An exploration of girls' experiences of exclusion from and reintegration into mainstream secondary schools

This thesis is submitted as part of the requirements of the University of East London for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to explore the reintegration experiences of excluded girls into mainstream secondary schools. While recognising the potential vulnerability of this population, increasing exclusion rates among girls and concerns about unofficial exclusions that are not legally accounted for in official statistics indicate that the needs of these children are sometimes invisible to the professionals who support them. In light of the long-term implications of exclusions, it is likely that the government and schools would be under significant pressure to reduce exclusion rates. Despite the growing number of girls affected by exclusions and reintegration, there is presently little research in the United Kingdom (UK) that explicitly explores how girls perceive the reintegration processes and what they consider to be valuable. Three secondary school-aged girls were recruited to participate in semi-structured interviews. Using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) approach, the interviews were recorded, transcribed, and analysed. Following the completion of individual case analyses, four overarching themes emerged from the data collected from the participants: "Fairness, Respect, and Accountability," "Participation and Inclusion," "Self-Determination and Personal Agency," and "Frustrations, Fear, and Fighting." The findings are discussed and presented in the context of the pre-existing literature and psychological theory. In in addition to discussing the implications for Educational Psychology profession and school-based, the research also highlights the limitations and suggests areas for future research.

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List of Abbreviations

AP	Alternative Provision
BPS	British Psychological Society
CIN	Child In Need
Covid-19	Coronavirus
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
FPE	Fixed-Period Exclusion
HCPC	Health and Care Professions Council
IE	Internal Exclusion
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LA	Local Authority
LSU	Learning Support Unit
PCP	Person Centred Planning
PE	Permanent Exclusion
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSP	Pastoral Support Plan
SDT	Self Determination Theory
SEMH	Social Emotional Mental Health
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UEL	University of East London
UK	United Kingdom

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter begins with a brief overview of the current research. The challenges pertaining to girls' mainstream secondary school reintegration processes are discussed and the national prevalence rates of exclusions in the UK are illustrated. The implications for learning and development of school exclusions and reintegration will be explored. In addition, the underlying conceptual frameworks for the thesis will be explored. These include the intersectionality perspective (Goodwin et al., 2019) and theories pertaining to the concept of belonging, namely school belonging (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). The chapter concludes with a rationale for the research after determining and explaining the researcher's position.

1.2 Introduction to the Research

The research intends to explore how excluded girls experienced their reintegration into mainstream secondary school as well as to explore their views on what supported the reintegration processes shaped by their past experiences and values. The purpose of this research, therefore, is to extend the previous body of literature on reintegration processes understanding the experiences of girls in the secondary education system of the UK and giving young people a platform to provide their perspective on "what works." It is therefore exploratory and emancipatory in nature and seeks to encourage secondary-aged girls' engagement and empowerment. The study works to promote Children and Young People's (CYP) inclusion in school and aims to promote inclusion in school and to add to the literature on what supports positive outcomes.

The official statistical figures for school exclusion in England show that around 75% of those permanently excluded are boys (DfES, 2020). With such dominating figures, it is easy to neglect the female population and assume that the problem of permanent exclusion is primarily a male one. The "invisibility" of girls is supported by official statistics and previous research, which suggests that girls have not been prioritised for inclusion in schools and educational policy (Agenda, 2021; DfE, 2021; Edward et al., 2017; Galbavy, 2003; Jones & Myhill, 2004; Osler et al., 2002; Osler, 2006; Rodue, 2014). The statistical rates also indicate a slight decline in exclusion

rates from 2017/18 to 2020-2021, according to the data (DfES, 2022). This is driven by the fact that while the percentage of boys who are permanently excluded has reduced over the previous few years, the percentage of girls who are permanently excluded has steadily increased, particularly amongst Black and minoritised girls (DfES, 2020). The purpose behind the current research is based on growing concerns with increasing exclusion rates amongst girls (Agenda, 2021; DfE, 2022; Social Finance, 2020) that current intervention and preventative strategies may not be meeting possible gender-specific developmental and psychological needs due to a lack of understanding of this demographic (Carlile, 2009; Galbavy, 2003; Murphy, 2022; Osler, 2006; Rodue, 2014). For instance, depression was a greater indicator of misbehaviour (Bright et al., 2014) and family functioning influences were more significant for girls (Galbavy, 2003).

Murphy (2022) found that male and female discourse regarding victimisation in the context of social gender ideals, such as bullying, differed, and no boys found greater mental health issues, suggesting that exclusion had a greater detrimental impact on girls than on boys. Similarly, boys may suppress or be unaware of the impact, whereas girls seem to be more self-aware or sensitive to their mental wellbeing. The study also found that girls were noticeably more concerned about how being in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) would affect their academic achievement. This could be an indication that girls are under more social pressure than boys to succeed academically. According to Stentiford et al's (2021) systemic review of gendered expectations of girls' academic achievement and mental health, there is evidence in the literature that girls on a micro-level may be exposed to specific expectations regarding study behaviours and levels of achievement that are distinct from those of boys. They include stressors brought on by family poverty, unhealthy pressured educational environments, and problematic discourses around "high achievement" that are gendered, classed, racialised, and disablist, which ultimately contribute to girls' mental ill-health. Furthermore, according to a two-year ethnographic research published by Carlile (2009b), girls were excluded for aggressive behaviour deemed unacceptable for young girls. Further evidence of gendered pressures on young people was found in the study was the prominence of Design and Technology for boys and Social Care for girls in GCSE options, as well as the support of vocational courses like plumbing and childcare. Therefore, it may

be claimed that certain pedagogical approaches encourage the development of masculine attitudes and beliefs through curriculum design and extracurricular activities that especially target the problematic behaviours of boys associated with particular types of perceived masculinity (DfE, 2018b; Jones & Myhill, 2004).

1.3 Defining Exclusion and Legislative Context

Fixed-term and permanent exclusions were introduced in the 1986 Education Act as a last resort to manage disruptive behaviour in schools in response to threats of substantial harm to pupils or others (DfE, 2017). Permanent exclusions (PE) involve the complete withdrawal of a CYP from the school's roll or being transferred to an Alternative Provision (AP). Fixed period exclusions (FPE) involve the temporary withdrawal of a CYP from school for a predetermined timeframe before returning to the same school on a fixed date. The number of incidents a pupil may be excluded from school for by the head teacher is unlimited, although the total number of exclusions is for a maximum period of 45 days in an academic year. Pupils who have experienced one or more FPEs frequently display disruptive behaviours but have not yet been PE from school are referred to as being "at risk of exclusion" (Cole et al., 2019).

Problems caused by exclusions brought to the attention of Parliament in official government reports as soon as their implementation as punishment was recognised (Elton, 1989). There were worries about the disproportionately high exclusion rates for children of African and Caribbean descent, the lack of consistency in how local governments tracked exclusions, and the absence of follow-up services for CYP who had been excluded from school (Elton, 1989). In 1997, according to the White Paper "Excellence in Schools" (DfEE, 1997), these problems persisted, and rising exclusion rates were added to the list of concerns.

According to Evans (2010), permanent exclusion is an "overused and inefficient disciplinary technique" (Evans, 2010, p3) that amplifies the already challenging circumstances for CYP and their families without understanding or resolving the underlying causes of the young person's exclusion. It has been argued that systems that manage and control pupil behaviour using punitive and exclusionary measures frequently exacerbate disciplinary issues and racial, gender, and socioeconomic imbalances, which highlights the need for alternate approaches

to whole-school behaviour management policies as well as initiatives that attempt to promote wellbeing throughout the school community (Lodi et al., 2021).

1.3.1 Trends in Exclusions

The most recent Department of Education (DfE) data figures show that PE gradually increased from 6,700 between 2016/2017 to 7,900 between 2018/2019 (DfE, 2022). While FPE and PE for the academic years 2019–2020 and 2020–2021 were possible, pandemic restrictions will have had an impact on the data reported, therefore care should be exercised when comparing between years. Permanently excluded pupils numbered 3,900 for the academic year 2020–2021. This is approximately half the amount of permanent exclusions in the last full academic year prior to the pandemic (7,900 in 2018/19) and over 1,000 fewer permanent exclusions than the academic year 2019/2020, which saw 5,100 permanent exclusions. For the academic year 2020–2021, the FPE rate was 352,500. This is higher than the previous year's total of 310,700, but still below pre-pandemic levels (438,300 in 2018–19). The problem, however, is that these figures only account for legally recognised exclusions. According to research, however, CYP are presently are "unofficially" excluded in a number of different ways, obscuring the precise number of exclusions in the UK (Gazeley et al., 2015; Gill et al., 2017; Malcolm, 2018; Power & Taylor, 2020).Recent media attention brings to light that girls are excluded through transfers to other schools or 'early exit,' which means they leave before the end of year 11 but do not complete their education elsewhere, despite the fact that boys are much more likely to be formally excluded (Guardian, 2021). A "informal" exclusion is anything that restricts a child's access to school resources without legally removing their name from the school register. It can occur within a school, such as through isolation or reduced timetables, or through "off-site" teaching (Social finance, 2020). Due to the absence of comparable accountability measures in these informal forms of exclusion, it is expected that girls may not receive the support that they are entitled through the official exclusions process.

In exclusion statistics, minoritised ethnic and SEND groups have been significantly overrepresented for decades (Parsons, 2005; Timpson, 2019). The Elton Report (1989) was the first to highlight the disproportionately high rates of exclusions among "Afro-Caribbean" ethnicities prior to the existence of centralised statistics on exclusions. Recent statistical comparisons showing the evident

discrimination against particular groups in exclusion data on government primary, secondary, and special schools (DfE, 2020b) demonstrate that this discriminatory disparity persists:

- Gypsy/Roma pupils still have the highest rates of PE (0.18) and FPE (15.0);

- Pupils of mixed White-Black Caribbean descent have the second highest PE rate (0.12 percent) and are 8.5 times as likely to receive an FPE.

- FSM (Pupils eligible for free school meals) pupils are four times as likely to be permanently excluded and nearly ten times more likely to obtain an FPE than non-eligible pupils.

- Pupils with EHCPs are 0.08 times more likely to receive PE and roughly 13 times more likely to receive FPE than pupils without SEND.

Persistent disruptive behaviour was the principal cause for the reported permanent exclusions. This reason for exclusion was listed for 1,500 PEs, or 39% of the total number of PEs. Following this, there were 900 PEs for physical assault against a pupil, followed by 600 PEs for physical assault against an adult. Although challenging or disruptive behaviour typically results in exclusion, many researchers have linked such patterns to underlying difficulties. Evans (2009), for example, cited multiple causes, such as strained relationships with teachers, Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH), anger, boredom, bullying, and an upward spiral of problematic behaviour, truancy, and eventually exclusion. Briggs (2010) highlighted how a succession of behaviours and reactions could escalate from aggressive behaviour within the school to exclusion. Murphy (2020) found that CYP frequently recalled exclusions occurring when schools' misinterpreted indicators of personal challenges as misbehaviour and disruption, resulting in harsh disciplinary approaches that amplified small problems into major and chronic disruptive behaviours.

