 2021; Stevenson & Rao, 2014), a limitation of this study is that it did not also focus on other minoritised groups such as people of colour who do not identify as Black, or those with dual-minority status. However, research involving Black and other ethnic minority groups has been criticised for grouping all people of colour into a collective, leading to meaningless conclusions (Aspinall, 2002). As discussed in Chapter 1, this study investigated ‘what works’ for Black students because of the evident wellbeing inequalities they encounter, and due to the prevalent problem-saturated narratives related to this student group in the wellbeing literature.

It is acknowledged that this has limited the opportunity to explore how minoritised student groups with additional characteristics such as having a disability (e.g. Black students with learning disabilities), for example, may perceive the available school wellbeing provisions. Although such focus was beyond the scope of the present study, YP's participation was not restricted by any potential additional needs or attributes (see Chapter 3). Thus, it is hoped that the participants of the study are at least partially representative of the breadth of YP in the Black community.

5.6.3 Recruitment

This thesis captures the views of a small proportion of young Black people, who met a specific inclusion criteria (see Appendix 2.14b). Namely, all participants were able to verbalise and reflect on their perceptions of what has supported their wellbeing. Thus, it is plausible that the views of those YP that are not as verbally able are not represented in the present study.

Additionally, several YP agreed to partake in this research after their parents had consented to this. This had meant that parents acted as gatekeepers to potential participants. Information shared during the reference group meeting suggested that there may be stigma associated with the topic under investigation in the researched community (see Appendix 2.2). In line with this, some parents could have been discouraged to allow their children to take part. Hence, there is a possibility that the voices of certain student groups are not captured due to factors such as parental approval of the subject matter.

5.6.4 Data Collection

Firstly, half of the students partook in the interviews at their school. While this brought associated advantages to participants, it could have led to YP discussing their

schools' provisions more favourably. It is conceivable that students with whom in-person interviews were conducted could have been subject to social desirability bias, thinking that they might be overheard by staff or their peers. The author attempted to minimise this by conducting the interviews in a private room that was not within an earshot of others (Bergen & Labonte, 2021).

Secondly, the generated findings were not triangulated with students' parents or practitioners, which could have supported the trustworthiness of the present findings. However, given that this study aimed to give a voice to and empower a potentially marginalised group of YP, collecting data from key adults would have not been appropriate as this could have perpetuated the existing adult-child power imbalances (Alderson, 2012).

5.7 Unique Contribution

5.7.1 Study Strengths

As discussed in Chapter 2, there has been an extensive empirical interest in the effectiveness of school wellbeing support. However, it is the author's understanding that this is the first study to explore the views of young Black people living in urban areas in England on their schools' wellbeing provisions. This allowed the author to promote the voice of a potentially marginalised group, which is an essential part of EP work (BPS, 2021). Interestingly, while previous research employed an uneven gender ratio, this study succeeded in nearly balancing the number of male and female participants employed. Consequently, it is argued that the results represented the researched community better than previous qualitative literature.

Secondly, the methodology adopted in the present study, namely the use of a participatory approach, provides a fresh look at the topic, having generated an ethically

sound, person-centered and culturally sensitive evidence on ‘what works’. In Chapter 2, it was identified that a within-person and problem-saturated view was often employed in previous wellbeing research. By utilising solution-oriented (Rees, 2016) and social-ecological theoretical lens (Ungar et al., 2007), the current study not only filled a clear literature gap, but it also enabled the identification of facilitating factors for students’ wellbeing. It is argued that this also contributed to a more positive narrative around the wellbeing of Black students.

Additionally, the use of semi-structured interviews is a clear strength of this study, allowing for more attuned interactions during the data collection stage (Kennedy et al., 2016). This also enabled students to adapt the conversation and talk about topics that were pertinent to them and their wellbeing. For example, whilst it was not anticipated that personal factors enhancing YP’s wellbeing would be discussed, the use of semi-structured interview style gave the researcher the opportunity to adjust her approach during her individual meetings with YP.

Furthermore, utilising Reflexive TA (Braun & Clarke, 2006) as a framework for data analysis was highly effective due to its accessibility to non-academic audiences (Cavallerio et al., 2016). This enabled the author to engage in member checking, which increased the robustness of the identified findings. The use of TA would also support the understanding of lay person audiences when the generated outcomes are disseminated (see Section 5.8).

Finally, using Gough’s (2007) Weight of Evidence process, the author rated the present study as ‘medium / high quality’ when considering its transparency, accuracy, accessibility, and specificity (see Appendix 3.2).

5.7.2 Implications for Research and EP Practice

5.7.1.1 Utilising Pupil Voice and Participatory Approaches. This research emphasised that school wellbeing provisions should cover relevant topics, as well as be relatable and needs-driven. The value of gaining pupils' views on the matter was not only highlighted by the creative and thought-provoking solutions generated by the students, but it was also explicitly stated by the participants (see Section 5.4.3). Additionally, this approach empowered the YP to generate ideas around meaningful changes to the way they are supported at school, which is in line with EP's duty for child-centred and respectful practice (BPS, 2021; DfE, 2014; HCPC, 2016). At an individual level or during consultations, EPs are well-positioned to gather and promote the voice of students regarding their school wellbeing support to ensure provisions are effective (Greig et al., 2019). Up to current knowledge, most previous research has focused on evaluating within-person, targeted interventions rather than employing pupils' voice to identify key wellbeing barriers and facilitators within their school system. Thus, there is value in completing further person-centered research involving young Black people from other settings such as inner-city schools or alternative resource provisions, which would likely facilitate the available knowledge about 'what works' in such settings.

The use of a participatory approach to research and practice does not only adhere to key ethical values (e.g. see Fox, 2015), but also ensures success in developing 'student-friendly' school cultures (Badham & Wade, 2005). Through utilising participatory methodology in the current study, it was identified that there may be certain barriers (e.g. stigma around MH) and facilitators (e.g. relationships with key community members) that can impact EPs' engagement in wellbeing casework with young Black people and their families, especially through participatory means. In the school context, pupil involvement in decision-making processes is facilitated by teachers' attitudes to

participation (Aston & Lambert, 2010). In line with this, EPs are well-placed to work collaboratively with teaching staff and explore opportunities for pupil participation when planning meaningful wellbeing provisions (Doveston & Keenaghan, 2010). Previous research outlining psychological interventions that have employed participatory elements demonstrated the value and feasibility of applying this methodology during EP casework (Aston, 2014). Hart's ladder of participation (1992) can support practitioners' thinking around how to meaningfully involve students by considering key factors such as their culture. The present study was researcher-initiated and, thus, it would be worthwhile to utilise higher levels of participation during future participatory research on the topic and when developing participatory-based changes to school wellbeing provisions.

5.7.1.2 Taking a Social-Ecological View. The present study has illustrated that adopting a social-ecological view can provide a valuable insight into the systemic factors contributing to YP's resilience. Thus, it is highly effective to look at schools as a whole rather than offering within-person wellbeing interventions (Wigglesworth et al., 2013). This is consistent with EPs' role to promote the wellbeing of CYP at all systems levels (Fallon et al., 2010). Cameron (2016) highlighted that a key aspect of EPs' contribution stems from sharing psychology with service users. In the context of school wellbeing provisions, this can include supporting school leaders to implement preventative approaches by taking a social-ecological view of resilience factors.

The present findings highlighted that one such factor is the support from attachment figures such as YP's friends and teachers. As identified in this study, EPs should also emphasise the importance of having formal systems of pastoral support, including peer support groups and wellbeing check-ins with staff. Providing access to effective universal provisions that facilitate students' awareness of key wellbeing topics is something EPs should also promote as school consultants. It was identified that this

may be associated with requiring less specialist support, which is a welcome advantage in the current austerity climate. Given the importance that YP placed on personal factors enhancing their resilience, EPs should recommend the whole-school promotion of skills such as reframing. EPs should also advise schools to facilitate students' work-life balance, especially during exam periods. Above all, the present study highlighted the importance of having a positive school environment, where cultural diversity is valued, and anti-discriminatory practices are embedded. As organisational change consultants, EPs have a role in helping schools to develop a positive whole-school ethos.

Thinking about further research using the social-ecological model, it would be interesting to explore what wellbeing support is viewed as helpful by Black YP with dual-minority status. As discussed in Section 5.6.2, the current study only focused on Black YP, which could have made it difficult to identify potential differences in the way wellbeing support is conceptualised by Black students with additional educational needs, for example.

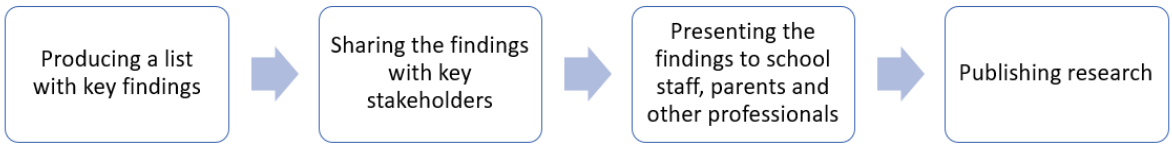
5.7.1.3 Removing Systemic Barriers Affecting Black Students' Wellbeing. Congruent with the present findings, EPs have a crucial role in highlighting the systemic issues affecting diverse students' wellbeing and facilitating anti-discriminatory practice, for example through staff supervision (HCPC, 2016; BPS, 2021). Similarly, critical race theory argues for exposing institutional racism to promote social equality (Taylor, 2017). This can enhance the wellbeing of minoritised groups (Brown, 2003), and as highlighted in the present study, of students identifying as Black. The participants emphasised how key it is to have a school anti-racist policy and support from teachers confident in dealing with microaggressions. EPs are well-placed to inspire those changes in the educational settings they work with, for example through staff training. Future action research projects can explore how whole-school anti-discriminatory approaches can be effectively embedded to promote Black students' wellbeing.

5.8 Dissemination Plans

As advocated by Staley (2009) and in line with the adopted participatory approach, the author involved the reference group and the participants when planning the dissemination process (see Appendix 3.3). As such, involvement in all dissemination stages will be offered to both groups.

Figure 5.1

Dissemination Phases that May Involve the Reference Group Members and Participants



Following the completion of this research, a document outlining its key findings will be created. This will be shared with the study's participants and its reference group members, alongside an invitation to feedback on the produced briefing paper and to participate in the other dissemination stages. Once the document has been finalised, it will be shared with key stakeholders such as senior leaders within the author's placement local authority, secondary schools, as well as people respected in the Black community (e.g. pastors). All parties will be invited to a presentation discussing what was found throughout this research. Finally, the researcher aims to disseminate this study's findings more widely through further presentations (e.g. at research conferences), as well as by publishing the research into a peer reviewed journal. In this way, other key professionals, who work with young Black people will have a better understanding of what wellbeing support is viewed as helpful.

5.9 Reflexivity and Personal Reflections

Engagement in ongoing reflexivity is commonly advocated to researchers, especially during qualitative inquiries (Leigh & Brown, 2021). Reflexivity involves

critically reflecting on one's decisions during the investigation, the interpersonal dynamics, and the impact that this has on the produced findings (Brown & Clarke, 2022; Finlay, 2002b).The author was mindful of this and continuously reflected on her research journey (Willig, 2013). This involved using a research journal (see Appendix 2.10), as well as engaging in regular tutorial and peer discussions, which all highlighted important points that needed to be considered. In this section, the author accounts for positionality and power issues, as well as her choice of methodology, concluding with the key learning that was gained throughout this process.

5.9.1 Research Positioning and Power

As previously mentioned, the researcher describes herself as a White woman. Given her passion for social justice, the author was keen to gain the views of students whose voice has not been promoted in the existing literature, namely young Black people. However, it was recognised that she is not a member of the researched community. As such, her position as an 'outsider researcher' had implications for the different aspects of the research process, including the data collection and analysis stages (Hellawell, 2006). On the one hand, it created the space needed for ongoing reflexivity throughout the study (Leigh, 2014). However, on the other hand, the author wondered if this had impacted her access to and recruitment of participants, as well as her ability to build trust with them during the interview (Berger, 2015). For example, one of the questions considered by the author was around participants' readiness to discuss issues around racial discrimination with someone who does not share their racial identity. The author also reflected on her interpretation of the data during the analysis stage of this research, asking herself if, as a White professional, she was able to fully comprehend participants' perspectives (Fawcett & Hearn, 2004). Employing a reference group enabled the author to be aware of dominant discourses within the researched

community, which enhanced her understanding of students' views. The rigour of this research was further facilitated by engaging in member checking with participants during the interviews and after data was analysed (see Appendix 2.12). Not only did this allow the author to identify potentially biased interpretations, but it also aimed to ensure that students' voice was appropriately promoted.

As the aim of this research was to empower the researched community, the author reflected on the dynamics between herself, the reference group members, and the participants. Being aware of her potential power as a researcher, the author ensured this was redistributed through the transformative aspects of this research (see Chapter 3). Additionally, the principles of attuned interactions were kept in mind during the reference group and data collection sessions (Kennedy et al., 2016), ensuring that the co-researchers and the participants felt listened to and empowered to take lead during the discussions. This was an ongoing point of reflection during the researcher's academic tutorials, which highly benefited the management of power issues within the present study.

5.9.2 Participatory Research Methodology

The author's reasons for employing participatory methodology were discussed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. However, she frequently reflected on her choice of methodology and how this impacted the research process.