1.3.2 Impact of Exclusions

Recently, a government-initiated review was prompted by concerns over the negative impact of exclusions with connections to low academic achievement, unemployment, youth offending, and social isolation (Daniels, 2011; Timpson, 2019). The Timpson review (2019) provides conclusive data on the negative effects of

exclusion as well as questions regarding an imbalance in minority group exclusion practices. As a consequence of the review, the government has identified a number of changes it intends to implement in schools, such as ensuring schools are accountable for the outcome measures of the pupils they exclude, revising exclusions guidance, and providing better preventative guidance for CYP who are at risk of exclusion, such as a counsellor with training in cognitive behavioural therapy, delivering workshops for CYP identified as needing more support across the school (DfE, 2019b).

Due to strong correlations between school exclusion rates and the increase in CYP being groomed and exploited by gangs (CCO, 2019) in addition to rises in knife crime, this topic has recently received increased media attention (BBC, 2019). The Office of the Children's Commissioner School Exclusions Inquiry reports (OCC, 2019) Gang-affiliated CYP are more likely to have been excluded from school or moved around because of disruptions at school. The inquiry found concerns about previous school disruptions noted by 45% of CYP (young people under 16) who are involved with gangs. The Child in Need (CIN) data (OCC, 2019) distinguishes between disruptions brought on by exclusions and those caused by changing school's mid-year. Compared to other children assessed by children's services, both are more prevalent with CYP (aged 5 to 15) affiliated with gangs. In the 12 months preceding their most recent assessment, 13% of CYP with gang affiliations moved schools' mid-year. Furthermore, there was a greater chance of having been permanently excluded in the past 12 months. Although it is impossible to determine cause and effect from this information, it does emphasise how fundamental it is to provide vulnerable young people with support so they can continue their education.

Concerns has been repeatedly expressed in the Office of the Children's Commissioner's School Exclusions Inquiry reports (OCC, 2012, 2013, 2019a) regarding the idea that excluded children are missing a substantial percentage of their education; this concern is reflected in previous research on exclusion (Gill et al., 2017; Michelmore & Mesie, 2019). Research has demonstrated that exclusions have a major academic impact on learners (Gill et al., 2017). After Key Stage 4 (KS4), just 57% of AP pupils continue in work, education, or training, compared to 94% of pupils in mainstream settings (DfE, 2018b). Some AP pupils feel worried about their futures because they are aware of these negative outcomes (Michelmore & Mesie, 2019).

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, 1989), education is a fundamental right for all children; hence, the acceptance of legislative exclusions is controversial. It implies that education is not a right, but rather a privilege that can be revoked for misbehaviour (Parsons, 2018).

Tejerina-Arreal et al. (2020) identified a bidirectional relationship between poor mental health and school exclusion in a longitudinal study; those with poor mental health are more likely to be excluded from school, and exclusion from school can be harmful to mental health. As previously indicated, data on exclusions indicate that they are more frequently applied to young people from minoritised ethnic groups, poorer socioeconomic groups, and those with SEND who are already most at risk of social marginalisation (DfE, 2019a). Therefore, the risk of adverse effects on the young person's life could be increased by the use of exclusions.

1.3.3 Gender and Exclusions

The Statistical First Release (DfE, 2018e) highlighted pupil characteristics, such as gender, that increase the chance of both PE and FPE. Less is known regarding gender, specifically why the FPE rate was over three times higher (6.91 percent compared to 2.53 percent) and why the PE rate for boys in 2016–2017 was 0.15 percent, more than three times higher than for girls (0.04 percent) (DfE, 2018a). There is some evidence that male conduct may indicate their internal conflict regarding what it means to be "masculine" (Craggs & Kelly, 2017). In a small-scale research conducted by Craggs et al. (2017), majority male respondents stated that being "masculine" necessitated conforming to what they regarded to be the gender norm: appearing big and strong. A small number of studies reported on gendered norms (gender roles, behaviours, and preferences that are socially constructed rather than biological in nature (Cislaghi & Heise, 2019)), and that there are different ways in which certain CYP’s difficulties with their sexuality, emotional regulation, mental wellbeing and gender identity could manifest as challenging behaviour (Beaman et al., 2007; Gill et al., 2017; Graham et al., 2019; Jones & Myhill, 2004; Maguire et al., 2016).

Researchers found that boys consistently performed slower on some tasks than females whilst performing faster on others, indicating the significance of gender and emotions in inhibitory control (Maguire et al., 2016). In comparison to boys, girls

outperformed boys in behavioural regulation, an indication of inhibitory control. This is because inhibitory control tasks require the activation of various brain processing regions, some of which are proven to be more prominent in males or females (Maguire et al., 2016). According to Gill et al. (2017), mental illness presents itself differently in boys and girls; boys are far more likely to have a mental health issue with externalising symptoms like aggression, whereas girls who have mental health issues are more likely to develop emotional disorders, which can appear as internalising behaviours like withdrawal and self-harm. In the context of school experience, girls and boys perceived discrimination and gender stereotypes differently, for example when a girl's behaviour was deemed to be outside of what was considered appropriate for femininity, such as being too "loud," gender norms were also reported to influence how teachers interacted with the pupil (Graham et al., 2019; Rudoe, 2014). It is interesting to note that whilst both autistic boys and girls can experience issues with peer relationships and mental health, these problems present differently depending on the gender, with girls, as is the case in the neurotypical population, more likely to struggle with relational conflict and anxiety (Sproston & Sedgewick, 2017).

In addition, research indicates that teachers discipline male pupils more harshly than female pupils (Welch & Payne, 2010). This reinforces gendered stereotypes within the education systems in general which consider middle class girls as the most diligent and ideal pupils; according to Rudoe (2014), females are steered into traditional, more 'feminine' courses. Due to gendered norms, the 16 excluded girls interviewed by the researcher felt that schools treated them harsher than if they were boys engaging in comparable behaviour. At the time of the study, many of them were pregnant or nursing mothers, and it was reported that the school's failure to support pregnant or nursing pupils contributed to their exclusion. In addition, girls who have received social care support (those with a CIN Plan, a Child Protection Plan, or who are looked after) are considerably more likely to be excluded than girls who have not received social care support. When analysing the relative likelihood of exclusion depending on various attributes and gender, this tendency becomes evident (DfES, 2022). For boys, this tendency is less significant. Notably, according to Agenda research (2021), the number of females permanently excluded from school

increased by 66% between 2013 and 2018, while the percentage of boys increased by 27%.

1.4 Reintegration

The Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2008a) described reintegration as the efforts and plans implemented by local authorities, educational institutions, and other stakeholders to return pupils to the mainstream education following an interruption caused by exclusion or other circumstances. One of the primary goals of AP is the offer of a respite period for pupils in order to enable successful reintegration into mainstream or special school, if necessary (DfE, 2018; Jalali et al., 2018; Levinson, 2016). This aim is based on mainstream schooling's asserted benefits of access to a broad curriculum and multiple peer interactions that increase the school community's diversity (Agius Ferrante 2012).

For the purposes of this study, reintegration pertains to a pupil's return to mainstream education after being excluded. Following an exclusion, the school should meet with the child's parents to discuss reintegration. At this reintegration meeting, precise goals should be stated in a reintegration plan, and measurable outcomes should be determined (DfE, 2017a). Reintegrating pupils who have missed significant school time is more difficult (DfE, 2004). Secondary school pupils are less likely than primary school pupils to be reintegrated into mainstream schools or move to mainstream further education after attending an AP, according to the DfE (2018a); 64% of pupils returned to mainstream education during key stage 3, 58% during year 10, 46% during year 11, and 42% during key stage 5 (DfE, 2018a). Since FPE are only temporary, all pupils receiving FPE must always be reintegrated into the mainstream education through a planned reintegration process. Extending or converting FPEs to permanent exclusions is also illegal (DfE, 2017a).

1.4.1 Barriers and Challenges associated with Reintegration

In cases where placements failed after support was abruptly withdrawn, reintegration into mainstream secondary schools appeared to have presented the greatest challenges (Parsons & Howlett, 2000). This has resulted in a "revolving door effect" (Pillay et al., 2013) of referrals back to APs, and it could be argued that this has prompted an increased interest in determining what makes reintegration challenging or successful.

Reintegration seems to be extremely problematic, and for many CYP, the journey ahead is anything but straightforward. According to the Timpson Review (2019), 64% of Key Stage 3 pupils and 65% of primary pupils respectively returned to the mainstream. For those in Year 10, this dropped to 53%, and for those in Year 11, perhaps not unexpectedly, it was just 10%. In an earlier DfES publication report (2004c) on a 14-month mixed methods study, quantitative results were found to be subject to a degree of under- and over-reporting, as well as majority of the local authorities (LAs) participating in the research not providing information on the number of pupils successfully reintegrated after exclusion, highlighting the limited data and its validity on reintegration. The DfES report (2019) on reintegration procedures details the most major barriers to successful reintegration. These include communication and interaction limitations (such as inadequate communication between key agencies), school-based limitations (such as schools' unwillingness to admit pupils and a lack of resources), and external barriers (such as inadequate reintegration planning and a lack of parental support). Overall, the research findings in the study suggest that reintegration back into mainstream education may be a complex process that must be managed with extreme care, careful planning, and clear communication for optimal success.

Literature suggests that pupils' perceptions of reintegration, their age (Jalali et al., 2018), and the length of their AP attendance may influence reintegration (Levinson, 2016). In addition to the length of time pupils spent in an AP, the optimal time for each pupil's reintegration depended on their views, readiness, and motivations to return to a more structured setting (Levinson, 2016). According to prior research, reintegration ought to be child-centered, holistic, and multi-agency in order to create positive experiences (Carlile, 2011; Ewan-Corrigan, 2013; Rose et al., 2016), and schools should implement a range of strategies to address the specific needs of children (Thompson, et al., 2011). Reintegration may become more challenging as a CYP ages and spends more time outside the mainstream classroom; this may be due to the mindset of the excluded pupil or the potential relocation school (Jalali et al., 2018). Some studies have indicated that there is a stigma associated with CYP and their exclusion, which will significantly influence how pupils were perceived in the (new) school setting and could impede reintegration (Kulz, 2015).

1.5 Intersectionality in Education

Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) began to describe the distinctive experiences of African American women and introduced the term "intersectionality." Through the intersectionality perspective the current research aims to recognise the various ways that gender oppression has been and continues to be experienced as discrimination for this target population (Goodwin et al., 2019). Bowleg (2012) proposed an intersectionality framework in which many social categories, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status, intersect at the micro level of a person's experience to indicate a network of interlinked systems of privilege and oppression at the macro, social-structural level, including sexism and racial discrimination. Therefore, intersectional analysis looks for the nuanced interactions and mutually constitutive relationships between racial and gender-based inequality. Race and gender cannot be separated into discrete variables and then joined together (Morris & Perry, 2017) and these interconnected power structures shape people's subjective experience of their social identities, making it impossible to understand human experience in one social group (such as race) without also understanding the other social groups to which they belong (e.g., gender and class) (Settles et al., 2019). According to research, implicit biases (unacknowledged prejudices) may affect how teachers interpret pupils' behaviour (Forsyth et al., 2015). While research on implicit bias and school discipline typically focuses on race, complex biases can also emerge at the intersection of race and gender (Morris & Perry, 2017).

Gill et al. (2017) refer to increasing evidence that more children are experiencing intersecting vulnerabilities. SEND, low attainment, unstable home settings, mental health, gender, and being from a minoritised ethnic group are a few of these, with each increasing the risk of exclusion. Groups of "pushed out learners," according to Menzies (2015), include pupils with SEND, social disadvantage, and individuals of minoritised ethnic groups. Cole (2015) reviews government policy and guidance documents from 1997 to 2015 and pertinent research to argue that school exclusion can stem from a variety of mental health, educational, social, and political challenges**.** He discovered that those who were excluded or at risk of being excluded experienced a variety of challenges, including poverty, family instability, a lack of adequate housing, criminality, and the pupils own social, emotional, and mental

health concerns. Richards (2015) addresses the UK government's efforts to safeguard those defined as vulnerable to discrimination treatment, including CYP from underrepresented ethnic groups as well as those with SEND, without considering the intersection within these and other group variations, when discussing the interplay between systemic biases and diverse community groups. This emphasises how little is known about the experiences at these various intersections. Richard claims that while it is true that a minority within another minority frequently consists of a fairly small number of individuals this should not be cause for disregard.

Much of the literature highlights the fact that schools do not operate in isolation. Carlile (2009b) refers to schools as institutions which replicate social order in a manner that is reminiscent of Bourdieu's (1985) social capital theory. In that schools do not function autonomously and are neither different from nor shielded from the social norms and ideas of the larger society to which they belong. Bourdieu (1985) highlighted the interconnections that transcend the dichotomies of agency and structure. The intersectional approach can provide more useful heuristics for understanding the interplay of individual and structural variables and how they affect the repositioning of the habitus, the conversion of cultural capital from potential to active, and the process of social formation (Webb et al., 217). According to Gazeley et al. (2015), intersecting factors, including race, gender, and social class, might overlap to some degree and are associated with a higher risk of exclusion. Furthermore, Kulz (2015) interviewed 26 parents, exclusions officers from the Local Authority (LA), and head teachers who were members of the Independent Review Panel. According to the findings of the study, some head teachers and exclusion officers felt that middle-class privilege, combined with racial and/or social class prejudice, contributed to the existing disproportionate exclusion statistics. A large percentage of parents reported that their child's exclusion was due to their child's race, social class, gender, or SEN. According to this research, intersectional positions were most constructed by combining other identity distinctions with gender.

Thus, intersectionality theory encourages attention to the ways in which dominant social structures (re)create racial and gender inequality (Harris et al., 2019). To that end, EPs are in an ideal position to help schools adopt anti-oppressive ideas and practices based on Intersectionality theories, which are necessary for fully identifying the impact of socioeconomic, political, and culture.

Furthermore, because it explicitly confronts anti-oppressive practices and aids individuals with multiple social identities in their exploration of knowledge, intersectionality has foundations in the discourse on social injustice and equality (Sewell, 2016). However, for failing to include how group membership, individual viewpoints, social and historical context, and other factors influence research findings, it is argued that intersectionality is an explicitly political approach to addressing injustices and improving the lives of marginalised people. (Settles et al., 2017).

In an effort to raise awareness, Burnham (1992) and Roper-Hall (1998) employed the concepts of power, oppression, and connection (Birdsey & Kustner, 2021). The social graces framework accomplishes this by providing us with a useful way to become more intentional in our awareness of sameness and diversity, our reflexivity toward it, and our ability in dealing with it. In contrast to the original nine social graces, there are currently fifteen social difference categories (Birdsey & Kustner, 2021): gender, geography, race, religion, age, ability, appearance, class, culture, ethnicity, education, employment, sexuality, sexual orientation, and spirituality (Burnham, 2012). Given that each grace is consistently emphasised as being of equal importance, it is essential to explore each component in detail. The process of distinguishing distinct social graces facilitates exploration and focuses attention on the precise social difference features that are most visible or, conversely, invisible (Burnham 2012). Although social graces address issues with power and difference which may be voiced or unvoiced, visible or invisible (Burnham, 2012), emphasising on particular components of identity compromises the individuality and complexity of privileges and oppressions established at intersections (Butler, 2015). Since social graces are interconnected, it might be hard to distinguish between them. Religion, culture, and ethnicity, for instance, may be intricately linked and difficult to separate. This void is filled by the concept of intersectionality, which permits a "both and" viewpoint. Intersectionality, which emphasises the multiple ways in which individuals experience oppression rather than a single axis of difference, has been argued to offer more than just social graces, which recognises the complexity of human behaviour (Hopkins, 2017). Similar to social graces, intersectionality has its critics. As Hopkins (2017) notes, it is not always apparent what is meant when the term "interlocking forms of oppression" is

used in relation to intersectionality discourse. Additionally, although intersectionality commonly explores oppression, it may also be used to evaluate other social positions, such as privilege, which is often neglected (Birdsey & Kustner, 2021).

1.6 School Belonging

Maslow (1943) first described how individuals have a psychological need to belong. In his motivational hierarchy, with the fulfilment of one's love and belongingness needs being regarded as a prerequisite to self-actualization and human flourishing. Belonging can be described as a relationally generated psychological construct that is frequently linked to expressions such as acceptance and connection (Bouchard and Berg, 2017). The need to establish and sustain meaningful, long-lasting relationships with others permeates all of human nature, according to Baumeister and Leary (1995). According to their "Belongingness Hypothesis," individuals need to have positive, mutually beneficial relationships with multiple others. Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969), suggests that infants have an inherent need to form attachments with their primary carers, has many parallels with the importance of this idea. It is claimed that all subsequent social connections are shaped by these early relationships (Bowlby, 1988). Individual and cultural constructions shape the degree to which belongingness needs are met (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Despite being predominantly a Westernised concept, the literature is generally in agreement that fulfilling one's need for belongingness through positive relationships is strongly linked to better social, behavioural, and psychological outcomes (Smedley, 2011).

The term "school connectedness," also referred as "school belonging," describes the degree to which a pupil feels valued and respected in the school setting (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). Strong evidence supports the notion that schools are essential for instilling a sense of belonging (Allen & Bowles, 2013). According to Gummadam et al. (2016), the construct entails positive interactions with teachers and pupils, as well as a wider sense of feeling connected to the school community. Belonging at school has been connected to students' academic achievement and attitudes like ambition, interest, and dedication to their education (Goodenow & Grady, 1993). In addition, substantial evidence (Ernestus et al., 2014) suggests that a pupil's sense of belonging at school protects them from mental health issues, such as depression. Prior research on school belonging have

not fully addressed the needs of young people living in poverty, underrepresented minoritised ethnic groups, children with disabilities, and other marginalised groups in relation to their sense of belonging in academic settings (Slaten et al., 2016).

A pupil's sense of 'not belonging' in a classroom has been linked to experiencing racial stereotypes and unfair treatment, which left them feeling disrespected and isolated (Carlile, 2009b; Gill et al., 2017). Murphy and Zirkel (2015), suggest that due to social identity threat- the sense that someone's identity has been devalued, and stereotype threat - the anxiety of potential negative stereotypes, pupils from marginalised or stigmatised minoritised ethnic groups may experience belonging differently. Nicholson et al. (2016) discovered that the majority of pupils preferred attending an AP owing to its structure, consistency in teaching and expectations, individualised support, and teachers' understanding, which in turn enhanced their self-belief. In addition, the pupils believed that the AP staff cared about and encouraged positive peer interactions, which contributed to the development of a sense of belonging among pupils, in contrast to their experiences in secondary schools, where they felt continually criticised. Porter and Ingram (2021) argue that increasing school-wide belongingness is an inexpensive preventative strategy for preventing feelings of isolation and the rising exclusion rates frequently experienced by children with SEND (DfE, 2019).

1.7 Researcher Aims and Rationale

With increasing exclusion rates amongst girls and concerns about unofficial exclusions that are not legally accounted for in official statistics, there is a pressing need for research to explore the individual experiences of girls and an understanding of how exclusion and reintegration is experienced by them. In order to ensure "what works" is in the best interests of young people, there is a need to listen to their views. Furthermore, considering the long-term impacts associated with exclusions, it is likely that the government and schools would be under intense pressure to lower exclusion rates.

Following Tom Bennett's independent review commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) (2017) recommending a "crackdown on bad behaviour," the DfE launched in May 2019 an initiative that intends to provide schools with support for managing behaviour. This £10 million initiative, coordinated

by Tom Bennett, intends to develop networks of "expert schools" to assist teachers in managing disruptive behaviour. Although advocating for the expansion of APs may sound inappropriate given the minimal research supporting their use, it looks to be a solution to a long-standing problem for the government: school exclusions (Parsons, 2005). Consequently, there is an urgent need for research exploring the lived experiences of ‘successful' reintegration processes.

Cooper et al. (2000) highlight that schools tend to place a greater emphasis on systems and policies, which might obscure the significance of idiographic experiences. This focus may have an effect on the experiences children have in school. Griffiths (2020) argues that exclusions are detrimental to mental health and that a solution-oriented approach is required when contemplating what the removal of these barriers may entail. This study aimed to determine how the females saw the reintegration processes and what they deemed beneficial. This is especially important for girls who are excluded from school, as their perspectives are frequently overlooked and "lost in the narratives around exclusions" (Agenda, 2021, pg. 7).

1.8 Position of the Researcher

This research was inspired by the researcher's own experiences and values. The research represents core beliefs and values regarding advocacy, social justice, beneficence, and respect. The researcher developed an interest in those CYP who struggled to identify where they belonged and the influence this had on their educational experience while working as a secondary school teacher before to receiving training as an Educational Psychologist (EP). The researcher had the opportunity to work at a PRU during the first year of training. Whilst at the PRU it was noticed by the researcher that it is was a male dominated environment and some girls reported sexual harassment and exploitation which often seemed to be unresolved, leaving emotions heightened. Based on this, the researcher became curious about how girls felt in an environment that largely supports teenage boys. According to the researcher, marginalisation places them at an even greater disadvantage (Billington, 2000). In the researcher's experience, reintegration is not always successful, maybe owing to a lack of regulation or guidelines, which leads to inconsistency in how the process is implemented, resulting in "failed" reintegration, which leaves young people feeling even more rejected and disconnected.

The researcher strongly believes that CYP should play a central role and be actively involved in the decision-making process. EPs play a crucial role in advocating for at-risk CYP who may not have a voice (Fox, 2015). When CYP are excluded, they frequently feel powerless (Gersch & Nolan, 1994), and their opinions are often ignored rather than sought (Ravenette, 1988). This study aims to give young people who were previously deemed to be at risk of PE the opportunity to share their perceptions of what contributed to their successful reintegration.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an overview of exclusion and reintegration processes, their use, and the prevalence rates in the UK. Exclusions and their possible implications on education and development were discussed. Following the introduction of intersectionality theory and the phenomenon of school belonging, the intersecting causes and consequences connected to a sense of school belonging were explored. The chapter ended with a statement of the researcher's position and the rationale for the research, which put the significance of this research in a wider national context.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Overview of literature review

The aim of this chapter is to provide a critical review and understanding of existing literature pertaining to girls' lived experiences of the reintegration process in a mainstream secondary school. By ascertaining what is known and appraising the quality of the reviewed literature, the findings subsequently inform the rationale for the present research by identifying gaps in current literature (Booth et al., 2016).

The chapter opens with a description of the systematic literature search approach employed, followed by a summary of the credibility and relevance of the reviewed literature. A synthesis of what is already known and the knowledge gaps in this area will be considered and discussed in order to define the research objectives and related research questions that will underpin the current research.

2.2 Systematic Literature Review

A systematic search was undertaken in August 2021 to gain an overview of the existing published research on the topic, which revealed a lack of literature directly relevant to understanding girls' experiences of the reintegration process following school exclusion, as reported by them. On this basis, the literature review question sought to address the following question:

- What does the literature tell us about girls' experiences of the reintegration process in a mainstream secondary school setting following an exclusion?