Given that the values underpinning this methodology closely align with the author's strong value for autonomy, she agreed with Spyrou's (2011) argument that participatory research was the most ethical way of completing this study. Upon reflection, this made it easier for the researcher to manage her assumptions around how the research should be conducted and, in turn, to follow her co-researchers' and

participants' lead. Notwithstanding, the author also noted different practical challenges experienced because of her choice of methodology, one of the main difficulties being the recruitment of co-researchers. Namely, it took her 6 months to organise the reference group meeting, which meant that the other research stages were postponed. Nevertheless, this allowed the author to explore the chosen topic in a way that utilised community knowledge, ensuring that a culturally sensitive and emancipatory approach was adopted. Not only did this show respect to the researched community, which was important for the author, but it also provided an essential insight into the cultural context in which wellbeing support is appraised.

During the process of carrying out a participatory study, the author learnt a lot about working with diverse communities, which has also undoubtedly enriched her as a researcher and a Trainee EP. Please, refer to Appendix 3.4, where this is outlined in more detail.

5.10 Conclusion

To the author's current knowledge, this is the first British study to employ a participatory approach to exploring the perceptions of Black YP on their secondary schools' wellbeing provisions. This research also contributes to the existing empirical evidence by focusing on 'what works'. The present findings highlighted many similarities with previous literature, including the importance of peers, teachers and the use of specialist and whole-school approaches. In addition to the available school provisions, several personal factors contributing to YP's resilience were also discussed as key for their wellbeing. It was also identified that there are specific aspects of schools' provisions that are perceived as essential by young Black people; namely, schools' commitment to anti-racist practice and the cultivation of diversity. According to this study's findings, school provisions are yet to meet the wellbeing needs of all students.

The generated outcomes have direct implications for EPs and schools. This includes the promotion of anti-racist practice and appreciation of cultural diversity within educational settings, ensuring that the adopted provisions consider students' racial identities. Additionally, students' work-life balance and their access to relevant pastoral care needs to improve. Essentially, the author argues that employing the social-ecological model of resilience (Ungar et al., 2007) can be effective when developing school wellbeing support. The involvement of students during this process is invaluable, ensuring meaningful, ethical, and effective wellbeing support is provided. To conclude, congruent with the transformative agenda adopted in this study, it is hoped that this research will promote the voice of a potentially marginalised student group and, thus, will facilitate school provision changes that are meaningful to young Black people.

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Appendix 1.1

Justification For Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Decision	Criteria	Justification
Include paper	UK-based studies	Their findings are likely applicable to other schools in the UK due to being part of the same educational system.
	Based in school settings	School settings have a vital role in the promotion of students' wellbeing (Department of Health & Department for Education, 2018; Weare & Nind, 2011).
	Focusing on school-age children	This is the student population that studies in school settings.
	Focusing on school support, intervention, or approach	This is the focus of the thesis.
	Focusing on prevention or early help	These approaches lead to better long-term outcomes for students (Clarke et al., 2015; Wells et al., 2003).
	Empirical studies	Empirical research can provide evidence about 'what works', which can be directly evaluated.
	Including students from the Black ethnic minority group	This is the target group of the thesis, driven by the author's value for social justice.
Exclude paper	Based in clinical, community, or specialist settings	This study focuses on school wellbeing support.
	Non-UK studies	Their findings are not necessarily applicable to the UK educational context (White, 2017).
	Studies that do not focus on prevention and early help (e.g. suicide interventions)	This is incongruent with the focus of this thesis.
	Ethnicity unreported, or when insufficient information about the	This limits the conclusions that can be made about students that identify as Black.

	sample's ethnic breakdown is provided (e.g. 'non-white')	
	Sample contains only 1 student from the Black ethnic group (e.g. in qualitative studies)	This can skew the research findings and, thus, limits the conclusions that can be made regarding students from Black ethnic backgrounds.
	Editorials, commentaries, reviews, or reports	These are not empirical studies.

Appendix 1.2

List of Papers Excluded from The Systematic Literature Review

Excluded papers	Justification
Loucas, C. E., Sclare, I., Stahl, D., & Michelson, D. (2020). Feasibility randomized controlled trial of a one-day CBT workshop ('DISCOVER') for 15-to 18-year-olds with anxiety and/or depression in clinic settings. *Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapy*, *48*(2), 142-159.	Based in a clinical setting
Baak, M., Miller, E., Ziersch, A., Due, C., Masocha, S., & Ziaian, T. (2020). The role of schools in identifying and referring refugee background young people who are experiencing mental health issues. *Journal of school health*, *90*(3), 172-181.	Based in Australia
Chiumento, A., Nelki, J., Dutton, C., & Hughes, G. (2011). School-based mental health service for refugee and asylum seeking children: multi-agency working, lessons for good practice. *Journal of Public Mental Health*.	Ethnicity of service users unreported
Deveci, Y. (2012). Trying to understand: Promoting the psychosocial well-being of separated refugee children. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, *26*(3), 367-383.	Does not focus on school-based interventions
Bluth, K., Campo, R. A., Pruteanu-Malinici, S., Reams, A., Mullarkey, M., & Broderick, P. C. (2016). A school-based mindfulness pilot study for ethnically diverse at-risk adolescents. *Mindfulness*, *7*(1), 90-104.	Based in the United States
Chowbey, P., & Barley, R. (2022). Building resilience: young children from minority ethnic backgrounds starting school in a multi-ethnic society. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *43*(3), 415-432.	Ethnicity of participants was not clearly reported
Platt, I. A., Kannangara, C., Tytherleigh, M., & Carson, J. (2020). The hummingbird project: a positive psychology intervention for secondary school students. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *11*, 2012.	Ethnicity of students unreported
Hamilton, P. L. (2013). It's not all about academic achievement: Supporting the social and emotional needs of migrant worker children. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *31*(2), 173-190.	Focuses on European migrant worker children
Higgen, S., & Mösko, M. (2021). Development and pilot evaluation of a universal intervention–Enhancing resilience in culturally and linguistically diverse primary school classrooms. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *108*, 101757.	Based in Germany
Parton, C., & Manby, M. (2009). The contribution of group work programmes to early intervention and improving children's emotional well-being. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *27*(1), 5-19.	Based in a Pakistani community; ethnicity of participants not clearly outlined

Platt, I. A., Kannangara, C., Carson, J., & Tytherleigh, M. (2021). Heuristic assessment of psychological interventions in schools (HAPI Schools). *Psychology in the Schools*, *58*(7), 1399-1415.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Ritchie, A., & Gaulter, A. (2020). Dancing towards belonging: the use of a dance intervention to influence migrant pupils' sense of belonging in school. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *24*(4), 366-380.	Ethnicity of students unreported
Turner, R. N., & Cameron, L. (2016). Confidence in contact: A new perspective on promoting cross-group friendship among children and adolescents. *Social Issues and Policy Review*, *10*(1), 212-246.	Not an empirical study
Ward, C. (2022). Practitioners' perspectives and needs: Developing skills to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASCs) in experiencing 'belonging' in English educational spaces. *British Educational Research Journal*, *48*(2), 311-329.	Ethnicity of service users unreported
Wigelsworth, M., & Quinn, A. (2020). Mindfulness in schools: An exploration of teachers' perceptions of mindfulness-based interventions. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *38*(4), 293-310.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Wyness, M., & Lang, P. (2016). The social and emotional dimensions of schooling: A case study in challenging the 'barriers to learning'. *British Educational Research Journal*, *42*(6), 1041-1055.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Allen, E. (2021). *Promoting the mental health and well-being of first-generation immigrants, asylum seekers and refugee young people in schools: a participatory action research study*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Salford].	Did not employ participants that identified as 'Black'
Berry, V., Axford, N., Blower, S., Taylor, R. S., Edwards, R. T., Tobin, K., Jones, C. & Bywater, T. (2016). The effectiveness and micro-costing analysis of a universal, school-based, social–emotional learning programme in the UK: A cluster-randomised controlled trial. *School Mental Health*, *8*(2), 238-256.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Deighton, J., Patalay, P., Belsky, J., Humphrey, N., Vostanis, P., Fugard, A., & Wolpert, M. (2013). Targeted mental health provision for children with behaviour difficulties in primary schools: Results of a national randomised trial. *Psychology of Education Review*, *37*(2), 40-45.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Eames, V., Shippen, C., & Sharp, H. (2016). The Team of Life: A narrative approach to building resilience in UK school children. *Educational and Child Psychology*, *33*(2), 57-68.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Galton, M., & Page, C. (2015). The impact of various creative initiatives on wellbeing: a study of children in English primary schools. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *45*(3), 349-369.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Kendal, S., Callery, P., & Keeley, P. (2011). The feasibility and acceptability of an approach to emotional wellbeing support for high school students. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *16*(4), 193-200.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Quinton, M. L., Clarke, F. J., Parry, B. J., & Cumming, J. (2021). An evaluation of My Strengths Training for Life™ for	Based in a community setting

improving resilience and well-being of young people experiencing homelessness. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *49*(5), 1296-1314.	
Stallard, P., & Buck, R. (2013). Preventing depression and promoting resilience: feasibility study of a school-based cognitive-behavioural intervention. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, *202*(s54), s18-s23.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Woodley, H. (2021). Supporting minority groups in schools–reflections on training education mental health practitioners. *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*.	Not an empirical study
Butler, N., Quigg, Z., Bates, R., Jones, L., Ashworth, E., Gowland, S., & Jones, M. (2022). The Contributing Role of Family, School, and Peer Supportive Relationships in Protecting the Mental Wellbeing of Children and Adolescents. *School Mental Health*, 1-13.	Ethnicity of students unreported
Long, E., Zucca, C., & Sweeting, H. (2021). School climate, peer relationships, and adolescent mental health: a social ecological perspective. *Youth & society*, *53*(8), 1400-1415.	Ethnicity of 'non-white' students unreported
Spencer, L., McGovern, R., & Kaner, E. (2022). A qualitative exploration of 14 to 17-year old adolescents' views of early and preventative mental health support in schools. *Journal of Public Health*, *44*(2), 363-369.	Ethnicity of students unreported
Kidger, J., Evans, R., Tilling, K., Hollingworth, W., Campbell, R., Ford, T., ... & Gunnell, D. (2016). Protocol for a cluster randomised controlled trial of an intervention to improve the mental health support and training available to secondary school teachers–the WISE (Wellbeing in Secondary Education) study. *BMC public health*, *16*(1), 1-13.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Adams, S. (2020). School mental health for all. *Management in Education*, *34*(1), 28-30.	Report
Kite, A. (2020). Challenging thoughts for challenging tasks: Investigating the effectiveness of a cognitive behavioural intervention delivered by school staff for secondary pupils experiencing anxiety about their schoolwork. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Essex].	Ethnicity of intervention participants not reported
Kaluzeviciute, G., Jessiman, T., Burn, A. M., Ford, T. J., Kidger, J., Leonard, N., ... & Spencer, L. (2022). Studying Mental Health in Schools: A Participatory Action Research (PAR) Approach in Public Mental Health.	Commentary
Hennigan, J. (2018). *Online counselling in schools as an additional option to face-to-face provision: exploration of pupils' experiences and comparison of effectiveness of working in different mediums.* [Doctoral dissertation, Middlesex University].	Ethnicity unreported
Finning, K., White, J., Toth, K., Golden, S., Melendez-Torres, G. J., & Ford, T. (2021). Longer-term effects of school-based counselling in UK primary schools. *European child & adolescent psychiatry*, 1-9.	Ethnicity not clearly reported
Longhurst, P., Sumner, A. L., Smith, S., Eilenberg, J., Duncan, C., & Cooper, M. (2021). 'They need somebody to talk to':	Ethnicity not clearly reported

Parents' and carers' perceptions of school-based humanistic counselling. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*.	
Churchman, A. (2019). *The feasibility and acceptability of a PCT-informed psychological intervention for young people in a school setting* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Manchester (United Kingdom)).	Only 1 (out of 16) participants identified as 'Black'
Goldberg, J. M., Sommers-Spijkerman, M. P., Clarke, A. M., Schreurs, K. M., & Bohlmeijer, E. T. (2022). Positive education in daily teaching, the promotion of wellbeing, and engagement in a whole school approach: a clustered quasi-experimental trial. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, *33*(1), 148-167.	Based in the Netherlands
Ford, T., Degli Esposti, M., Crane, C., Taylor, L., Montero-Marín, J., Blakemore, S. J., Bowes, L., Byford, S., Dalgleish, T., Greenberg, M.T. and Nuthall, E., ... & Kuyken, W. (2021). The role of schools in early adolescents' mental health: findings from the MYRIAD study. *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, *60*(12), 1467-1478.	Cross-sectional study focusing on the impact of demographic characteristics on MH rather than on type of school support
Beecham, J., Pearce, P., Sewell, R., & Osman, S. (2019). Support and costs for students with emotional problems referred to school-based counselling: findings from the ALIGN study. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, *47*(4), 460-471.	Relevant findings already reported by Pearce et al. (2017)
Cooper, M., Stafford, M. R., Saxon, D., Beecham, J., Bonin, E. M., Barkham, M., Bower, P., Cromarty, K., Duncan, C., Pearce, P., Rameswar. T. & Ryan, G. (2021). Humanistic counselling plus pastoral care as usual versus pastoral care as usual for the treatment of psychological distress in adolescents in UK state schools (ETHOS): a randomised controlled trial. *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, *5*(3), 178-189.	Employed students with moderate to severe emotional symptoms (including suicidal ideation)
Michelson, D., Sclare, I., Stahl, D., Morant, N., Bonin, E. M., & Brown, J. S. (2016). Early intervention for depression and anxiety in 16–18-year-olds: Protocol for a feasibility cluster randomised controlled trial of open-access psychological workshops in schools (DISCOVER). *Contemporary clinical trials*, *48*, 52-58.	Protocol for Brown et al.'s study (2019)
Sclare, I., Michelson, D., Malpass, L., Coster, F., & Brown, J. (2015). Innovations in Practice: DISCOVER CBT workshops for 16–18-year-olds: development of an open-access intervention for anxiety and depression in inner-city youth. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *20*(2), 102-106.	Intervention delivered in community settings
Lewis, K. (2016). Helping mixed heritage children develop 'character and resilience' in schools. *Improving Schools*, *19*(3), 197-211.	Only focuses on mixed heritage children
Vincent, C., Neal, S., & Iqbal, H. (2016). Children's friendships in diverse primary schools: teachers and the processes of policy enactment. *Journal of Education Policy*, *31*(4), 482-494.	Focuses on policy enactment rather than wellbeing support for students