In February 2022, a final search was done to ensure that any recent literature meeting inclusion and exclusion criteria was also included.

2.2.1 Literature Search Process

An exhaustive and thorough systematic search technique was used to locate literature relevant to this review to ensure replicability and reduce bias (Booth et al., 2016). To start the literature search, electronic databases relevant to psychology, education and the use of English language were used. The EBSCO host including Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, ERIC, and PsycINFO was utilised. The same search terms were then utilised to conduct a search on Scopus. To retrieve the literature, key search terms pertinent to the review topic were determined. Detailed in Table 2. 1 below provides an overview of the two groups of search terms and the number of articles found.

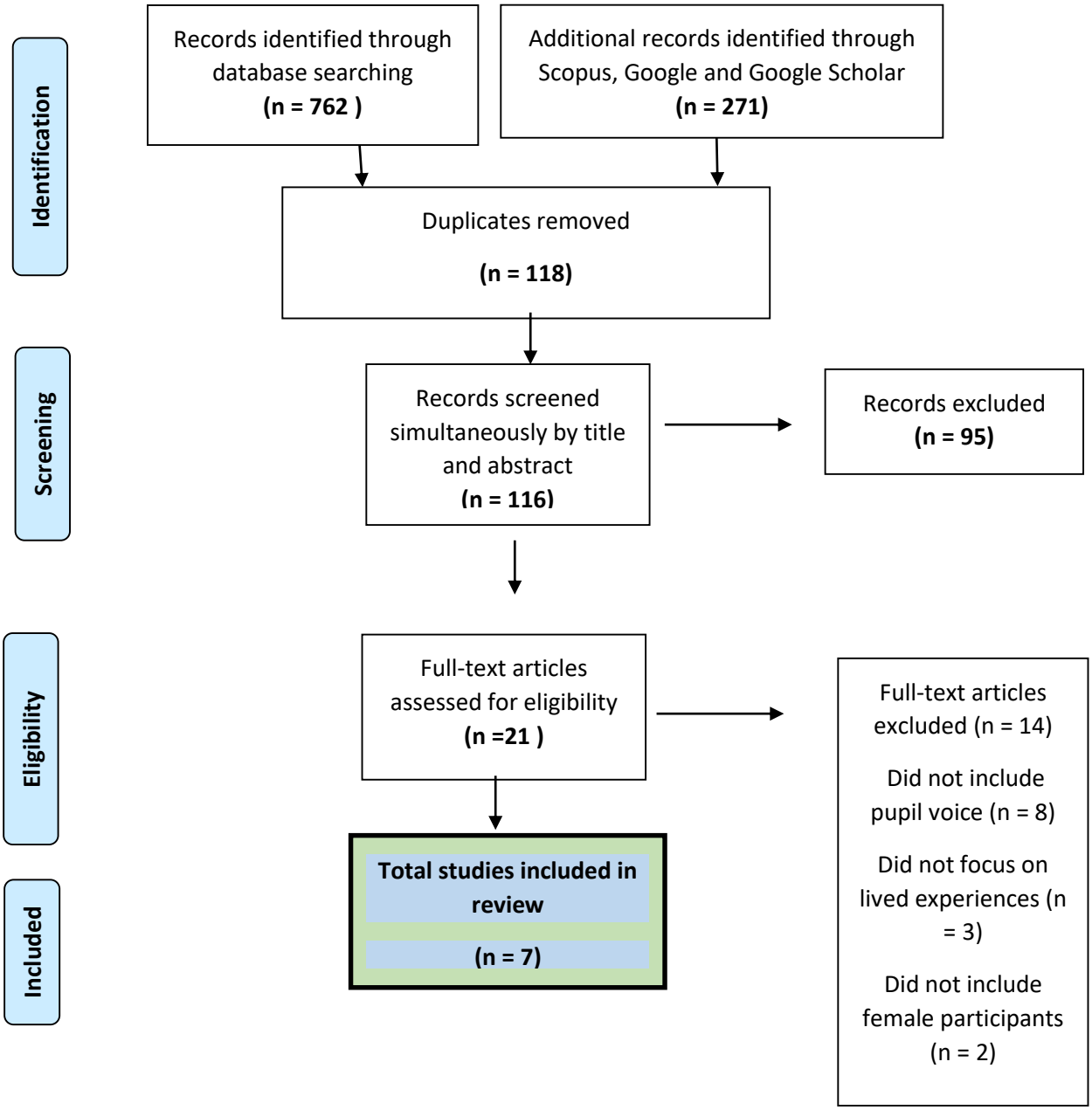
Table 2.1: Search terms and number of results found

Search Term 1	**(reintegration) AND (“secondary school” OR “secondary education")**	
Search Engine	No. of articles found after applying parameters and duplicates removed	No. of articles selected
EBSCO	91	6
SCOPUS	27	0 (2 duplicates from EBSCO search)
TOTAL	**118**	**6**
Search Term 2	(exclu* OR expel* OR “pupil referral units”) AND (school OR educat* OR college OR "sixth form" OR "6th form" OR "key stage" OR pupil OR pupil) AND (experience OR perception OR view OR voice OR "lived experience" OR account OR narrative OR story OR “pupil views”) AND (re-integrat* OR reintegrat* OR return* OR rejoin*)	
Search Engine	No. of articles found after applying parameters and duplicates removed	No. of articles selected
EBSCO	592	6
Scopus	170	0 (3 duplicates from EBSCO search)
TOTAL	762	6

The researcher used a thesaurus to ensure that variable synonyms and words related to the most prevalent descriptor terms were included in the search strategy. In addition, truncation symbols were employed to accommodate various plurals and grammatical differences. Also, the Boolean operator 'AND' was used to discover relevant articles containing the search terms 'reintegration' and 'secondary school' in the title. Further to this, keywords related to ‘perspective’ were explored within the abstracts of literature, with the assumption that the methodology and aims of the research would be comprehensive enough to ascertain its relevance. Limiters for English language scholarly peer-reviewed journals were applied to ensure that journals were of an appropriate standard of quality for the review. The researcher did not limit by age nor gender to avoid excluding retrospective school experiences as the initial scoping review found a lack of research exploring pupil voice; a comprehensive list of criteria can be found in Appendix A.

Following a systematic search of the literature, a total of 762 articles were generated (see Figure 1). According to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, article titles and/or abstracts were evaluated for relevance to this review. A manual search of Scopus, Google, and Google Scholar was conducted to identify any papers not found in the initial database searches. In addition, the reference lists of each research study were checked using the "snowballing" method. Using the snowballing method, one additional study was found, bringing the total number of studies to seven. Despite having been published before 2000, this study met all other parameters and was pertinent to the present research. Figure 1 shows the literature search and screening procedure. Appendix B contains the complete list of references for all seven papers included in the review.

Figure 1 *PRISMA Flow Diagram of Studies Included in the Systematic Review*



2.3 Critical Appraisal

Following the selection of papers pertinent to the review question for the literature review, each article was read in its entirety and critically appraised. An adapted version of the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) checklist from 2018 was utilised to assess the methodological quality and applicability of the findings. Appendix C provides a full summary and critique of each paper.

2.4 Introduction to Literature

Following an in-depth review of the literature, there is a paucity of research pertaining to eliciting girls' lived experiences of the reintegration process within an educational setting and this remains an underrepresented area of psychological research. The literature highlighted a number of facilitating factors and barriers impacting the reintegration process, theoretical frameworks underpinning research, the key interacting systems involved and the contributing individual attributes of the young people themselves. The key findings across the reviewed articles were themed and grouped together to form a coherent structure and narrative. The researcher will discuss and critique each study in detail at the point of first introduction, followed by further references throughout the chapter where necessary.

2.5 Systemic factors facilitating reintegration

A theme captured across the literature was the number of interrelating systems and the impact they have on reintegration and in turn the degree of success in the process. All the papers explored the contributing factors that were experienced or perceived as supportive and important in relation to the phenomenon of interest. A key overarching theme in the literature was the systemic factors that facilitated reintegration. The articles will be presented to explore the following sub-themes: School supportive factors and parental engagement.

2.5.1 School supportive factors

Atkinson and Rowley (2019) explored the perspectives of nine pupils aged 10 to 16 who'd already reintegrated into mainstream school following a period ranging between 3-36 months (about 3 years) in an AP. Using a Q methodology approach and a mixed methods design, the researchers gathered data via ratings analysis of 37 standardised statements adapted from a pilot study regarding potential reintegration-supporting factors, followed by a short questionnaire that allowed

participants to provide qualitative data. In addition, researchers invited participants to elaborate on statements placed at the extreme ends of the Q-grid. Given the paucity of participatory approaches, the researcher's choice of methodology was a particular strength of the study, as the majority of research focusing on eliciting the perspectives of CYP have used semi-structured interviews as the main method of data collection. The data was analysed using Q-factor analysis, which involves identifying sorting patterns that yield "factors" that support a particular viewpoint. An averaged load (using a software package) on a specific factor is then used to generate a ‘best estimate’ for that factor which is then configured and interpreted to provide a descriptive qualitative statement of each viewpoint. The data extracted two factors which were split into four central themes and associated helpful strategies in relation to successful reintegration to mainstream education. Relationship factors, parental factors, individual factors, and environmental factors were among these themes. These themes were interpreted using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) eco-systemic framework, which provided a suitable reintegration model for conceptualising the data regarding pupils' perspectives on "what works." The findings provide a holistic picture of the reintegration phenomenon by exploring the interacting systems surrounding the child. Although the Q methodological approach limits the pupil's ability to express their unique experience in its entirety, the researchers accept the limitations of this method and note the effort undertaken to guarantee the Q-set was representative of the topic.

Both Factor 1 and Factor 2 perspectives on systemic elements were considered supportive during reintegration emphasised the need of a nurturing and inclusive school ethos. One participant's viewpoint reflects on feeling included and having a quiet space to go to in school when they feel stressed out. For secondary school reintegration, having a key member of staff who listened and understood was described as helpful because “it makes you feel wanted and understood” (p.345). The majority of the pupils viewed having opportunities for ‘time out’ in a mainstream education setting as a significant factor. Primary school aged participants, unlike the viewpoint shared by Factor 1, found peer relationships to be a crucial factor in supporting reintegration over adult support in school and placed importance on support with social and emotional support. Some of the secondary school aged

pupils acknowledged challenges with academic work but did not want ‘special treatment’ as such, support would need to be discreet.

As mentioned above, the strength of the study lies in the use of multiple data gathering techniques to triangulate the findings. Atkinson and Rowley (2019) address that social and cultural context that comprises socioeconomic status and ethnicity is not represented in the research. Although the researchers acknowledge that generalisability was not the aim of the research and this is moreover congruent with the social constructionist perspective to explore what views exist on a given topic as opposed to how many people hold a particular view. it is of note that the sample population were majority male, secondary- aged with SEMH needs and with no comparative discussions with pupils with no SEND there is difficulty in extrapolating whether the views reflect a specific type of pupil.

This relates to the findings of Jalali and Morgan (2018), who interviewed both primary and secondary pupils with SEMH difficulties on a dual-registration placement in PRUs. The researchers sought to gain and compare views of primary (n=5) and secondary (n=8) school aged participants between the ages 7-16 years, attending three different PRUs for a period of 3 months to 1 year. Jalali and Morgan (2018) employed a qualitative methodology involving semi-structured interviews and Life Grids (timeline of significant moments) to collect the data, and identified common themes using Moustaka's (1994) framework for phenomenological data analysis. There were a total of eight key themes identified across both age categories, seven of which were unique to secondary school experiences and two to primary school experiences. The themes included attribution, anger, change, equality, relationships, mainstream education, challenge, and the self. However, not all themes are presented under distinct headings in the findings. Of strength, Jalali and Morgan (2018), like Atkinson and Rowley (2019) use multiple data gathering techniques to gain rich data. For the purpose of establishing rapport, the first author sought participant consent after six weeks of weekly contact. Despite recognising the potential impact of participants' desire to "please" on the trustworthiness and accuracy of their responses, the researcher concluded that the importance of rapport building in enhancing the quality of the data collected outweighed the potential drawbacks. During data collection and analysis, the researchers noted in a reflective journal the steps they had done to mitigate researcher interpretation bias.

Adult support was a component of the 'Supportive Factors' theme for the secondary pupils in Jalali and Morgan's (2018) study; the pupils had a greater sense of control in relation to their improved behaviour, which they attributed to the additional adult support in the PRU. Whereas the primary pupils associated the physical structure of the PRUs and increased space, such as a quiet room, as a contributing factor to positive changes in behaviour. Other aspects identified by the pupils as supportive factors included rewards systems and a personalised curriculum, which contrasts with the Atkinson and Rowley (2019) findings. In addition, according to Jalali and Morgan (2018), the increased social and behavioural outcomes linked with the flexible approach prevalent in many PRUs are not explicitly acknowledged by the government or mainstream education settings. Literature highlighted the importance CYP place on establishing strong relationships with staff, highlighting factors alluding to attunement and containment as significant for the development of these relationships, such as feeling understood by school staff and feeling emotionally and academically supported.

Hart (2013) explored potential protective variables contributing to positive social and academic outcomes for excluded CYP. Six children (aged 9 to 13) with recognised SEN (Special Educational Needs) (including moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and attachment difficulties) and four PRU staff members participated in semi-structured interviews. For the purpose of facilitating discussion and enhancing the children's understanding of the interviewing process, the researcher employed scaling replies and pictures to demonstrate and confirm the meaning of the data. Four themes emerged from the findings: relationships, teaching and learning, expectations, and the environment. Of the four elements, particular focus was placed on attachment, relationships, adult support, and teaching approaches; hence, the strong relationships with staff fostered through the time and support offered were the major "ingredient" that contributed to their success at the PRU. All children reported making progress, particularly with reading and writing, where children felt greater opportunities of success through manageable tasks and rewards, which the author relates to resilience enhancing since they build self-esteem and self-efficacy. Further protective factors included a consistent approach with high expectations, clear boundaries, and reward systems. in addition, staff felt that despite the efforts by the

PRU, children were at risk of re-entering a system that was not working for them in the first place. The researcher continued that although CYP made progress in relation to within-child factors, such as self-regulation and learning capacity, it may not be enough to enable children to manage mainstream educational setting and suggests a systemic shift in moving away from the 'child deficit' model to inclusive practice and changing school systems. Conversely, the researcher does conclude that the contrasting school experiences expressed by children in relation to previous mainstream experiences and the protective factors offered within the PRU come with implications relating to lack of resources. Whilst the study justifies the methodological design as research-driven by previous literature which shaped the interview questions and the deductive approach to data analysis, it lends itself to criticism with regards to potentially framing the data into pre-existing themes.

2.5.2 Parental engagement

Using a qualitative design, Pillay et al. (2013) explored the reintegration experiences of 11- to 14-year-old pupils with social, emotional, and behavioural issues (SEBD). Thirteen pupils (three girls and ten boys) who had reintegrated into mainstream education from a Learning Support Unit or a PRU during the previous 12 months participated in completing a series of incomplete sentences and a 40-minute task of writing a life essay about their reintegration experiences. On the basis of the 'richness' of their responses, four participants were chosen for an unstructured interview. The researchers triangulated data gathered through multiple sources (learner interviews, parent and teacher qualitative questionnaires and interviews with three professionals) and used Giorgi's steps of data analysis to identify themes. Emotional experiences, relationships, and reintegration experiences emerged as the three central themes. Each of them branched into two distinct categories: promotive experiences and risk experiences. Whilst the findings suggest that risk factors have the most significant impact and outweigh the promotive factors in reintegration experiences, although the views on promotive factors were central to understanding the phenomena of 'post-reintegration regression.' Pillay et al. (2013) amalgamated resilience theory and bioecological theory to form a new bioecological resilience theoretical perspective to explore the experiences of CYP with BESD who have reintegrated into mainstream education from PRUs and LSUs (Learning Support Unit). The researchers propose a resilience-based reintegration programme

that takes into account the development of CYPs' emotional competence prior to reintegration, the development of promotive relationships (teacher-learner, peer, and family-school relationships), and the planning of a structured reintegration route. This study's triangulation of perspectives from many systems is one of its strengths. While the purpose of the research was to explore the perspectives of learners' experiences, only four participants were chosen out of thirteen at the start of the study. In addition, the rigorous eligibility screening process may have marginalised the voices of those with literacy issues, whose perceptions are as valid. It is important to note that literacy difficulties are common among CYP attending PRUs and LSUs, and it is questionable whether the findings reflect the perspectives of a particular type of pupil, namely those with higher academic ability and those who are able to engage in extensive interviews. As a result, the sample is potentially biased, as it excludes the perspectives of pupils who struggle academically in school. It is also unclear which provision each participant attended, whether it was a PRU or LSU, as this may have significant implications on their reintegration experience. There is limited research on parental perspectives, perhaps many of the studies did not seek to triangulate the views of parents due to the inherent challenges with engaging and accessing this population. The reporting of low response rate of parental questionnaires supports this view.

Corrigan (2014) used a longitudinal mixed methods design as a framework to evaluate the implementation of person-centered planning (PCP) approaches in supporting those who have experienced transition and reintegration to mainstream education setting following a school exclusion. Six participants (five male, one female) aged between 5-15 years, two participants attended mainstream schools and four were in an AP. The sampling method was opportunistic, participants were identified through professionals who were supporting the CYP within their settings and within the education authority and were aware of forthcoming transition or reintegration. A two-phase sequential data collection strategy that includes questionnaires with open-ended questions for qualitative data and 'Likert' rating scales about essential elements of PCP is advantageous to the research design. Corrigan (2014) adapted the Essential Lifestyle Planning framework (Smull et al., 2005) that uses a ‘guided process’ to discover what is significant to an individual in order to create an action plan. In addition, multiple stakeholder views were gathered

(43 adults, consisting parents, school/setting staff, multi-agency professionals, and EPs, were interviewed) following the initial PCP meeting and a second review meeting (six to nineteen weeks after the initial PCP meeting) with Target Monitoring Evaluation (TME) of each participant's initial two targets. Qualitative data was analysed using Thematic analysis to generate themes associated with the views and experiences of multiple stakeholders. When all categories for each stakeholder group were analysed together, the results showed that CYP parents, and facilitators all had positive experiences with PCP. The empowering nature of the PCP process emerged as a key theme from the qualitative data, with young people experiencing reduced power imbalances that strengthened relationships between stakeholders. Corrigan (2014) suggests the visual format may contribute towards a greater collaborative and discursive atmosphere, which promotes and enables young people and parents' levels of participation. The author concluded that PCP procedure led to a positive impact over-time on CYPs SEMH needs, attendance in school and academic attainment.

Strengths of this study include the longitudinal design, employing a relatively accessible mixed method data collection and gathering of multiple stakeholder views. When reporting the findings, the researcher included direct quotes from the open-ended questions on positive or constructive reflections. This provides an insight into how the researchers' understanding developed and thus maintains trustworthiness of findings. However, the researcher amalgamates the data between the multiple stakeholder views, so it is not possible to ascertain commonalities and differences between the young people's perspectives in comparison to others. Furthermore, the study aimed to explore and engage with young people, however the sample consisted of seven times more adult participants than pupils, consequently the data was disproportionately skewed towards adult views, for that reason, the superordinate themes and ratings are not truly representative of pupil views. Conversely, although it is considered a strength, the researchers claim to evaluate outcomes over time through a single review meeting is arguable and may have been strengthened by longer term follow up.

The researchers concluded that collaboration amongst all necessary parties was an important feature of the process, and that a lack of attention to the needs of CYP within the home context posed a possible impediment to the efficient

formulation and implementation of PCP. Parents and families must be informed that the position of "equal partner" is offered to them, and professionals must be sensitive to how parents and relatives may perceive their role. Similarly, Atkinson and Rowley (2019) suggest that EPs are well-positioned and competent in promoting coordinated systemic practice, which can aid in successful reintegration.

Gersch and Nolan (1994) conducted a study to investigate the perspectives and consequences of children who were excluded from school for emancipatory purposes, as well as the implications for future policies and regulations. Six pupils who had attended a special provision designed to reintegrate pupils into mainstream education were interviewed for approximately two hours using open-ended questions designed to elicit their perspectives on primary and secondary school, exclusion(s), special provisions, and reintegration. While Miles and Huberman's (1984) cluster analysis was used to interpret the interviews' underlying themes, it seemed that the results were reported in accordance with the questions themselves. The majority of pupils reported difficulties with learning tasks which started at primary school with increasing complexity in secondary school which impacted on self-esteem. Their conversance with behavioural difficulties stemmed mostly from their struggle to access the curriculum, but participants also described using their behaviours to combat "boredom" and for "attention" (Gersch & Nolan, 1994. P.39). Many of the participants experienced adverse family disruptions at the time of exclusions and reported feeling worried about their families. Gersch and Nolan (1994) advocate that such experiences may have constituted difficulties establishing relationships with teachers and peers. All the participants reported accepting family involvement in the AP and felt that the involvement helped parents feel reassured. Where pupils received encouragement and support from family, Atkinson and Rowley (2019) found that they felt a greater sense of belonging in the school. The authors created a parent information leaflet as they felt that parents are often unsure of their rights and options available to them. Gersch and Nolan (1994) highlight that there may be early indicators and risk factors that need monitoring and intervening by schools to avoid exclusions and that parental involvement should be at an early stage of difficulty for joint problem solving and information sharing.

Despite welcoming the Gersch and Nolan’s (1994) research demonstrating factors from pupils' perspective which contributed to school exclusions and reintegration, the

researchers recognise the small sample size and the generalisability of findings. In addition, the research explores retrospective pupil perspectives, therefore the validity of participant experience must be considered with caution.

2.6 Barriers and Challenges impacting reintegration

Building on Hart's (2013) study, Levinson and Thompson (2016) sought to explore pupil and staff views about reasons for being in AP settings, the difference in culture with mainstream schools, and feelings about reintegration. The researchers discuss 'the tipping point' (p.40), when staff at the AP are required to identify when pupils are reaching a point whereby reintegration will become unlikely. Through semi-structured interviews (5 staff members and 10 pupils, aged between 11 – 16 years) the researchers found that although there was a high percentage of positive reintegration, with increasing age there was a decline in success rate. Like previous studies (Hart, 2013; Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Pillay et al. 2013) effective reintegration was dependant on timing and reintegration readiness, all five staff members reported that the CYP would return to mainstream before they were ready it was likely to be unsuccessful. Reintegration was also considered precarious, requiring joint parental and mainstream school support. The challenges within a mainstream setting highlighted by participants in the study included lack of inclusive ethos, staff preoccupations with academic attainment, impersonal and rigid school rules. Some pupils referred to the size of secondary schools, the intensity of social relationships and presumed negative judgements made by staff. Invariably, deteriorating behaviour in school was linked to events at home. This links to Jalali and Morgan's (2018) findings, whereby secondary aged pupils were significantly more reluctant to return to mainstream school than the primary aged pupils due to factors such as size of secondary schools, lack of support, difficulties connecting to the school, navigating peer relationships, and being overwhelmed. Primary school aged participants viewed the PRU as a temporary placement and thus maintained a sense of connectedness to mainstream education (Jalali & Morgan, 2018), As mentioned above, Hart (2013) reported adult participants concerns and reflections under the theme 'Environment' about CYP returning to the same setting and system that failed them in the first place.