Dobia, B., Parada, R. H., Roffey, S., & Smith, M. (2019). Social and emotional learning: From individual skills to class cohesion. *Educational & Child Psychology*, *36*(2), 78-90.	Ethnicity of participants not clearly reported
Mahmud, A. (2019). *The role of emotional intelligence in the development of adolescents' social and emotional skills, abilities and academic performance after the transition to secondary school.* [Doctoral dissertation, Middlesex University].	Ethnicity of participants not clearly reported
Churchman, A. (2019). *The feasibility and acceptability of a PCT-informed psychological intervention for young people in a school setting.* [Doctoral dissertation, The University of Manchester].	Included only 1 Black participant (out of 16)
Ramtohul, A. J. K. (2019). *Listen Up: Using young people's views to help shape education to support psychosis literacy*. [Doctoral dissertation, University of Northumbria at Newcastle].	Ethnicity of participants not clearly reported
Collins, S., Woolfson, L. M., & Durkin, K. (2014). Effects on coping skills and anxiety of a universal school-based mental health intervention delivered in Scottish primary schools. *School Psychology International*, *35*(1), 85-100.	Did not employ participants, who identify as 'Black'
Cramer, K. M., & Castro-Olivo, S. (2016). Effects of a culturally adapted social-emotional learning intervention program on students' mental health. *Contemporary School Psychology*, *20*(2), 118-129.	Based in the United States
Cortina, M. A., & Fazel, M. (2015). The Art Room: An evaluation of a targeted school-based group intervention for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties. *The arts in psychotherapy*, *42*, 35-40.	Ethnicity of participants unreported
Shiner, M. (2004). *Mentoring disaffected young people: An evaluation of Mentoring Plus*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.	Intervention based in community settings
Rousseau, C., Benoit, M., Gauthier, M. F., Lacroix, L., Alain, N., Viger Rojas, M., ... & Bourassa, D. (2007). Classroom drama therapy program for immigrant and refugee adolescents: A pilot study. *Clinical child psychology and psychiatry*, *12*(3), 451-465.	Only one participant identifying as 'Black'
Afuape, T. (2020). Radical systemic intervention that goes to the root: working alongside inner-city school children, linking trauma with oppression and consciousness with action. *Journal of Family Therapy*, *42*(3), 425-452.	Ethnicity of participants unreported
Frostick, C., Tong, J., Moore, D., Renton, A., & Netuveli, G. (2018). The impact of academies on school connectedness, future aspirations and mental health in adolescents from areas of deprivation in London. *Pastoral Care in Education*, *36*(4), 325-342.	Cross-sectional study that did not look at a particular intervention
Patalay, P., O'Neill, E., Deighton, J., & Fink, E. (2020). School characteristics and children's mental health: A linked survey-administrative data study. *Preventive Medicine*, *141*, 106292.	Cross-sectional study that did not look at a particular intervention

Appendix 1.3

Summary of Studies Included in The Literature Review

Author	Title	Participants	Design and measures	Type of intervention and theoretical background	Analysis	Outcomes	Critique and Weight of Evidence (WoE) rating
Targeted early intervention for students who are refugees							
Fazel, M., Doll, H., & Stein, A. (2009).	A school-based mental health intervention for refugee children: An exploratory study. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *14*(2), 297-309.	47 refugee children (aged 5-17; 3 from Africa) and 2 control groups (ethnic minority and indigenous white students) N males = 32 (in each group) N females =15 (in each group)	Mixed-methods design Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire at baseline and follow-up (completed by teachers) Teacher and student anonymous comments	Mental health consultation services provided to students and teachers Treatment work offered: 1) family sessions, 2) individual psychodynamic sessions, 3) group sessions **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	One-way analysis of variance (individual group comparisons) Independent sample t-tests (refugee group vs control) No formal analysis of qualitative data	Improvement in SDQ total difficulties ($p = 0.002$) Greatest SDQ changes in the peer problems scale ($p = 0.005$) All students rated the intervention as either ‘very helpful’ or ‘helpful’	Control groups employed Systemic focus (e.g. consultative nature of intervention) Holistic service involving teachers, pupils and families Students chosen based on ‘concerning behaviours’ Within-child measures employed

							Potential power imbalances due to the 'expert position' adopted **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Fazel, M. (2015).	A moment of change: Facilitating refugee children's mental health in UK schools. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *41*, 255-261.	Same as Fazel et al. (2016)	Qualitative design Semi-structured interviews	Same as Fazel et al. (2016) **Theory:** Social representation theory (Skovdal & Andreouli, 2011)	Thematic analysis	Social recognition was associated with: • Eagerness to change • Confidence to seek help • Motivation to study harder and develop peer relationships.	Child voice was promoted Within-child focus Unbalanced sample (in terms of gender) Most interviews conducted at schools, which brings bias Recommendations not directly linked to students' suggestions **WoE Rating:** High quality

Fazel, M., Garcia, J., & Stein, A. (2016).	The right location? Experiences of refugee adolescents seen by school-based mental health services. *Clinical child psychology and psychiatry*, *21*(3), 368-380.	40 adolescent refugees (aged 15-24) N school-aged students = 26 N male = 29 N female = 11	Qualitative design Semi-structured interviews	3 school-based mental health services involving one-to-one, family or group sessions **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Thematic analysis	Benefits of school-based services: • YP felt safe at school; • Improvement in one's emotions, peer relationships, and attainment; • Help with asylum application stress; • Teacher involvement. Disadvantages of school-based services: • Lack of privacy; • Hectic environment.	Child voice was promoted Within-child focus Unbalanced sample (in terms of gender) Most interviews conducted at schools, which brings bias Findings not reported in regard to ethnicity **WoE Rating:** High quality
Hughes, G. (2014).	Finding a voice through 'The Tree of Life': A strength-based approach to mental health for refugee	**Initial workshop:** 9 refugee Afghani mothers (initial workshop)	**Initial workshop:** Qualitative design **Follow-up workshops:** Quantitative design	Tree of Life intervention (Ncube, 2006) including 1) interpreter, 2) facilitator and 3) refugee link worker	**Initial workshop:** verbal comments	**Initial workshop:** • Not feeling alone; • Taking pride in one's culture;	Systemic focus (e.g. headteachers invited to award ceremonies)

	children and families in schools. *Clinical child psychology and psychiatry*, *19*(1), 139-153.	**Follow-up workshops:** Secondary-aged Congolese, Afghani, Arabic-speaking and Horn of Africa refugee children		**Theory:** Narrative therapy approaches	**Follow-up:** Pre- and post-scaling questions Teacher feedback	• Improved emotional wellbeing. **Follow-up workshops findings:** • Pride in YP's cultural heritage; • Improved self-confidence; • Peer support; • Problem-solving opportunities; • Improved behaviour in class.	Culturally sensitive intervention Services made 'easy to reach' Follow-up assessments would have been helpful Key participant characteristics unreported Participant accounts unreported **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
O'Shea, B., Hodes, M., Down, G., & Bramley, J. (2000).	A school-based mental health service for refugee children. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, *5*(2), 189-201.	14 students (aged 7-11; 3 YP from Africa) N males = 12 N females = 2	Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire at baseline and follow-up (completed by teachers) Clinical rating scale for exposure to war and violence	Weekly CAMHS visits including family appointments **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Statistical analysis of questionnaire scores	Results available only for 7 students Reduction in SDQ scores (non-significant; p=.109)	Systemic focus (e.g. family appointments) Small sample size Unreported results for some participants Unbalanced sample

							WoE Rating: Low / Medium quality
Author	**Title**	**Participants**	**Design and measures**	**Type of intervention and theoretical background**	**Analysis**	**Outcomes**	**Critique and Weight of Evidence (WoE) rating**
Other targeted early intervention							
Knowler, C., & Frederickson, N. (2013).	Effects of an emotional literacy intervention for students identified with bullying behaviour. *Educational psychology*, *33*(7), 862-883.	4 primary schools N = 50 (aged 8-9) identified through peer nomination N females = 6 18.5% identified as Black	Quantitative research method Emotional Literacy Assessment-Pupil Form Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Child Form The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Self-Report Version Fidelity of intervention questionnaire	Controlled trial Small-group EL sessions for 12 weeks 45-60-minute sessions weekly EL tasks **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Mixed analyses of variance (ANOVAs)	The children whose pre-intervention EL scores were low showed significant improvements in their pro-social behaviours and a decrease in their bullying tendencies (as rated by peers) Increased levels of adjustment (e.g. pro-social behaviour) associated with higher emotional literacy scores	Good fidelity of the intervention Completed alongside universal SEAL interventions Self-reported data Small sample size Groups not successfully matched on SES Within-child focus

						No intervention session had lower than 'satisfactory' fidelity	Participants 'done to' rather than 'done with' **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Lee, R. C., Tiley, C. E., & White, J. E. (2009).	The Place2Be: Measuring the effectiveness of a primary school-based therapeutic intervention in England and Scotland. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, *9*(3), 151-159.	N = 1864 (aged 4-11) 18.5% identified as Black	Quantitative design Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (parent and teacher ratings)	A one-to-one or group Place2Be intervention **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Repeated measures t-tests	A reduction in SDQ (Total Difficulties) scores following the intervention when compared to baseline ($p<0.001$)	Within-child / group perspective Triangulated findings Lack of pupil voice Lack of comparison group Possible 'sleeper effect' (benefits seen a few months after therapy) **WoE Rating:** Medium / High quality
Messiou, K., & Azaola, M. C. (2018).	A peer-mentoring scheme for immigrant	3 schools N mentors = 16 (aged 12-16; 5	Qualitative design Interviews	Weekly mentoring meetings for 5 months	Thematic analysis	Increased levels of empathy between participants	Flexibility of scheme to suit individual

	students in English secondary schools: a support mechanism for promoting inclusion?. *Inter national Journal of Inclusive Education*, *22*(2) , 142-157.	male and 11 female) N mentees = 15 (aged 12-16; 7 male and 8 female) Several students from South Africa and Kenya (N unreported)		A set of open-ended questions used during meetings **Theory:** Critical approach towards cultural diversity		Mentees felt they were well supported by the mentors Improved peer relationships for mentees Mentors expanded their skillset (e.g. social skills)	schools / students Impact on individual students but not on school as a whole **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Pearce, P., Sewell, R., Cooper, M., Osman, S., Fugard, A. J., & Pybis, J. (2017).	Effectiveness of school-based humanistic counselling for psychological distress in young people: Pilot randomized controlled trial with follow-up in an ethnically diverse sample. *Psychol ogy and Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and*	N = 64, including control group (aged 11-18) 78% had non-white ethnicity (25% identified as Black) 90% females	Quantitative design Young Person's CORE questionnaire Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire Self-esteem scale	Randomised controlled trial Humanistic counselling sessions: 12 weekly 14-minute sessions **Theory:** Humanistic theory (Rogers, 1959)	Multilevel modelling Log-likelihood ratio tests	Lower levels of stress and emotional difficulties and better self-esteem outcomes in the experimental condition Only emotional symptoms significantly different at 9 months follow-up	Employed a longitudinal data Inappropriately matched control group Only self-report measures used Within-child focus Relatively small sample Highly unbalanced sample (10% males)

	Practice, *90*(2), 138-155.						**WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Toth, K., Cross, L., Golden, S., & Ford, T. (2022).	From a child who IS a problem to a child who HAS a problem: fixed period school exclusions and mental health outcomes from routine outcome monitoring among children and young people attending school counselling. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*.	N = 6712 students (308 aged 4-11; 61 aged 11 – 16) 16.1% identified as 'Black' 38.2% were females	Quantitative research design: baseline and post-intervention assessments Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	Controlled trial Place2Be one-to-one counselling **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Statistical analysis, controlling for many confounding variables (e.g. Pupil Premium funding)	A significant decrease in subsequent number of school exclusions amongst 74% of students 56% had no further exclusions Improved SDQ scores as rated by teachers / parents	Large sample size Ratings triangulated with parents and staff Thought-provoking results that reframe the view that children are 'the problem' in the school exclusion process Possible research bias due to involvement of Place2Be Research Advisory Group Within-child focus No follow-up assessments