The authors emphasised that mainstream school staff did not understand the underlying cause and instead "engaged with the behaviours, not the cause" (p. 36),

highlighting the critical component of competence and commitment required. Participants believed mainstream settings punished them for outbursts, but there was nowhere to calm down, and that their behaviour was a reason for their exclusion, whereas at the AP, "they know that's not you" (p.37). The paradox identified by Levinson and Thompson (2016) is that pupils can become encultured to the therapeutic environment provided at the PRU and struggle to adjust to the structures and processes of mainstream settings. According to According to Pillay et al. (2013), reintegration can be challenging for pupils who have become acclimated to the small, nurturing environment of the AP and have difficulty to adjust to the mainstream's rules and expectations. Likewise, Jalali and Morgan (2018) advocate for early intervention to reintegrate pupils into the mainstream before their views become too entrenched.

Whilst the study builds on the findings of the previous literature, it presents some challenges due the lack of detail in the data analysis process, the researchers refer to an ethnographic framework applied to data analysis, however no further detail on the process and how dominant and recurrent themes were identified is provided. Further critique lies in the researcher's position within the PRU, increasing the risk of bias in relation to the interview process and interpretation of data.

2.7 Individual factors and Attributes

In several studies, specific within-child and individual factors were captured and discussed in relation to reintegration. The literature will be presented under the following sub-themes: Emotions, attributes and motivations, and cognitive, behavioral, and emotional challenges experienced.

2.7.1 Emotions.

Unsurprisingly, a reoccurring theme expressed across the literature referred to the varying emotions experienced by CYP in the reintegration. Under the theme 'Emotional experiences' Pillay et al (2013) describe how CYP faced both promotive and risk emotional experiences during reintegration. Positive emotions included pride and optimism, which contributed towards feeling security and assurance through the idea of a positive future vision was recognised as a promotive factor. Atkinson and Rowley (2019) also found that teenagers spoke about their future ambitions and 'goal motivation', which is linked to educational endurance and self-efficacy. Many of

the participants referenced to the concept and significance of teamwork and emphasised the need for a supportive key staff member. This enabled CYP to feel agentic in their learning and develop their self-determination. Consequently, this increased participants' self-efficacy and self-esteem which allowed them to view themselves more positively (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Hart, 2013). However, many CYP who have experienced exclusions often have a very negative self-perception and low self-esteem, which impacts on their self-agency and determination (Jalali & Morgan, 2018).

Conversely, emotional risk factors included feelings of anxiety, loneliness, and anger, where feelings of anger formed a large part of the participants' daily emotional experience during reintegration. A distinct comparison between mainstream setting and a PRU was the therapeutic milieu provided to address deep-rooted experiences of rejection and feeling undervalued, and a space to explore their emotions without being excluded (Levinson & Thompson, 2016). Moreover, Pillay et al (2013) posit that emotional risk factors were 'bidirectional' (p.317); the experience of reintegration was anxiety-inducing because of the disrupted mainstream educational experience, which led to academic encumbrance. What is more, feelings of anger were also present as a meta construct in Jalali and Morgan's (2018) research, with notions of injustice and unfair treatment being implicitly embedded within the participant narratives. Literature suggests developing emotional competence (Pillay et al, 2013) by adopting a resilience framework (Hart, 2013; Pillay et al, 2013) by promoting positive emotional experiences through managing anger and anxiety.

2.7.2 Attributes and Motivations

Within the theme 'Attribution,' Jalali and Morgan (2018) found that the majority of participants attributed their behaviour and exclusion to external factors, resulting in a lack of accountability and an unwillingness to understand the repercussions of their behaviour. The participants perceived feeling offended or targeted by their peers and unfairly accused. This theme was strong among primary school participants, but secondary school participants exhibited heightened self-awareness and an external locus of control, as well as a prominent sense of learned helplessness with regard to their potential and desires to change. According to Jalali and Morgan (2018), punitive forms of behavioural reinforcement can strengthen dissonance over their behaviour and beliefs of injustice, causing CYP to become stuck in entrenched narratives.

In some circumstances, reintegration into a mainstream school can help CYP with the proposition of a ‘fresh start’ and a ‘second chance’ and an opportunity to reinvent themselves (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Gersch & Nolan, 1994). Most pupils reported wanting to start at a new school rather than going back to their previous school (Gersch & Nolan, 1994). Additionally, narratives that surround a CYP can sabotage successful reintegration, Atkinson and Rowley’s (2019) study highlighted reflections on the power of ‘labelling and judgement’ (p.46) and value of avoiding labels and past difficulties to participants. Similarly, CYP were perceptive of how narratives can alter staff views and how they interact with CYP who have been excluded, which in turn influences how they view themselves and ‘become trapped in behaviours that connected to certain roles and labels’ (Levinson & Thompson, 2016, P.38). According to Self Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), academic motivation depends upon cognitions connected with setting goals and believing that it is achievable. Interestingly, where participants felt connected with the PRU, they were more motivated within the classroom, made more progress and higher levels of engagement (Hart, 2013).

2.7.3 Cognition and learning and social, emotional, and mental health challenges experienced.

Exclusion from school presents important equal opportunity concerns, and exclusion can have social, emotional, academic, and economic effects for children and youth (CYP) (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Gersch & Nolan, 1994). Daily challenges with classroom learning tasks emerged as a dominant theme across the literature, with the most cited difficulties alluding to poor conceptual understanding. A number of the studies revealed a preference for the AP curriculum and teaching style over the negative experiences within mainstream education (Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Pillay et al., 2013). Irrelevant learning experiences in mainstream education was highlighted by excluded pupils, as a result staff that are attuned to individual learning needs was considered a protective factor (Hart, 2013). In spite of this, it is recognised that the trajectory for pupils educated outside mainstream education is poorer (Jalali & Morgan, 2018). Despite acknowledging their difficulties accessing mainstream curriculum, participants preferred not to be ‘too different’ to their peers and not want ‘special treatment’ in the form of additional

support, showing an interest in discrete support strategies (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019).

Participants' accounts of their own difficulties with emotional and behavioural regulation at school were common in the literature, and may have contributed to the negativity some participants felt about their educational experiences. Participants demonstrated valuing self-agency through demonstrating insight into self-regulation and taking responsibility for their learning. Participants across the literature expressed having access to a calming space and staff that were supportive and understanding. In accordance with the findings of Levinson and Thompson (2016), CYP appreciated having a significant adult who supported them regulate their emotions and manage their behaviour. Pillay et al. (2013) found that initiatives, such as short-term individualised learning programmes through PRUs and LSUs aimed at addressing behavioural, emotional, and social difficulties for reintegration into mainstream education, frequently fail and result in the 'revolving door effect' (p.311), which calls into question the overall effectiveness of AP settings. Much of the research within the literature review supported this finding, demonstrating the need for systemic changes in mainstream settings to support CYP with SEMH needs (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019)

2.8 Theories Underpinning Research in relation to Reintegration

The present literature around reintegration refers to a multiplicity of psychological paradigms and frameworks that contribute towards understanding the phenomena surrounding it. These will be explored under the following headings: Bioecological Framework, Positive and Solution-focused psychology, Attachment Theory, Resilience framework and Person-centered Psychology.

2.8.1 Bioecological Framework

Some of the studies used a deductive approach to data analysis and explored themes to fit within a psychological framework from the outset. Atkinson and Rowley (2019) contextualised their findings within Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological paradigm, acknowledging the significance of a systemic approach. Bronfenbrenner (1979) postulates dynamic systems regarding the interactive relationships between humans and their environment, which influence and shape human development and behaviour. Similarly, Pillay et al. (2013) utilised bioecological theory to explain the

interaction between risk and resilience elements during the reintegration process of pupils from PRUs and LSUs into mainstream contexts. Microsystemic resilience includes both risk and protective factors, wherein the learner's relationships with their family, peers, neighbourhood, and community influence their reintegration experiences. Mesosystemic resilience provides an awareness of the interconnectedness and balance of these components within the interpersonal interactions in the child's microsystems, such as the child's family, school, and peer relationships. Pillay et al. (2013) reported that exosystemic resilience (larger social system and economic stressors) and macrosystemic resilience (ideology, cultural values, and laws) influenced the growing resilience and risk trajectory of learners. Finally, chronosystemic resilience incorporates the factor of time, such as current sociopolitical shifts. The researchers hypothesise that exosystemic and chronosystemic resilience provide the theoretical basis for comprehending how pupils CYP experience reintegration.

2.8.2. Attachment theory

A dominant theme across all the literature concerning successful reintegration for CYP was the importance of relationships. This included staff-pupil, staff-parent, peer, family, and school-school relationships (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Hart, 2013; Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Pillay et al., 2013). The importance of forming interpersonal relationships alludes to the idea that relationships are a key determinant to the extent in which a school's inclusive ethos is. Levinson and Thompson draw on the principles of Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969) and highlight the importance of the quality of school staff relationships and interactions with pupils that serve as a secure base and reciprocal dialogues in supporting emotional wellbeing and containing anxieties and uncertainties that surround exclusions and reintegration. Themes emerged from the accounts that referenced principles to attachment and CYPs' readiness to engage in learning, even though only one staff member openly alluded to an understanding of attachment theory in their attempts to make sense of CYPs' behaviour. The teacher-child relationship, from an attachment perspective, may be an extension of the parent-child relationship. Patterns of insecure attachment have implications in the classroom in relation to the child's learning process and difficulties developing trusting bonds with school staff.

Pillay et al. (2013) found that experiences of low attachment to the family and the variable family structure impeded academic and social progress. Geddes (2006) emphasise the role of the staff in school to create a nurturing and responsive environment that serves as secure base from which learning can take place. Pillay et al. (2013) findings also suggest psychoanalytical ideas of promotive relationships with teachers and school staff contributed towards emotional holding and an increased sense of attachment. Similarly, Hart (2013) found that participants placed special focus on attachment relationships, which was a key factor in building a safe basis for children where their fundamental needs were satisfied and learning engagement could be encouraged. The research emphasising the significance of CYP forming positive relationships during the reintegration process is grounded in psychoanalytical concepts within an attachment paradigm.

2.8.3. Positive Psychology

Several studies combined positive psychology models with solution-focused perspectives on reintegration. A positive psychology model of 'what works' and best practices that contribute towards successful and sustained reintegration into mainstream education was explored by Atkinson and Rowley (2019). The findings in the study incorporated a solution-focused approach, which is based on the idea that change is achieved through activating individual and collective resources. The model focuses on 'what works' in order to effect change and move away from ineffective approaches.