							WoE Rating: Medium quality
Author	**Title**	**Participants**	**Design and measures**	**Type of intervention and theoretical background**	**Analysis**	**Outcomes**	**Critique and Weight of Evidence (WoE) rating**
Targeted prevention							
Brown, J. S., Blackshaw, E., Stahl, D., Fennelly, L., McKeague, L., Sclare, I., & Michelson, D. (2019).	School-based early intervention for anxiety and depression in older adolescents: A feasibility randomised controlled trial of a self-referral stress management workshop programme ("DISCOVER"). *Journal of Adolescence*, *7 1*, 150-161.	10 inner-city schools N = 62 (aged 16-19) N control group = 80 44.5% were Black British/ African 81% female	Quantitative design Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale and Mood and Feelings Questionnaire Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale Paediatric Quality of Life Enjoyment and Satisfaction Form	Randomised controlled trial A self-referral stress management workshop programme (DISCOVER) **Theory:** • Within-child focus • Cognitive behavioural theory	Analysis of covariance	Schools reported high willingness to take part Small-to-medium improvements for emotional difficulties at follow-up	Results were based on self-reports and, thus, could have been biased. Associated effect sizes suggest limited impact. Limited generalisability due to a predominantly female sample Within-child focus Group labelled 'hard to reach'

							Intervention impact for sample subgroups unreported (e.g. Black students) **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Chisholm, K., Patterson, P., Torgerson, C., Turner, E., Jenkinson, D., & Birchwood, M. (2016).	Impact of contact on adolescents' mental health literacy and stigma: the SchoolSpace cluster randomised controlled trial. *BMJ open*, *6*(2).	N = 769 (aged 12-13) 15% identified as Black 85% (N=657) provided both pre- and post-intervention data	Quantitative design Resilience scales Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, 7-point scale for help-seeking behaviours Mental Health Knowledge schedule	Randomised controlled trial 1-day psychoeducational training led by a MH worker **Theory:** • Intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954) • Within-child focus.	Unadjusted statistical analysis T tests and marginal homogeneity tests (for ordinal data)	At a 2-week follow-up, MH stigma decreased in both experimental groups	Large sample employed Intervention impact for sample subgroups unreported (e.g. Black students) Within-child focus Cultural and systemic factors ignored Limited impact of intervention **WoE Rating:** Medium quality

Marques, S. S., & Braidwood, R. (2021).	Impact of the coronavirus lockdown on older adolescents engaged in a school-based stress management program: changes in mental health, sleep, social support, and routines. *Children & Schools*, *43*(4), 198-208.	12 schools in South London N = 107 (aged 16-18) 37% identified as Black 74% were female	Mixed methods design The Coping with COVID-19 questionnaire Likert scales Open-ended questions about YP's experiences	A school-based stress management program (DISCOVER) for anxiety, stress or low mood **Theory:** • Positivist philosophical stance • Cognitive behavioural theory Within-child focus	MS Excel used for quantitative analysis Thematic analysis used for qualitative responses	Students reported changes in their MH and routines, including their sleep, during the COVID-19 lockdowns Higher levels of anxiety related to relatives' MH and physical health Participants used of CBT techniques for coping	Lack of triangulation of data Self-report data used Within-child focus Complementing quantitative data with qualitative High proportion of ethnic minority YP (including those identifying as Black) Findings related to Black students not highlighted **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
McKeague, L., Morant, N., Blackshaw, E., &	Exploring the feasibility and acceptability of a school-based self-referral	N students = 24 (aged 16-19) N school staff = 10	Qualitative design Semi-structured interviews with: 1) students who attended the	Stress management workshop accessed through self-referral (DISCOVER)	Thematic analysis	Improved stress awareness and understanding of how to deal with it	Data gathered 4 months after the workshop

Brown, J. S. (2018).	intervention for emotional difficulties in older adolescents: qualitative perspectives from students and school staff. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, *23*(3), 198-205.	60% were Black African/Caribbean/British	workshop, 2) pupils who were interested but did not attend, as well as 3) school staff	**Theory:** • Within-child focus • Cognitive behavioural theory		Interactive activities were preferred by students The programme was congruent with the values of the target educational settings The main reason why students did not engage with the workshop was having limited time	Within-child perspective of wellbeing Triangulated findings High proportion of ethnic minority YP, although findings related to Black students not highlighted **WoE Rating:** High quality
Patalay, P., Annis, J., Sharpe, H., Newman, R., Main, D., Ragunathan, T., Parkes, M. & Clarke, K. (2017).	A pre-post evaluation of OpenMinds: A sustainable, peer-led mental health literacy programme in universities and secondary schools. *Prevention Science*, *18*(8), 995-1005.	N secondary school students = 234 (aged 13-15) N university students = 40 53% ethnic minority students (2 Black students) 36% females	Quantitative design Pre- and post-surveys	MH literacy programme run by university students (OpenMinds) **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Paired sample t-tests (for continuous variables) Chi-square estimate (for binary variables)	Significant improvements in 3 out of 4 MH literacy aspects School students' knowledge of helping behaviours improved Most pupils reported that the programme was enjoyable	Relatable content of intervention, although content not explicitly outlined Unknown if systemic and cultural factors have been considered Within-child focus

							Lack of control group Higher proportion of male students Findings related to Black students unreported **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Author	**Title**	**Participants**	**Design and measures**	**Type of intervention and theoretical background**	**Analysis**	**Outcomes**	**Critique and Weight of Evidence (WoE) rating**
Universal support							
Aston, H. J. (2014).	An ecological model of mental health promotion for school communities: adolescent views about mental health promotion in secondary schools in the	N = 26 (aged 13– 19) N males = 21 N females = 5 8% identified as 'Afro-Caribbean'	Qualitative research design 5 focus groups with semi-structured questions 'Ideal' and 'Non-Ideal' school setting exercise	N/A Grounded theory study **Theory:** Ecosystemic theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)	Data coding involved 'initial coding processes' and 'constant comparison'	3 unique themes mapped onto the ecosystems model: **(1) Micro level:** supporting personality, identity and relationships; **(2) Meso level:** focusing on positive	Eco-systemic focus Child voice was promoted Higher proportion of male participants

	UK. *International Journal of Mental Health Promotion*, *16*(5), 289-307.					school culture and ethos; **(3) Macro level:** society and school cultures promoting listening, participation, and providing information about systems and MH.	Single-method design linked with potential bias Questionable transferability of findings Participants' quotes unreported Findings related to Black students unreported Cultural sensitivity not discussed **WoE Rating:** Medium / High quality
Jessiman, P., Kidger, J., Spencer, L., Geijer-Simpson, E., Kaluzeviciute, G., Burn, A. M.,	School culture and student mental health: a qualitative study in UK secondary schools. *BMC public health*, *22*(1), 1-18.	3 schools N staff = 27 N parents = 7 N students = 28 (aged 16 or above)	Qualitative research design Interviews (parents and staff) 4 focus groups (students)	Participatory action research study to identify changes to school culture that might impact student mental health	The Framework Method to thematic analysis	The identified aspects of school culture were grouped into 4 themes: **(1)** structure and context;	Information was triangulated Systemic focus Clear discussion around the role of culture

Leonard, N. & Limmer, M. (2022).		7 students identified as Black Sex of participants unreported		**Theory:** Ecosystemic theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)		**(2)** organisational and academic; **(3)** community; **(4)** safety and support. Interdependence between the 4 themes.	Unclear if the sample is balanced Questionable transferability of findings Staff's voice overrepresented in the reported data **WoE Rating:** Medium / High quality
Sharpe, H., Patalay, P., Vostanis, P., Belsky, J., Humphrey, N., & Wolpert, M. (2017).	Use, acceptability and impact of booklets designed to support mental health self-management and help seeking in schools: results of a large randomised controlled trial in England. *Europ ean child & adolescent*	75 Local authorities N primary school students = 8139 (aged 8-9): • 49.8% were female • 7.7% identified as Black N secondary school students = 6551 (aged 11-12):	Quantitative research design Survey around booklet use and acceptability Information about students' quality of life, MH, and help seeking behaviours was gathered	Randomised controlled trial • Targeted mental health support in schools (TMHS) • MH booklets • TMHS + booklets • Waiting list controls **Theory:** Within-child, medical model	Chi squared analysis and mixed-effects models	Almost a half of the primary school pupils and a fifth of the secondary pupils reported seeing the booklets Most primary school pupils said that the booklets were 'very helpful' or 'quite helpful', in contrast to 73% of the participants from secondary schools	Large sample size Part of the intervention had within-child focus Low uptake of booklets Limited depth of data collection (e.g. no direct records of booklets use)

	psychiatry, *26*(3), 315-324.	• 48.9% were female • 6.6% identified as Black				No detectable impact of booklets	No triangulation when assessing differences in help seeking behaviours **WoE Rating:** Medium quality
Wigelsworth, M., Humphrey, N., & Lendrum, A. (2013).	Evaluation of a school-wide preventive intervention for adolescents: The secondary social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme. *School Mental Health*, *5*(2), 96-109.	41 secondary schools N = 4443 (aged 11-12) 2.9% and 1.4% identified as Black in SEAL and non-SEAL schools, respectively 52% were females	Quantitative research design: evaluations at baseline and after the intervention Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	Controlled trial The Secondary Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) Programme: • Whole-school approach; • Direct teaching of key skills. **Theory:** Goleman's model of Emotional Intelligence (1996)	Hierarchical linear modelling	Overall, SEAL programme had limited impact on students' wellbeing Reduced wellbeing difficulties for 'at risk' students, although similar trend evident at control schools	A balanced sample (in terms of gender) Large sample size Nationally representative sample Within-child focus Low implementation quality Self-report measures Findings related to Black students unreported

							WoE Rating: Medium quality
Wolpert, M., Humphrey, N., Deighton, J., Patalay, P., Fugard, A. J., Fonagy, P., Belsky, J. & Panos, V. (2015).	An evaluation of the implementation and impact of England's mandated school-based mental health initiative in elementary schools. *School Psychology Review*, *44*(1), 117-138.	75 LAs 268 primary schools N = 8172 (aged 8-9) 7.4% identified as Black 47% were female	Quantitative research design: pre- and post-intervention assessment School-level and pupil-level assessments via an online survey 'Me and My School' questionnaire	Randomised controlled trial TaMHS funding was provided (could be used flexibly) **Theory:** Within-child focus	Nonparametric Mann-Whitney U-tests	TaMHS schools offered significantly more group therapeutic sessions for pupils, staff training, activities promoting students' wellbeing, and information for pupils and parents (small effect size) Improved collaboration between TaMHS settings and local MH specialist services	Systemic impact of TaMHS Representative sample (in terms of gender and ethnic minority groups) A lot of missing data No triangulation with parents and staff No follow-up evaluation **WoE Rating:** Medium quality

Appendix 1.4

Weight of Evidence (WoE; Gough, 2007) of Reviewed Studies

The following literature review question was explored: '*What does the literature tell us about the school wellbeing support available in the UK to students who identify as 'black'?'*

Gough's (2007) evaluation criteria was employed, including:

- Transparency or whether the purpose of adopted approach is clear.
- Accuracy or whether the information provided in the study is accurate.
- Accessibility or whether the paper is understandable.
- Specificity or whether the employed research method is of good quality.
- Purposivity or whether the used method is good fit for purpose.
- Utility or whether the paper provides relevant answers.
- Propriety or whether the research is legal and ethical.

Colour-coding was used to denote the author's judgement made regarding each criteria, whereby green meant 'yes', yellow indicated 'somewhat' and pink signified 'no'. An overall rating out of 3 (1 = low; 2 = medium; 3 = high) was also given.

Paper author and year	Coherence and integrity of own evidence **(WoE A)**	Appropriateness of the used evidence for the literature review question **(WoE B)**	Relevance of evidence focus for the literature review question **(WoE C)**	Overall assessment of the weight related to the literature review question **(WoE D)**
Aston (2014)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 3	Medium / High quality
Brown et al. (2019)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
Chisholm et al. (2016)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
Fazel et al. (2009)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality

	Rating: 2			
Fazel (2015)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 3	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	High quality
Fazel et al. (2016)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 3	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	High quality
Hughes (2014)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium quality
Jessiman et al. (2022)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 3	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium / High quality
Knowler & Frederickson (2013)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium quality
Lee at al. (2009)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium / High quality
Marques et al. (2021)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
McKeague et al. (2017)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 3	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	High quality
Messiou, & Azaola (2018)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity	Purposivity Rating: 3	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality

	Rating: 2			
O'Shea et al. (2000)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 1 / 2	Low / Medium quality
Patalay et al. (2017)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
Pearce et al. (2017)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium quality
Sharpe et al. (2017)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2 / 3	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
Toth et al. (2022)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2 / 3	Medium quality
Wigelsworth et al. (2013)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality
Wolpert et al. (2015)	Transparency Accuracy Accessibility Specificity Rating: 2	Purposivity Rating: 2	Utility Propriety Rating: 2	Medium quality

Appendix 2.1

Presentation Slides Used During the Reference Group Meeting

Please, note that the attached slides were filled in during the reference group meeting and, thus, incorporate the interview questions and the dissemination strategies suggested by the co-researchers.

HOW CAN WE BEST ENGAGE YOUNG BLACK PEOPLE?

SOME IDEAS...

1:1 discussion

Taking photographs

Drawing

Group discussion

Creating a collage

Any other ideas?

QUESTIONS

1. WHAT IS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF WELLBEING? HOW DO YOU DEFINE IT. CAN YOU GIVE A PICTURE / PHRASE / WORD (ETC) TO DESCRIBE IT?