Person-Centred Psychology, like positive psychology, is grounded in humanistic psychology, which encourages autonomy, positive fulfilment, and growth (Rogers, 1951) and the concepts of empowerment, collaboration, and equality (Sanderson, 2000). Corrigan (2014) shared this perspective and utilised Person-Centred Psychology principles to promote the transition and reintegration of excluded children into mainstream schooling. Individuals will be positioned in the center of planning and decision-making in an effort to create a positive future through identifying their strengths and addressing their needs (Corrigan, 2014). Studies that seek to elicit the voice of CYP, keeping them at the centre of the research process and acknowledging them as experts in their own lives, are inherently humanistic (Sanderson, 2000).

2.8.4. Resilience

Pillay et al. (2013) discussed both risk and resiliency factors in relation to reintegration experiences, arguing that the phenomenon of ‘reintegration regression’ cannot be understood within bioecological theory alone and should be accompanied with resilience theory. Hart (2013) also focused on exploring potential protective factors identified by children and staff at a PRU through a resiliency perspective. The research recognised a role for systemic work and moving away from a ‘child deficit’ model towards a resilience perspective, which offers hope on the basis that despite experiences of difficulties or risk, many children achieve positive outcomes. Although intrinsic variables (e.g., social skills, temperament, internal locus of control) may influence an individual's resilience potential, the degree of resilience is controlled by dynamic interactions between the individual and their environment. Consequently, an accumulation of perceived resilience factors is believed to limit the risk trajectory and support CYP develop resilient characteristics that enable positive outcomes and ‘educational resilience’ which relates to ‘achievements in schools, despite difficult circumstances’ (Hart, 2013. P.198).

2.9 Summary of Literature

The literature review captured the lived experiences of the reintegration process into mainstream education of CYP, as well as school staff and parents using a range of qualitative and mixed methods. The findings present many facilitating factors and barriers to reintegration, indicating interrelating systems and circumstances that impact CYPs experiences.

Reoccurring themes identified amongst literature in relation to key facilitating factors to successful reintegration were impart due to interrelating systems between the school and the family. Schools that cultivated a nurturing and adaptive inclusive ethos, where CYP felt secure to explore their emotions and understood, developed self-efficacy and motivation within individuals. In addition, positive relationships with teachers and peers determined the extent of successful and sustained reintegration into mainstream education. Social skills and peer relationships was particularly relevant for younger participants who were more propelled to return to a mainstream setting.

Amongst the literature, presented under barriers and challenges impacting reintegration, many studies reinforced that lack of flexibility, punitive forms of punishment and academic difficulties negate positive reintegration experiences. The studies highlighted the importance of timing and readiness for reintegration into a mainstream setting. Lack of a sense belonging and 'feeling different' was a narrative common amongst secondary school participants through the literature as a barrier to their motivations for reintegration which was often compounded with learned helplessness a lack of self-efficacy and awareness around individual strengths and needs.

The majority of the literature reviewed explored experiences of primary and secondary pupils with a SEN, except two studies that focused research on secondary aged pupils in a PRU setting (Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Pillay et al., 2013). All of the studies included a mix of genders, however male participants dominated the sample population which leads to a predominately male discourse around the experiences of reintegration. Although this reflects the current PRU population, the research findings and conclusions potentially reflect supportive and risk factors steered towards a specific gender.

There is limited consideration amongst the research on the researcher's positionality which brings into question any hermeneutic biases and adequate measures accounted for in the findings. Jalali and Morgan (2018) took measures to address potential researcher interpretation bias through reflective journal during data collection and analysis and inter-coder reliability checking to improve robustness and trustworthiness. Whilst notwithstanding the importance of rapport building, the participants were known to the researchers ahead of the interviews, increasing the potential for response bias which impacts the generalisability of findings.

The literature around reintegration predominantly falls within four psychological paradigms: Bioecological framework, attachment theory, positive psychology, and resilience. However, the findings show that multiple theoretical paradigms are intertwined with regards to facilitating factors in successful reintegration.

2.10. Gaps in the Literature Informing the Research

There are gaps in the current research base regarding the reintegration experiences of CYP who have been excluded from mainstream education, according to a review

of the existing literature. Although studies have sought the perspectives of CYP, none have investigated gender-specific experiences and characteristics. Girls' perspectives were notably absent from the reviewed papers, with the majority of research focusing on the educational experiences of male adolescents. There is value in conducting research that seeks to understand the marginalised population of girls who have been excluded and encounter reintegration into mainstream education in order to more effectively inform practice, given that this represents the national statistics on the population of excluded pupils attending APs.

The research using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological model highlighted a socio-cultural systemic aspect, but did not address the compounding impacts of these experiences on the gendered and "othered" identities of the participants. The article by Crenshaw (1989) on intersectionality emphasises the concept of gendered understanding, specifically the marginalised female perspectives regarding educational support and needs. The absence of considerations of gender inequality and gender-specific risks in the research base raises questions about the findings' breadth and validity.

In light of this, the present research sought to provide a positive contribution to the body of evidence around the phenomena by raising the voices of girls' reintegration into mainstream education.

2.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides an overview and critical appraisal of the existing published pupil voice literature concerning the lived experiences of the girls during the reintegration process into a mainstream secondary school. The identified literature gaps informed the rationale for the present research.

The aims of the research will be reviewed in the following chapter, along with how they relate to its purpose and design. The ontological and epistemological position of the researcher will also be discussed, along with its influence on the methodology and design. The procedures for data gathering will be described in detail, along with considerations for the research's quality.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will begin by discussing the research study's design, outlining the researcher's ontological and epistemological positions, and demonstrating how these perspectives influenced the chosen methodological approach. The rationale for selecting Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and its theoretical underpinnings will be explored, as well as its comparison to other methodologies.

The subsequent section will elaborate on the research procedure, covering the recruiting of participants and the gathering of data. The required research quality and ethical considerations will be provided, and the chapter will conclude with a description of the data analysis procedure.

3.2 Research Study and Design

3.2.1 Research Study Aims and Purpose

The current study sought to explore participants' experiences and perceptions of reintegration processes into a mainstream secondary school. A qualitative design was employed to address the research questions, allowing the researcher to identify the key aspects of a phenomenon as reflected by the depth and richness of the viewpoints of the individuals most impacted (Cline et al., 2015). The study's purpose was exploratory in nature, with the aim of providing a voice to a marginalised population and exploring their experiences while aiming to develop knowledge to benefit this group, which is in accordance with the additional emancipatory purpose of this research. The researcher took an inductive approach which, rather than deductively, seeks themes to emerge from data, where themes are drawn based on pre-existing research and ideas (Fox et al., 2007). Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain the views of the participants. In order to elicit rich detailed accounts, probing questions and prompts were factored into the interview guides (Appendix D) (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). This allowed flexibility to gain richer data and to discuss what is important to the participants without rigidly sticking to an interview guide (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The research sought to produce responses to the following two research questions:

• RQ1. How do girls experience the reintegration process following exclusion from a mainstream secondary school?

• RQ2. What are girls' views of what works in the reintegration process following exclusion from a mainstream school?

3.3. Ontological and Epistemological Positions

The researcher's paradigm influences the way in which the research is designed, as well as the interpretation of the data in order to answer to the research question(s) (Crewell & Poth, 2018; Willig, 2013). A paradigm represents distinct concepts and systems of belief about how reality is perceived and about how such information is known. This includes the ontology, which is concerned with the nature of reality (Mertens, 2015). The ontological stance exists on a continuum ranging from relativism-to-realist position (Braun & Clarke, 2013). A realist position assumes an observable and measurable truth, where the cause and effect are known (Willig, 2013). Therefore, a realist ontology would assume that there is a universal objective reality for girls that are excluded. However, a relativist ontology argues that there are multiple truths and realities co-existing that are shaped by our interpretation (Crotty, 1998). Therefore, in terms of this research, a relativist ontology would accept that there are multiple perceptions of reintegration and how the girls experience this will be different but true to each individual. Therefore, assuming that there are multiple complex interpretations, yet equally valid realities a relativist ontological position is established. This research will assume that the experience of exclusion and reintegration as a female is dependent on their cultural context, past experiences and interactions with other people.

Epistemology relates to the nature of knowledge and the methodology, the process of producing knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Lincoln et al., 2018). One such position that seeks to manipulate variables to look for causal relationships for an accurate representation of the truth, is positivism (Sarantakos, 2012). This approach tends to be taken in quantitative research. Alternatively, a constructivist epistemological approach maintains that knowledge is co-constructed and formed subjectively depending on the different meanings individuals attribute to various factors (Crotty, 1998). The researcher adopted a constructivist epistemology, with the assumption that participants will view their experiences through empirically

informed data through various discourses and systems they exist in (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Whilst the researcher sought to explore individual experiences for their truth and the reality of their experiences, inevitably the researcher's own experiences may influence the interpretation and analysis of the data.

3.4 Choosing a Methodological Approach: Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

The research questions sought to explore secondary school aged girls' experiences of the phenomenon of the reintegration process in mainstream education following a school exclusion. It was determined that Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was the methodological approach most suited to address this. IPA is congruent with relativist and constructivist theoretical frameworks because its primary goal is to learn about and from individual's unique lived experiences and perspectives. (Smith & Eatough, 2015; Smith & Osborn, 2015). This is an idiographic method that does not disregard generalisability, but instead focuses an individual's experiential experience. Therefore, the IPA process does appreciate that with shared experiences there will be definitive similarities and differences. It achieves this by incorporating the inductive method, which takes into account what may be learned from the data. (Fox et al., 2007).

3.5 Consideration of Alternative Approaches

The subsequent section will examine three alternative approaches and explain why IPA was selected as the most appropriate one. Among these were Thematic Analysis, Narrative Approaches, and Grounded Theory, each of which is described in detail below.

3.5.1 Thematic Analysis.

Thematic Analysis was considered as it aims to identify reoccurring themes and patterns in the data between accounts described by participants in a group (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) acknowledge that its emphasis on patterns within whole-group data in this respect, as opposed to exploring idiographic experiences, disregards how individuals make sense of their experiences. The small sample in the study seeks to explore the detailed account of the lived experiences of the reintegration process from girls currently in mainstream education. Therefore, Thematic Analysis research, is not in line with the proposed research question which

is more suitably aligned to IPA method and its focus on the individual (Smith et al.,2009).

3.5.2 Narrative Analysis.

Through the concept of "storytelling" and the narratives individuals construct, Narrative Analysis explores how individuals relate and make meaning of an experience (Willing, 2008). To this end, Narrative Analysis is concerned with how individuals utilise and structure language, as well as the order of events (Crossley, 2000). With Narrative methods, the emphasis is on the content and structure of people' sense making, whereas IPA focuses on the sense making of specific individuals in connection to a specific experience (Smith et al., 2009). As the focus is on how participants make meaning of their lived experiences of a given phenomenon, as opposed to how it is constructed, it was believed that IPA methodology would be more appropriate for addressing the research issues of this research.

3.5.3 Grounded Theory.

Grounded Theory aims to provide an explanation for a phenomenon based on participant data (Robson & McCartan, 2016). This inductive approach differs with IPA methodology in that there is typically a large sample size and that it is interested in symbolic interactionism and develops a more explanatory focus (Smith et al., 2009). Central to the current study is exploring in more detail the subjective construct of an individual’s experience of the reintegration process, thereby establishing that IPA methodology is most appropriate to address the research aims of the current study.

3.6 Theoretical Underpinnings of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

After considering different approaches, it was determined that the rationale for using IPA as opposed to other qualitative research methods was the most appropriate. In accordance with the researcher's constructivist epistemology, the IPA methodology places emphasis on the participants' experiences and understandings of a particular phenomenon. IPA's theoretical foundations are phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography (Smith et al., 2009). This section will discuss the applicability of each of these theoretical underpinnings to the purpose of the research.