2. HOW IS WELLBEING SUPPORT ADVERTISED IN YOUR SCHOOL? HOW DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS AVAILABLE (E.G. ASSEMBLIES, NEWSLETTERS, ETC)?

3. WHAT SCHOOL WELLBEING SUPPORT HAVE YOU FOUND USEFUL? WHY?

4. CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE WHEN YOU FELT YOUR WELLBEING WAS WELL - SUPPORTED AT SCHOOL? WHY DO YOU THINK THAT IS?

5. HOW CAN YOUR WELLBEING BE BETTER SUPPORTED?

QUESTIONS CONT.

SHALL DISCUSSIONS BE MORE FLEXIBLE, OR HAVE A STRUCTURE?

SHARING WHAT WE HAVE FOUND

1. PUBLISHING RESEARCH

2. SPEAKING TO SCHOOLS

3. SPEAKING TO OTHER PROFESSIONALS

1. PEOPLE IN THE COMMUNITY WHO ARE RESPECTED (PASTORS, LOCAL PARENTING GROUPS, YOUTH CLUBS)

2. TRANSITION MEETINGS BETWEEN PRIMARY AND SECONDARY

3. LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Appendix 2.2

Summary of the Reference Group Discussion

Reference group meeting – 02.12.2022

	Co-researcher 1	Co-researcher 2
Pseudonym	Kaleisha	Dembe

Attendees: Kaleisha, Dembe and researcher

Duration: 1 hour and 15 minutes

Pre-data collection meeting:

- Containing expectations and clarifying what will happen as part of the research before data is collected was deemed important.
- This can be optional in case some participants want to opt out.
- Having a document that explains this to parents and YP may be useful, too.
- Often, people from the Black community may find it difficult to 'trust what people say' so being specific will help. This can involve differentiating between what the research will produce and what outcomes will likely not be achieved.
- For example, explaining that wellbeing is a broad term and that this research is a small step towards improving the systems supporting one's wellbeing, or highlighting that the researcher would not directly work with students' schools.

Data collection method:

- Focus group alongside a trusted adult is preferrable if YP know each other. This is because group discussions bring feelings of connectedness and shared experiences, can validate YP's feelings and make people 'feel they are not on their own'. The trusted adult should be chosen by participants e.g. by giving them an option of a few known adults.
- If online focus groups are held with unknown peers, participants can be allowed to create fictional name tags and switch their cameras off. Participants could be given the option to email any further information if there were uncomfortable sharing in the focus group.
- If YP are not from the same school / organisation, individual interviews seem more appropriate due to the sensitive nature of the topic. A few barriers such as 'not knowing each other' and 'compromised feelings of safety' were given.
- There was an agreement that the interviews / focus group discussions should be semi-structured.

Data collection session:

- Explaining the reason for gaining the voice of Black students seemed essential i.e. ensuring that their voice is heard given the topic is underresearched.

- Participants can be given a ‘warm up’ activity at the beginning e.g. using the ‘Wellbeing Dashboard’ tool to indicate how they feel at the time. Such approach may also help the researcher understand what is happening in the wider community, which may bring further insight.
- Black students are not often asked about things concerning their community unless it is on Black History Month.

Language used:

- Using the word ‘mental health’ may scare participants as there is a lot of stigma around this word.
- A discussion around whether the word ‘emotional wellbeing’ or ‘wellbeing’ to be used. There was an agreement that a bottom-up approach may be more appropriate, where students use their own understanding of ‘wellbeing’ in general; this would indicate what is important to the community.
- Emotions are not often talked about in the Black community; instead, things like ‘being healthy’, having a ‘roof over your head’ may be deemed more important.
- There are particular narratives e.g. ‘the strong Black woman’, which can prevent people from talking about their feelings.

Questions for YP:

Kaleisha and Dembe adjusted and added to pre-written questions:

1. What is your understanding of wellbeing? How do you define it. Can you provide a picture / phrase / word (etc) to describe it?
2. How is wellbeing support advertised at your school? How do you know what is available (e.g. assemblies, newsletters, etc)?
3. What school wellbeing support have you found useful? Why?
4. Can you give me an example when you felt your wellbeing was well-supported at school? Why do you think that is?
5. How can your wellbeing be better supported?

Dissemination:

Kaleisha and Dembe agreed with the suggested methods for dissemination:

- Publishing research
- Speaking to schools
- Speaking to other professionals

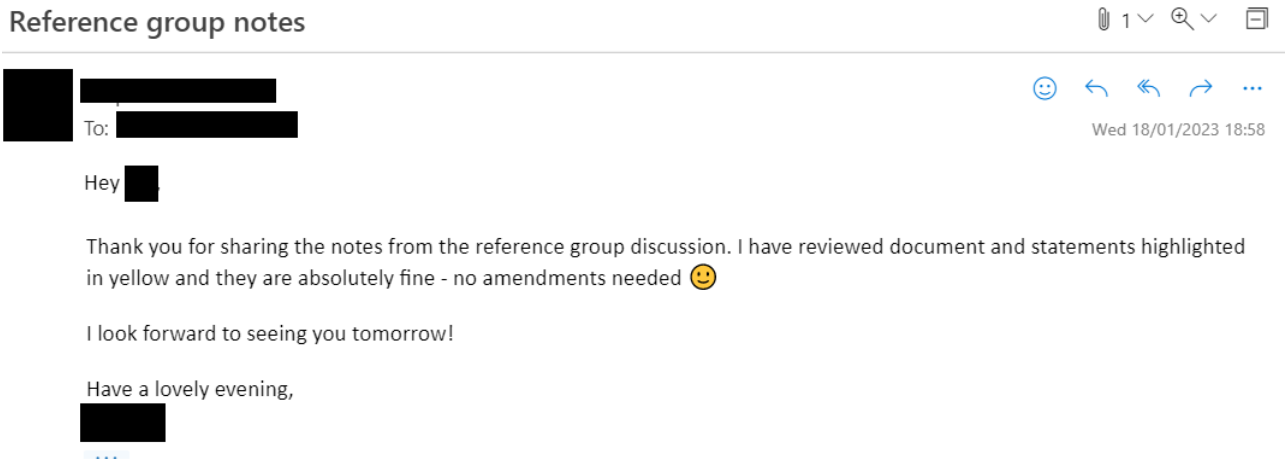
They added the following ideas for dissemination of research findings:

- Speaking with people, who are respected in the Black community e.g. pastors, youth workers and local parenting groups; this may open conversations around wellbeing and decrease the existing stigma.
- Presenting findings to key stakeholders in local authorities as they have budgets and funding that can be used to make the needed changes.

Appendix 2.3

Reference Group Members' Feedback Regarding Accuracy of Notes

Please, see Kaleisha's feedback sent via an email below.



Reference group notes

[redacted]

To: [redacted]

Wed 18/01/2023 18:58

Hey [redacted]

Thank you for sharing the notes from the reference group discussion. I have reviewed document and statements highlighted in yellow and they are absolutely fine - no amendments needed 🙂

I look forward to seeing you tomorrow!

Have a lovely evening,

[redacted]

Please, note that Dembe confirmed the accuracy of the reference group meeting notes verbally and in-person.

Appendix 2.4

Interview Schedule

Prompts used during the interview:

- Anything else...?
- Can you tell me more about...?
- What do you mean when you say...?
- Could you provide an example...?

Prior to the interview:

Outline the following:

- Introductions and aim of study
- Interview duration: up to 1 hour
- Participant's right to withdraw
- Voucher to be received by the participant: £10
- Recording of the interview
- Maintaining confidentiality: anonymisation and pseudonym use
- Requests: camera on and being alone
- Verbal consent.

During the interview:

1. Warm-up activity (using the Integrated Well-being Dashboard): How are you feeling today?

2. What is your understanding of wellbeing? How do you define it? Can you give a picture / phrase / word (etc) to describe it?
- How does this relate to emotional wellbeing (how we feel)?

3. How was wellbeing support advertised in your school? How did you know what is available (e.g. assemblies, newsletters, etc)?

4. What school wellbeing support have you found useful? Why?

5. Can you give me an example when you felt your wellbeing was well-supported at school? Why do you think that is?

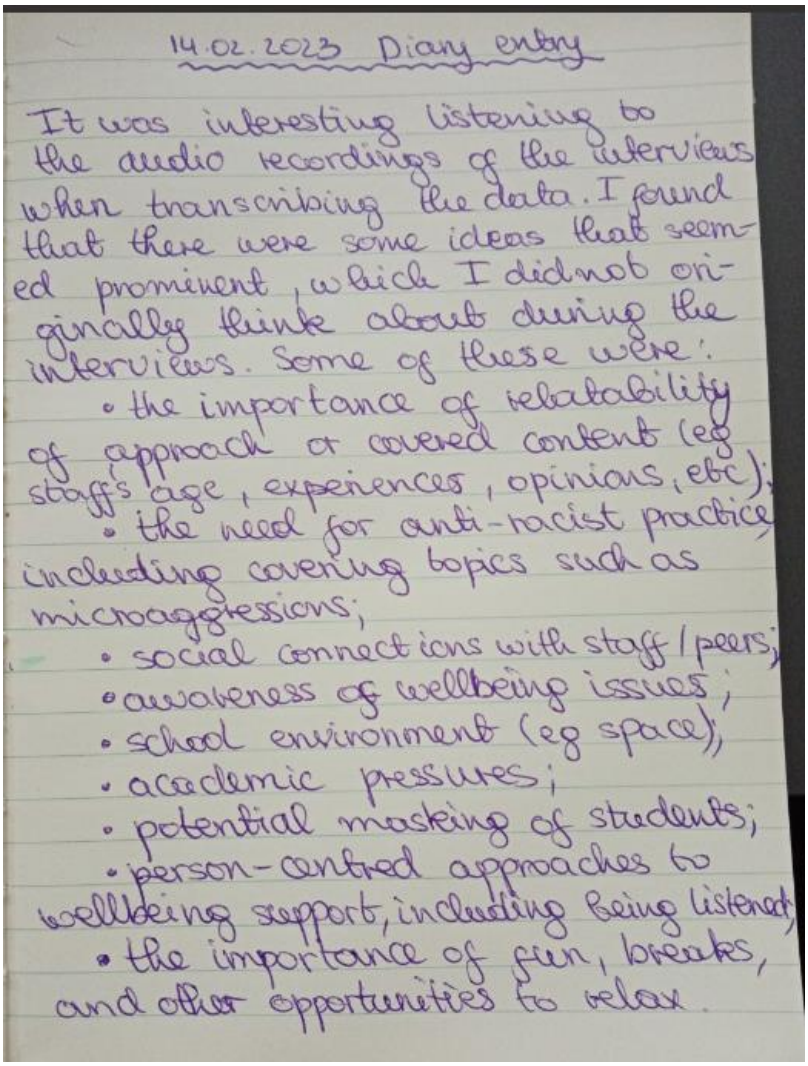
6. How could your wellbeing be better supported?

After the interview:

- Sensitive topic: check-in and wellbeing support available outlined in debrief sheet
- What this research is / is not about
- Further details regarding voucher
- Right to withdraw in the next 3 weeks.

Appendix 2.5

Emergent Thoughts About the Data Following Transcription (TA Phase 1; Braun & Clarke, 2006)



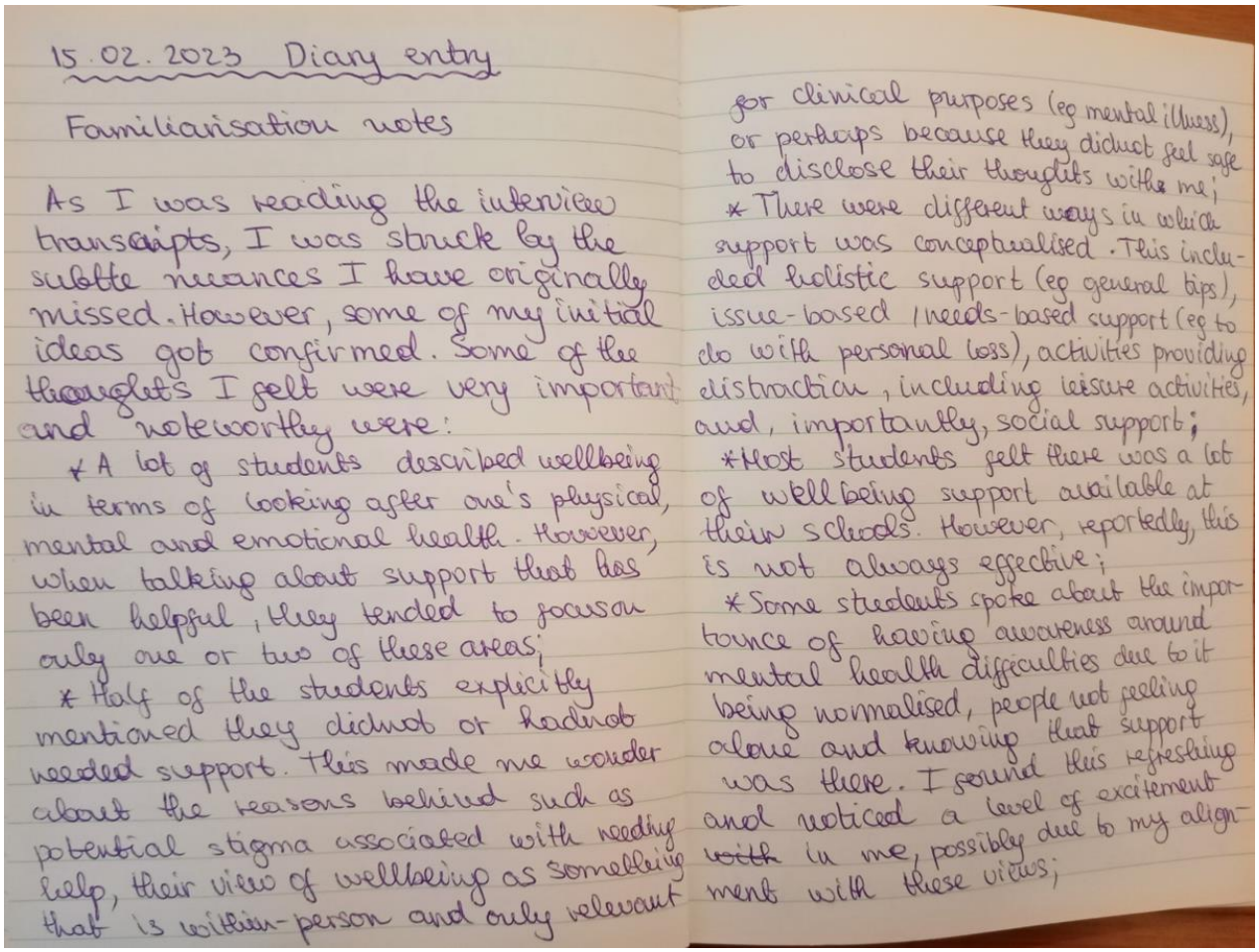
14.02.2023 Diary entry

It was interesting listening to the audio recordings of the interviews when transcribing the data. I found that there were some ideas that seemed prominent, which I did not originally think about during the interviews. Some of these were:

- the importance of relatability of approach & covered content (eg staff's age, experiences, opinions, etc);
- the need for anti-racist practice, including covering topics such as microaggressions;
- social connections with staff / peers;
- awareness of wellbeing issues;
- school environment (eg space);
- academic pressures;
- potential masking of students;
- person-centred approaches to wellbeing support, including being listened to;
- the importance of fun, breaks, and other opportunities to relax.

Appendix 2.6

Thoughts Regarding the Participants' Views Following Familiarisation With Data (TA Phase 1; Braun & Clarke, 2006)



15.02.2023 Diary entry

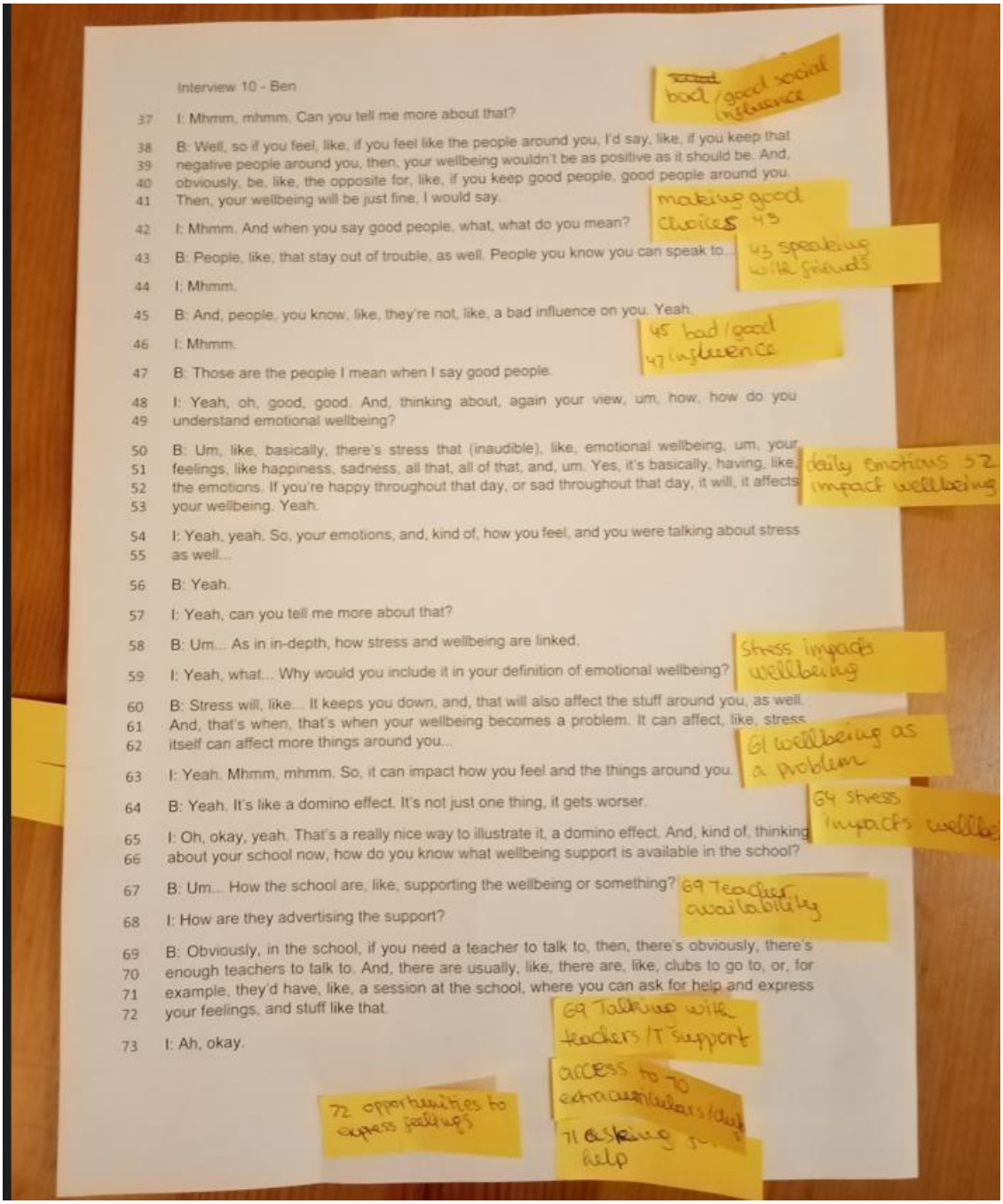
Familiarisation notes

As I was reading the interview transcripts, I was struck by the subtle nuances I have originally missed. However, some of my initial ideas got confirmed. Some of the thoughts I felt were very important and noteworthy were:

* A lot of students described wellbeing in terms of looking after one's physical, mental and emotional health. However, when talking about support that has been helpful, they tended to focus on only one or two of these areas;
* Half of the students explicitly mentioned they didn't or hadn't needed support. This made me wonder about the reasons behind such as potential stigma associated with needing help, their view of wellbeing as something that is within-person and only relevant for clinical purposes (eg mental illness), or perhaps because they didn't feel safe to disclose their thoughts with me;
* There were different ways in which support was conceptualised. This included holistic support (eg general tips), issue-based / needs-based support (eg to do with personal loss), activities providing distraction, including leisure activities, and, importantly, social support;
* Most students felt there was a lot of wellbeing support available at their schools. However, reportedly, this is not always effective;
* Some students spoke about the importance of having awareness around mental health difficulties due to it being normalised, people not feeling alone and knowing that support was there. I found this refreshing and noticed a level of excitement ~~with~~ in me, possibly due to my alignment with these views;

Appendix 2.7

Initial Coding Process: Ben (TA Phase 2; Braun & Clarke, 2006)

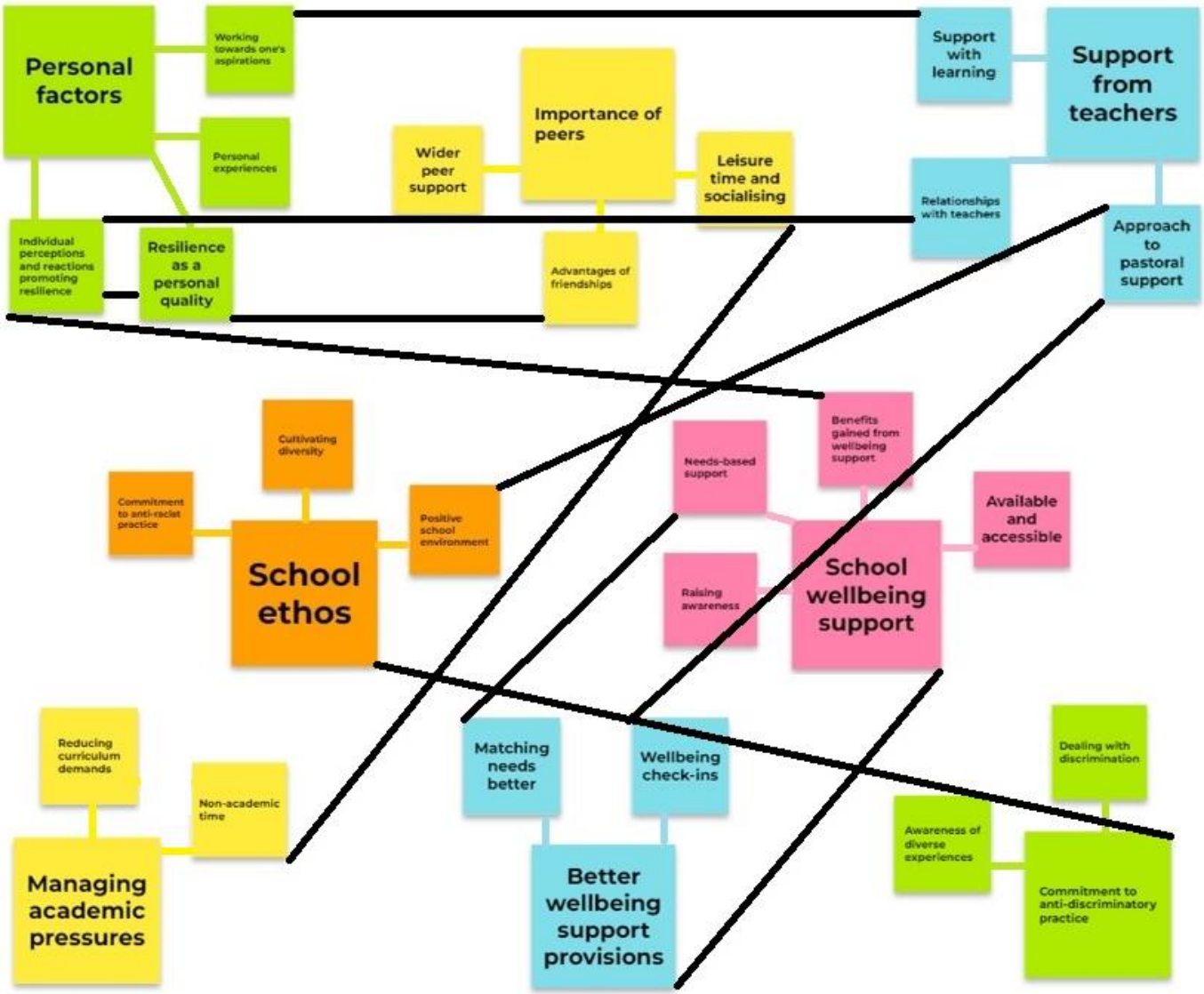


Appendix 2.8

Visual Mapping of Initial Themes Related to RQ1 (TA Phases 3 and 4; Braun & Clarke, 2006)

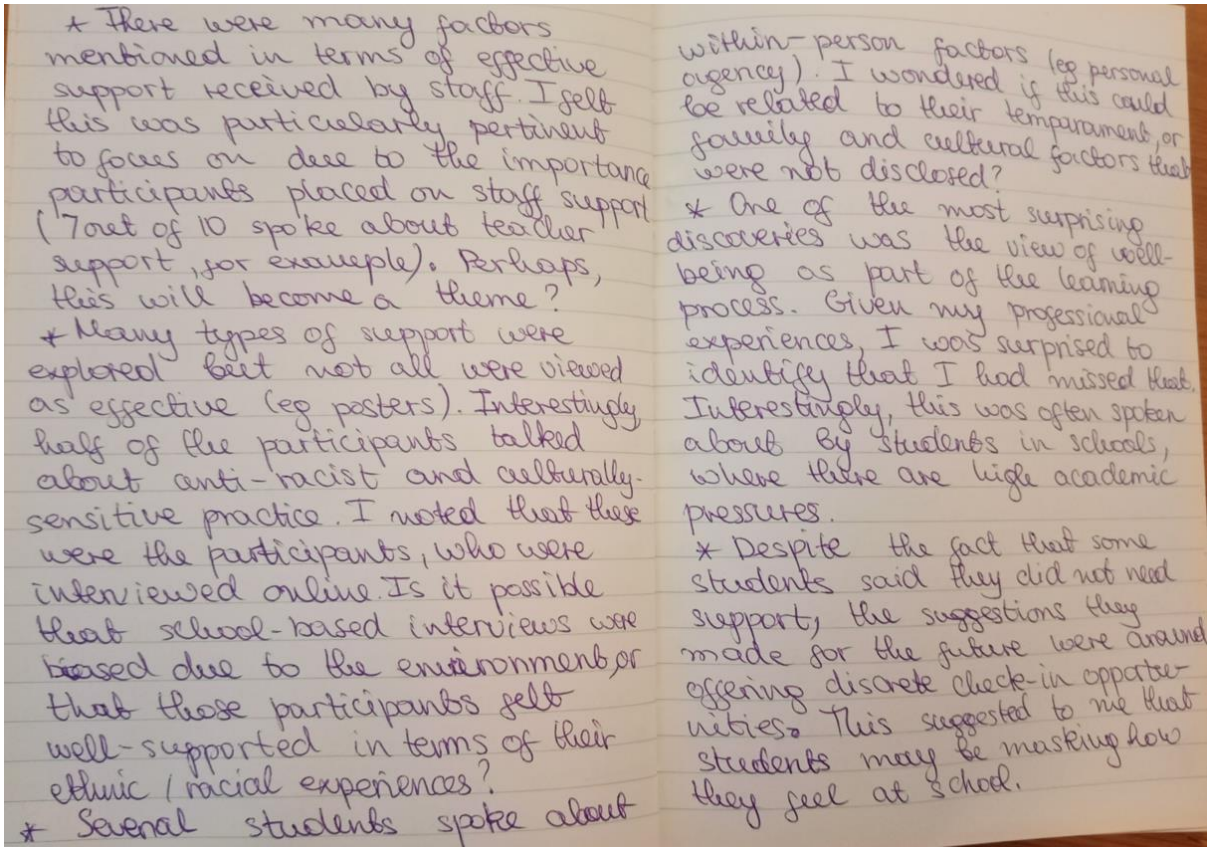
Appendix 2.9

Final Thematic Map Inclusive of Links Between Themes and Sub-themes (TA Phase 5; Braun & Clarke, 2006)



Appendix 2.10
Extract From the Author's Reflexive Diary

Please, see an excerpt from the author's research diary regarding her reflections during the initial coding process.



* There were many factors mentioned in terms of effective support received by staff. I felt this was particularly pertinent to focus on due to the importance participants placed on staff support (7 out of 10 spoke about teacher support, for example). Perhaps, this will become a theme?
* Many types of support were explored but not all were viewed as effective (eg posters). Interestingly, half of the participants talked about anti-racist and culturally-sensitive practice. I noted that these were the participants, who were interviewed online. Is it possible that school-based interviews were biased due to the environment or that those participants felt well-supported in terms of their ethnic / racial experiences?
* Several students spoke about within-person factors (eg personal agency). I wondered if this could be related to their temperament, or family and cultural factors that were not disclosed?
* One of the most surprising discoveries was the view of well-being as part of the learning process. Given my professional experiences, I was surprised to identify that I had missed that. Interestingly, this was often spoken about by students in schools, where there are high academic pressures.
* Despite the fact that some students said they did not need support, the suggestions they made for the future were around offering discrete check-in opportunities. This suggested to me that students may be masking how they feel at school.

Appendix 2.11
Extract From Raw Data (Zofia, Lines 71 - 102)

Zofia (Z): I've been to two schools in England, my old school and my new school, which is this school, and, in this school, I feel it's, like, more advertised.

Interviewer (I): Mhmm.

Z: That, there are, like, teachers and spaces to go to if you're feeling unsafe, or unwell, or if you just need to talk to someone.

I: Mhmm.

Z: But some people have connections with certain teachers, who they are more comfortable with. Like, for example, me and my English teacher, Miss XXXX, that I've had last year, and she's a really good teacher, so I know that if I had a problem, I'd just go to her and speak to her about it. But the advertisement of the Safeguarding team, we have them, have them in assembly, and although they advertise it, I feel like it's different from when you actually go to the Safeguarding team.

I: Mhmm.

Z: Because most of the problems of us kids and teenagers, like, we know what they would say if we did go to them, and it's not what we need. We need advice, not necessarily steps, like, that we want them to take. We just need advice in certain situations.

I: Okay. So, it sounds like speaking with your teacher, Miss XXXX, if I understood her name correctly, um, has been helpful because not only you can, you feel comfortable speaking with her, um, and you've had her for a few years now, so...

Z: Yeah, for over two years.

I: Yeah. And how has that been helpful for your wellbeing?

Z: Well, when I first came to this school, they put me in the low sets because they didn't have the information from my old school, and I felt frustrated because I know my ability, my abilities in school and that I should be doing higher.

I: Mhmm, yeah.

Z: But she, she reminded me that it's not, like, the set doesn't matter, but it's the work that matters, so she pushed me to be even better than before. And she just helped me understand the problems I had in certain domains in school work, or even, like, giving advice about my personal life, and how I could create, like, good habits, and things like that.

I: Mhmm, mhmm. Could you tell me a little bit more about that?

Z: Well, for example, if I felt stressed about, um, schoolwork or the marks, she would, like, give me an extension because a lot of teachers give us a lot of homework.

Appendix 2.12

Member Checking (Walt)

The following research findings were shared with Walt via email:

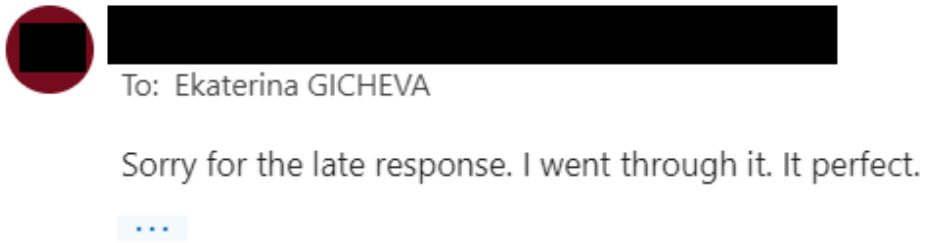
Question 1: What aspects of current school wellbeing provisions are viewed as helpful?

Theme name	Quote
Personal factors	At times, an individual may be homeless and is not satisfied. An individual may get a house or an apartment to stay in (pause) and it's been satisfied only he or she has that apartment. But, what it is, the basic tools that he or she would use that will be available in that apartment, the person may not be satisfied about it.
Support from teachers	So, to me, I feel loved because it's not that easy for someone who may have just knowing to say, 'Oh, please, just try and be okay. It will be fine. It's just the situation that you need to overcome.' That kind of people with those kind of words, they motivate me and they encourage me. So, at that point, it was really helpful for me.
School wellbeing support	And I just need some motivation and encouragement for me to stay firm and to be steadfast in everything I do (pause) irrespective of different challenges I find myself. So, at that particular point, I went with it and, at that point, I was activated, out of choice of ways of talking to me, and even counselling me at that particular point.
School ethos (eg positive school climate)	But with the love I see with the psychologist, the teachers, and a few of the other students over there, it was amazing. I feel love that, I felt, I've been replaced. I just replaced my brother with these people.

Question 2: How can school wellbeing support be improved?

Theme name	Quote
Commitment to anti-discriminatory practice	Number two has to do with, um... We treat who as who. We should avoid discrimination, yeah. [...] So, what I would just add is that I believe they should treat students fairly
Better wellbeing support provisions	Yeah, in the school here, I really believe they need helping hands. They should increase the number of psychology. [...] That's it, so... I believe the time frame for students should be properly managed by them, that would (pause) they, kind of, employ more hands to help when the situation rises. So, I also... The situation that we have in societal cases, I believe there should be more hands, also people in the situations should be.

The following email response was received from Walt:



Appendix 2.13
Ethical Approval

School of Psychology Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION LETTER

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

Details	
Reviewer:	**Hanna Kampman**
Supervisor:	**Lucy Browne**
Student:	**Ekaterina Gicheva**
Course:	**Prof Doc in Educational and Child Psychology**
Title of proposed study:	What Works: the Views of Young Black People on School Wellbeing Provisions
Decision on the above-named proposed research study	
Please indicate the decision:	**APPROVED - MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES**

Minor amendments
Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make
I will invite you to reconsider this: "Participants might be excluded if their sex, or gender is overrepresented within the sample" – Please consider if this is necessary within a qualitative design and particularly, please consider how it is handled if someone is excluded. **Another point I would like to invite you to consider is that it was not entirely clear if the co-researcher collects the data or if they will be only involved in creating the design and recruiting. I would recommend considering data protection from this perspective in case the co-researcher will have access to sensitive data, such as names and emails and particularly if they will have access to other research data (e.g., photos).** **This being participatory research, the safeguarding in relation to the co-researcher is essential. I read that in the thorough risk assessment "researcher" referred to the co-researcher as well – if not, please add these considerations as well.**

Assessment of risk to researcher		
Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?	**YES** ☒	**NO** ☐
	If no, please request resubmission with an **adequate risk assessment.**	
If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard, please rate the degree of risk:		
HIGH	Please **do not approve a high-risk** application. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not be approved on this basis. If unsure, please refer to the Chair of Ethics.	☐
MEDIUM	Approve but include appropriate recommendations in the below box.	☒
LOW	Approve and if necessary, include any recommendations in the below box.	☐
Reviewer recommendations in relation to risk (if any):	Again, this is only relevant if the "researcher" in the risk assessment form did not include the co-researcher. In which case I recommend thoroughly considering their safeguarding as well.	

Reviewer's signature	
Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Hanna Kampman**
Date:	**20/03/2022**
This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee	
RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE For the researcher and participants involved in the above-named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.	

For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard.

Confirmation of minor amendments (Student to complete)	
I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data	
Student name: (Typed name to act as signature)	**Ekaterina Gicheva**
Student number:	**2064586**
Date:	**24/03/2022**
Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed if minor amendments to your ethics application are required	

Appendix 2.14
Research Documents

2.14.a Study Advert

What Works: The Views of Young Black People on School Wellbeing Provisions

Are you a Black 11-21-year-old?

Do you attend a school or college in a urban area in England?

Do you have an opinion about how your wellbeing is or was supported at school?

If so, I would love to hear from you!

Please, contact me, Kat Gicheva, at: [redacted]

University of East London

Additional information

Who am I? I am a trainee educational psychologist researching the views of young Black people on their school's wellbeing provisions.

What am I interested in? I would love to hear about what wellbeing support has been helpful. I hope to share my findings so that schools and other professionals are aware of best practice.

How long will it take? We will meet once – it should take no more than 1 hour in total.

What will happen to my answers? I will anonymise all your responses. I will also store your information securely and will delete it after the study has finished.

You will receive a £10 voucher for your participation!

2.14b Information Sheet

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

What works: the views of Black young people on school wellbeing provisions

Contact person: Ms. Ekaterina Gicheva

Email: [XXXX]

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what your participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

Who am I?

My name is Ekaterina Gicheva. I am a doctorate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London (UEL) and am studying for a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

What is the purpose of the research?

I am conducting research into the views of Black secondary-aged students on their school's wellbeing provisions. The aim of this study is to identify what wellbeing support is viewed as helpful to young Black people by students and professionals supporting them. This will be shared with English schools and local authorities, at research conferences, and academic journals. I hope that this will promote good practice in schools and, thus, that all students will have access to good wellbeing support.

Why have I been invited to take part?

To address the study aims, I am inviting young people and professionals from the Black ethnic group to take part in my research. You are eligible to take part in this study If you:

- Identify as Black (African, Caribbean, or British);
- Are 11-21 years old or a professional working with this age group;
- Attend an educational setting or support a young Black person that does;
- Live in an urban area in England;
- Can speak English at a conversational level.

It is entirely up to you whether you take part or not, participation is voluntary.

What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?

If you agree to take part, you will:

- ***Meet with the researcher for up to an hour:*** to share your views about your school's wellbeing support; you can request another meeting to ask questions about the study before you decide if you want to take part.
  Choose how to meet: this could be online using Microsoft Teams, or face-to-face at a community setting. It might not be possible to meet in person due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- ***Share your views:*** this might involve taking pictures, drawing, or making a collage, as well as taking part in an interview (an informal chat), or a group discussion.
- ***Give permission to be recorded:*** an audio or video recording of your interview or group discussion will be made. This will be transcribed and, then, deleted.
- ***Receive a voucher for your participation:*** you will receive a £10 voucher as part of this study.

Can I change my mind?

Yes, you can change your mind at any time and withdraw without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. If you would like to withdraw from the study, you can do so on the day of your allocated session. If you withdraw, your data will not be used as part of the research.

Separately, you can also request to withdraw your data from being used even after you have taken part in the study. This request needs to be made within 3 weeks of the data being collected. The data analysis will begin after this, and withdrawal will not be possible.

Are there any disadvantages to taking part?

- ***Your wellbeing:*** you might talk about past times when you were stressed, sad, or angry. This might impact how you feel now.
- ***Available support:*** I will do regular check-ins with you during our chat to ensure you are well. Additional information about available support will be provided. This can also be found below:

Black Minds Matter

https://www.blackmindsmatteruk.com/

NHS Live Well

Further advice on how to manage your wellbeing can be found on https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/

YoungMinds Textline

Free, 24/7 and confidential support available for young people. Text YP to 85258.

ChildLine

Free, confidential support for children and young people in the UK, including a helpline and 1:1 online chat with counsellors. Call 0800 1111 or visit childline.org.uk.

How will the information I provide be kept secure and confidential?

- You will not be identified by the data collected, or on any material that comes from the data. Instead, pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity. Confidentiality will be only broken if you or another person is at serious risk of harm.
- All information that can identify you, any school, or any other person will be removed or replaced (e.g. School 1).
- You will not be asked to share any other private information.
- Your details will be saved securely on a password-protected file until the study ends. These will be stored securely on the researcher's OneDrive for Business account, which is also password-protected.
- Audio, or video recordings will be deleted after they have been transcribed (i.e. written down).
- All information will be shared securely by using University of East London emails.
- Only the researcher will have access to your confidential information. This will be deleted at the end of the study.
- The anonymised data will be kept securely on the researcher's OneDrive for Business account.

For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information about how the University processes personal data please see www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection

What will happen to the results of the research?

The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. The thesis will be publicly available on UEL's online Repository. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, school practitioners, educational psychologists, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, and blogs. In all material produced, your identity will remain anonymous, in that, it will not be possible to identify you personally. Personally identifying information will either be removed or replaced.

You will be given the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed for which relevant contact details will need to be provided.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by the researcher for a maximum of 3 years, following which all data will be deleted.

Who has reviewed the research?

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ekaterina Gicheva [XXXX]

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Dr Pandora Giles. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: [XXXX]

or

Chair of School Research Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

Email: [XXXX]

2.14c Participant Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

What works: the views of young Black people on current school wellbeing provisions

Contact person: Ms. Ekaterina Gicheva

Email: [XXXX]

Statement	Please initial
I confirm that I have read the participant information sheet dated 01/12/2022 (version 4) for the above study and that I have been given a copy to keep.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time, without explanation or disadvantage.	
I understand that if I withdraw during the study, my data will not be used.	
I understand that I have 3 weeks from the date of the interview to withdraw my data from the study.	
I understand that the interview will be recorded using a voice recorder or via MS Teams.	
I understand that my personal information and data, including audio/video recordings from the research will be securely stored and remain confidential. Only the researcher will have access to this information, to which I give my permission.	
It has been explained to me what will happen to the data once the research has been completed.	
I understand that short, anonymised quotes from my interview or group level data may be used in material such as conference presentations, reports, articles in academic journals and that these will not personally identify me.	
I understand that short, anonymised part of the transcripts may be added to the researcher's thesis.	
I would like to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed and am willing to provide contact details for this to be sent to.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……

Participant's Signature

……

Researcher's Name: EKATERINA GICHEVA

Researcher's Signature:

Date:……..……

2.14d Debrief Sheet

PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF SHEET

What works: the views of young Black people on school wellbeing provisions

Thank you for participating in my research study on the views of young Black people on their school's wellbeing provision. This document offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

How will my data be managed?

The University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. More detailed information is available in the Participant Information Sheet, which you received when you agreed to take part in the research.

What will happen to the results of the research?

The research will be written up as a thesis and submitted for assessment. The thesis will be publically available on UEL's online Repository. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, school practitioners, educational psychologists, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, and blogs. In all material produced, your identity will remain anonymous, in that, it will not be possible to identify you personally. Personally identifying information will be removed.

You will be given the option to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed for which relevant contact details will need to be provided.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by Dr Pandora Giles for a maximum of 3 years, following which all data will be deleted.

What if I have been adversely affected by taking part?

It is not anticipated that you will have been adversely affected by taking part in the research, and all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise distress or harm of any kind. Nevertheless, it is possible that your participation – or its after-effects – may have been challenging, distressing or uncomfortable in some way. If you have been affected in any of those ways, you may find the following resources/services helpful in relation to obtaining information and support:

Black Minds Matter

https://www.blackmindsmatteruk.com/

NHS Live Well

Further advice on how to manage your wellbeing can be found on https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/

YoungMinds Textline

Free, 24/7 and confidential support available for young people. Text YP to 85258.

ChildLine

Free, confidential support for children and young people in the UK, including a helpline and 1:1 online chats with counsellors. Call 0800 1111 or visit childline.org.uk.

Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Ms. Ekaterina Gicheva [XXXX]

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Dr Pandora Giles. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,

Email: [XXXX]

or

Chair of School Research Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

Email: [XXXX]

Thank you for taking part in my study.

2.14e Eligibility Questionnaire

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

Pseudonym: .....

Age: .....

Please, tick to indicate your answer - I describe myself as:

Black (African, Caribbean, or Black British)	
White (English, Welsh, Irish / Gypsy Traveller, any other White background)	
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background)	
Mixed ethnic background (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, any other Mixed ethnic background)	
Other ethnic group (Arab or any other ethnic group)	

Thank you for the additional information!

Appendix 3.1

Identified Factors Related to 'What Helps' Applied to The Social-Ecological Model of Resilience (Ungar et al., 2007)

The table below provides a visual representation of how the current findings are related to Ungar and colleagues' model of resilience (2007). Namely, the generated sub-themes were mapped onto the seven tensions identified within the social-ecological model.

Please, note that some sub-themes were used more than once due to their adherence with more than one of Ungar et al.'s tensions.

Ungar et al.'s tensions (2007)	Examples given by Ungar et al. (2007)	Sub-themes from current research
Access to material resources	Availability of resources such as financial and educational support	Personal experiences Peer support Support with learning Approach to pastoral support Better pastoral care Matching needs better Non-academic time Reducing curriculum demands Available and accessible Benefits gained from wellbeing support Needs-based support
Relationships	Relationships with key others, including one's peers, family and community	Relationships with teachers Advantages of friendships Leisure time and socialising **N.B.** Parents / carers / family / community were not mentioned.
Identity	One's individual and collective sense of purpose, their evaluation of their own strengths and needs, as well as their beliefs, aspirations and values	Working towards one's aspirations Individual perceptions and reactions

		Resilience as a personal quality
Power and control	One's experiences of providing care for themselves and other people One's ability to bring about change in their environment so as to access key resources	Resilience as a personal quality Individual perceptions and reactions Personal experiences
Cultural adherence	Following and agreeing with one's family, community and/or global cultural norms	Awareness of diverse experiences **N.B.** Family / community systems were not discussed.
Social justice	Experiences that are associated with social equality and identifying a meaningful position in one's community	Commitment to anti-racist practice Dealing with discrimination Awareness of diverse experiences
Cohesion	A balance between individual interests and one's sense of responsibility to the common good One's feeling that they are part of something that is bigger than themselves	Cultivating diversity Positive school environment

Appendix 3.2

Weight of Evidence Evaluation of the Present Study (Gough, 2007)

When evaluating the present study, a quality rating out of 3 (1 = low; 2 = medium; 3 = high) was given to each of the following criteria:

- Transparency or whether the purpose of adopted approach is clear.
- Accuracy or whether the information provided in the study is accurate.
- Accessibility or whether the paper is understandable.
- Specificity or whether the employed research method is of good quality.

Transparency	Accuracy
Rating: 3 **Justification:** Purpose of research, the adopted theoretical frameworks and the author's positioning within the research are clearly outlined in Chapter 1 and 2. RQs are linked with the theoretical models adopted and the literature review findings. The author's ontological and epistemological positions, as well as choice of methodology, and how these impact the research are discussed. Sampling and recruitment methods are discussed. Participants' and co-researchers' characteristics are outlined. Key procedures, including data collection, analysis and dissemination are discussed. Audit trail and quotes from participants are included to strengthen the identified findings.	**Rating:** 2 / 3 **Justification:** The author checked with the co-researchers if she had accurately represented their views in the reference group meeting minutes. The author habitually checked her understanding of participants' views throughout the interviews. The author engaged in member checking to ensure she accurately represented participants' views. The author shared quotes related to the first theme with her academic tutor to ensure that the identified codes accurately represent the data.
Accessibility	**Specificity**
Rating: 2 **Justification:** Given that this is a doctoral research thesis, an academic writing style was utilised.	**Rating:** 3 **Justification:** The author utilised participatory approaches to ensure that this research was culturally sensitive.

All adopted terminology was clearly defined. Examples were often used in brackets (eg; ie) to provide context when discussing key terms, models and findings. Figures and tables were employed to support the reader's understanding of key terminology and theoretical models.	The author utilised a qualitative research methodology, effective in gaining pupils' views. The author used semi-structured interviews, which allowed for flexibility during the data gathering stage. The author used Reflexive Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022), which is a robust data analysis approach.

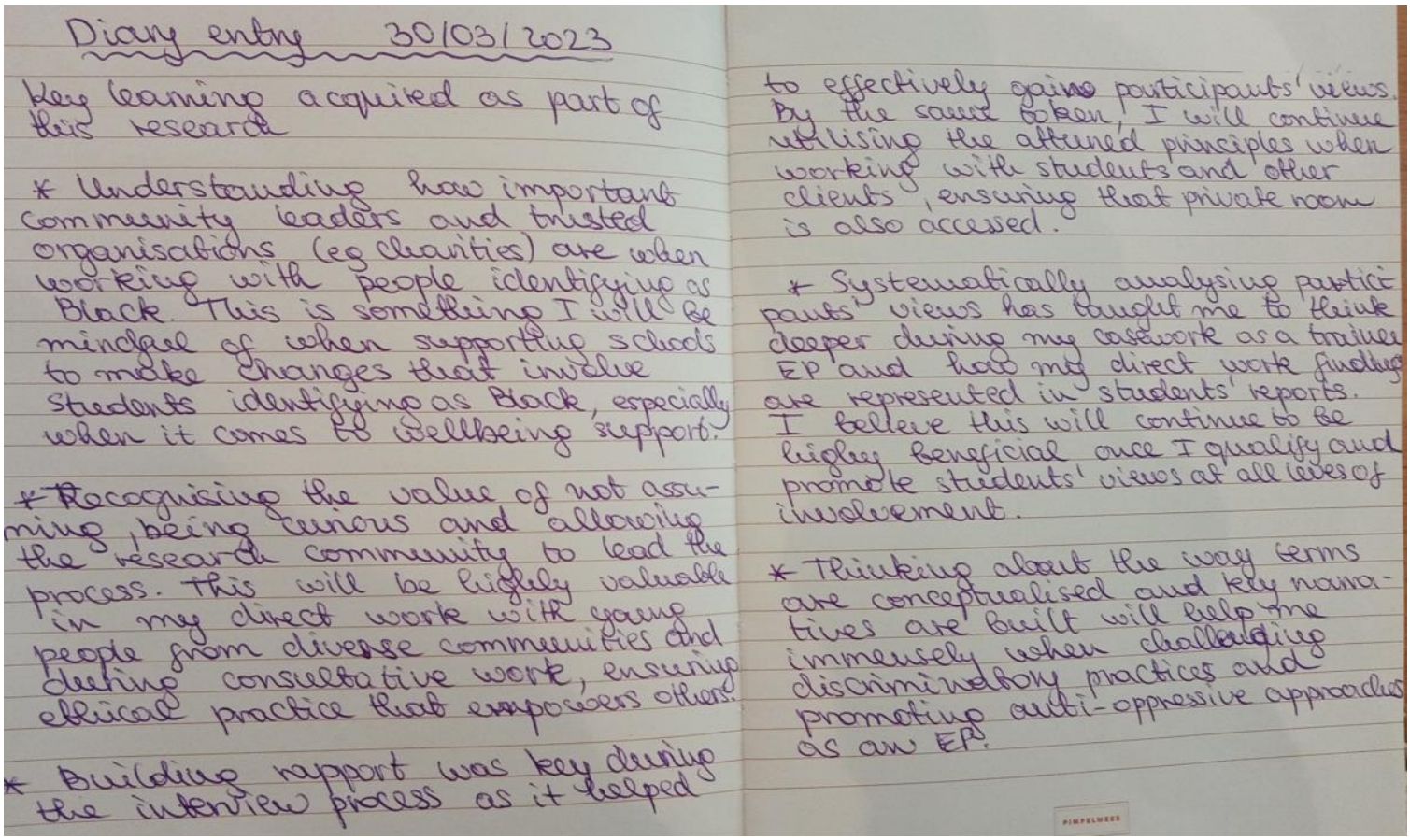
Appendix 3.3

Dissemination Ideas Given by Participants and Reference Group Members

Dissemination idea	Suggested by whom	How
Speaking with people, who are respected in the Black community (e.g. pastors, youth workers and local parenting groups)	Reference group members	Share a list of key findings Send invitation for a presentation of findings
Presenting findings to key stakeholders in local authorities that contribute to LA budgets	Reference group members	Send invitation for a presentation of findings
Post-secondary school organisations and educational settings (e.g., colleges and apprenticeship providers)	Derek	Share a list of key findings Send invitation for a presentation of findings
Schools, teachers and Senior Leadership Teams	Alesha	Share a list of key findings Send invitation for a presentation of findings
Publishing research Speaking to other professionals (e.g., counselling psychologists)	Researcher	Publish research in a peer reviewed journal Share a list of key findings Send invitation for a presentation of findings

Appendix 3.4

Reflections on Learning That is Relevant for the Author's Future Practice



Diary entry 30/03/2023

Key learning acquired as part of this research

* Understanding how important community leaders and trusted organisations (eg charities) are when working with people identifying as Black. This is something I will be mindful of when supporting schools to make changes that involve students identifying as Black, especially when it comes to wellbeing support.

* Recognising the value of not assuming, being curious and allowing the research community to lead the process. This will be highly valuable in my direct work with young people from diverse communities and during consultative work, ensuring ethical practice that empowers others.

* Building rapport was key during the interview process as it helped to effectively gain participants' views. By the same token, I will continue utilising the attuned principles when working with students and other clients, ensuring that private room is also accessed.

* Systematically analysing participants' views has taught me to think deeper during my casework as a trainee EP and how my direct work findings are represented in students' reports. I believe this will continue to be highly beneficial once I qualify and promote students' views at all levels of involvement.

* Thinking about the way terms are conceptualised and key narratives are built will help me immensely when challenging discriminatory practices and promoting anti-oppressive approaches as an EP.