3.6.1 Phenomenology.

Phenomenology refers to the study of human experience and how humans make sense of these lived experiences and derives from leading philosophers Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and Sartre (Smith et al., 2009). Philosophers have claimed that in order to understand how humans view the world, preexisting filters of their conscious awareness must be identified and reflected upon (Husserl, 1927, as cited in Smith et al., 2009). This approach to studying experiences is concerned with the essence of how people perceive and describe an individualised and subjective event which differentiates experiences that appear alike, from others. Heidegger (1962) questioned this approach and acknowledged the impossibility in the attempt to remove their personal experiences in the process of sense-making, or intersubjectivity, as this is always related to interpretations through the individual's previous knowledge and interactions with their environment (Smith et al., 2009). In an attempt to truly access and understand the participants' experiences, IPA researchers must 'bracket off' and are required to reflect on any assumptions and perceptions of the participants may be bringing to their interpretations. (Smith et al., 2009). Merleau-Ponty (2012) considered the role of subjectivity in making sense of human experiences and argued that individual perception is shaped through lived experiences. Sartre (1943/1992) extends existential phenomenology by emphasising the significance of personal and social interactions in the development of individual perceptions, by considering how experiences are shaped by relationships. IPA aims to understand the intricacies of lived experiences through the concept of phenomenology, which emphasises on how humans make sense of a phenomenon through their unique contextual lens and connections with the world surrounding them (Smith et al., 2009).

3.6.2 Hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the second important theoretical principle underpinning IPA research, and it seeks to understand the approach and reasons for interpretation (Smith et al., 2009). IPA researchers are required to maintain the interpretative significance in hermeneutic concept, focusing on the meaning made by the participants. Schleiermacher (1998) pertained the process of interpretation involves seeking objective textual meaning as well as the participants' unique way of communicating this. In other words, the IPA researcher's goal of interpretation depends not only on the text but also on the researcher's influence (Smith et al.,

2009). Further, Schleiermacher argues that the cultural environment of the individual should be taken into account since it affects the use of language and the articulation of meaning in communication (Friedrich & Schleiermacher, 1998). Interpretation of these nuances of language and alternative ways of communicating is recognised within hermeneutics as this impacts the researcher's understanding of these expressions.

Heidegger emphasises the value that the interpreter brings to the interpretation cycle, highlighting that one's own preconceptions and experiences will invariably impact sensemaking (Smith et al., 2009). The process through which the researcher makes sense of the participants' efforts to make sense of their own experience is referred to as the double hermeneutic (Smith & Osborn, 2015). This is a complex and dynamic process; Gadamer (2013) believed the researcher's preconceptions may become more apparent as the interpreter engages further with making sense of the individuals' lived experience (Smith et al., 2009). The process of interpretation is not linear and draws on a dynamic and cyclical process, termed as the "hermeneutic cycle", which involves moving between the part and the whole repeatedly to gain an understanding (Willig, 2008). While using IPA to infer meaning from data, the researcher iteratively switches between various approaches to thinking about and interpreting the data. (Galletta, 2013). During this process, IPA researchers take up an active role, including an additional stratum to the interpretative approach to understanding individuals' experiences of a phenomenon, whilst bringing reflexivity to the process (Larkin et al., 2006; Smith & Eatough, 2015).

3.6.3 Idiography. Idiography, the third central principle of IPA, puts emphasis on the particulars of an individual's experiences as opposed to the population as a whole (Smith & Osborn, 2015). In contrast to traditional nomothetic approaches, it aims to obtain a comprehensive analysis to understand a participant's phenomenon from their perspective in a given situation (Smith et al., 2009). A homogeneous group of individuals is selected based on their lived experience with the topic of interest. The researcher's commitment to explore how participants generate meaning from their own experience of a phenomenon through an interpretative process is supported by relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology. With this idiographic focus, IPA was used to explore girls' experiences of a reintegration process in a mainstream

secondary school context in order to explore their understanding of what contributes to a successful reintegration after exclusion.

3.7 Research Process

3.7.1 Participants

3.7.1.1 Sampling Methods and Recruitment. In accordance with IPA research methodology and with the research aims in mind, an attempt was made to recruit a homogeneous group of participants who can provide a personal perspective on a particular phenomenon of interest. The degree of homogeneity is dependent upon practical constraints and socio-demographic variables that permit analysis of patterns of convergence and divergence among participants (Smith et al., 2009). As advised by Smith et al. (2009) for Doctoral level research, the initial intention was to recruit three to six participants who had experienced either a fixed-term or permanent exclusion and have since been reintegrated and are currently enrolled in a secondary mainstream school. Whilst the researcher made several attempts to recruit up to six participants, this was not possible due to the impact of coronavirus pandemic lockdown measures and restriction of recruitment opportunities.

Maintaining the group's homogeneity was essential for the researcher while considering ways to increase recruitment opportunities. Therefore, it was decided to purposively sample secondary school-aged girls who had experienced the reintegration process following any form of school exclusion. The three participants recruited did not compromise the detail or depth of the analysis either individually and across participants. Throughout the recruitment process, the researcher considered the participants' ability to communicate their understanding and perspective of the phenomenon in question (Willig, 2013). Smith et al. (2009) note the importance of a pragmatic and flexible approach to purposive sampling when conducting research in real-world contexts.

3.7.1.2 Inclusion Criteria and Rationale. In order to preserve the homogeneity of the participant group, the researcher devised an inclusion criterion that would appropriately identify participants on their lived experience of the phenomenon of reintegration. The pre-defined criteria the researcher followed and the rationale are illustrated in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Rationale
Girl	Gender identity is a girl within the UK context (this is distinct from an individual's sex, which is typically determined by biological differences including reproductive organs, genes, and hormones). To establish homogeneity of the phenomenon with this particular group of children, the gender identity of the participants is specified.
Secondary school age	Participants at the time of interview are of secondary school age (11-16 years). To establish a degree of homogeneity in the manner in which individuals experience the phenomenon.
Participants have experienced one or more forms of exclusions and reintegration	The phenomenon under exploration is associated to current lived experiences of the reintegration process in mainstream secondary school.
Currently on roll at a mainstream secondary school	The researcher was interested in recruiting participants who had completed a reintegration to explore supportive factors and what went well.
Proficiency in English	Participants needed to be able to communicate in English in order to participate in an interview.

3.7.1.3 Recruitment Strategy and Sample Size. Following confirmation of ethical approval (Appendix E) for the research study, all secondary school head teachers within the LA where the TEP researcher was placed were contacted. The opportunistic recruitment strategy began with an email outlining the aim and nature of the current study and asking head teachers to identify participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria (Table 3.1). This was supported by the schools' link EP, a colleague of the EPS who was already assigned to the school and formed a professional

relationship with the head teacher. Prospective schools who showed an interest through email received an information sheet and school consent form with additional research information and were required to submit a signed consent form. (Appendix F). Once informed consent was obtained, schools were required to distribute participant information and consent forms to parents/carer and young people identified as participants. Once participants consented to participate and signed parental agreement was obtained through the school, the researcher scheduled a meeting with each participant via Microsoft Teams to confirm their understanding and gain informed assent prior to the interview. This contributed to quality assurance and provided ample opportunities to notify participants of the extent of their participation. At the time of submitting the research for ethical approval, the Covid-19 pandemic reduced the likelihood of face-to-face interviews, necessitating the use of video conferencing on Microsoft Teams for remote interviewing (Appendix G). The interviews were scheduled to occur at convenient times for each participant. The interviewing procedure is detailed in the section below titled "Data Collection."

The recruitment process required approaching gatekeepers, those who are responsible for safeguarding the interests of others and provide initial permission for research to proceed (Greig et al., 2013). Depending on the gatekeeper's approval and identification of willing participants lends itself to a potential bias. It is unclear, for example, whether the participants were approached subject to the gatekeeper's expectation that they would represent the school positively and therefore restricting access to the views of a wider sample of the population of interest. This will be discussed further in the analysis of the data section below.

3.7.1.4 Participant Information. Three girls between the ages of 13 and 14 were recruited to participate in this research, in line with DfE figures indicating that almost a quarter of school exclusions involve pupils aged 14. (DfE, 2017). All of the participants attended mainstream secondary schools in England that were overseen by local authorities. One participant was in year 9 and two were in year 10. Two of the participants had transferred from different secondary schools, with no overlap between their prior and current schools. One individual (Leigh) was asked to leave her old school; however, her current school reported being unaware of her previous exclusion history.

All of the participants had been through a fixed-period exclusion and the school's reintegration process, there was some homogeneity of experience. Varying amounts of time were spent at current schools by participants. Two participants had only recently completed their 12-week Pastoral Support Plan (PSP), and one participant (Leigh) was in the final week of her PSP period, yet the reintegration was deemed successful by the head teacher. The length of time spent at their current school is likely to have influenced their perspectives, experiences, and memories of their previous school. This will be discussed in further detail in the discussion chapter.

To ensure privacy, pseudonyms were substituted for real names during transcription, and recordings were erased once the transcriptions were complete. In Chapter Four, the participants will be introduced in greater depth. Despite these discrepancies, the sample was deemed sufficiently homogeneous for the purposes of this IPA study in terms of their experiences in relation to the phenomenon of interest. The participant information is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 *Participant contextual information (accurate at the point of interview)*

Name	**Age**	**ethnicity**	**Type of exclusion**
Brooke	14	White British	Multiple FPE & IE
Alana	13	White Albanian	Multiple FPE, AP
Leigh	14	White British	PE, Multiple FPE & IE

3.8 Data Collection

3.8.1 Method of Interviewing. To collect data, semi-structured, one-on-one interviews, which are common in IPA research, were used in keeping with the exploratory nature of this research (Smith et al., 2009). This format is recognised for providing a platform that creates a space for participants' reflective and thoughtful account of an experience and sense making of a phenomenon (Galletta, 2013; Smith & Osborn, 2015). While employing open-ended questions focuses on getting responses to the research questions, the interviewer has the flexibility to modify the

order and wording of the questions in response to the participants' responses (Robson & McCarten, 2016). The interviewer may also utilise prompts and probing questions to collect a detailed account of the participants' experiences, thoughts, and emotions (Galletta, 2013; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). This inductive and indirect method recognises the interviewer and interviewee's interaction as active research participants (Smith et al., 2009; Smith & Eatough, 2015). The interactive dialogue can help participants establish rapport, that is important when they are asked to reflect on potentially sensitive, emotional, and personal issues. (Reid et al., 2005).

The rapport and familiarity established during the researcher's initial contact with the participant, in an effort to answer any new questions, eased engagement in interviews. Some participants required additional prompts for expanding purposes when a question's specific meaning or concepts appeared difficult. In these instances, the researcher took precautions to ensure that their own biases wouldn't influence the participants' responses.

3.8.2 Developing an Interview Schedule. In order to appropriately address the research question whilst allowing a space for the participant to tell their story, the researcher developed an interview schedule (Appendix D). The schedule was used as a guide that encompassed a flexible approach to enable adaptations based on participant responses, which offered a degree of participant led conversational direction (Smith et al., 2009). This reflects the emancipatory purpose of the study, through providing a platform to empower the voice of the participants. Due to the nature of IPA research, the sequencing of the questions, type of question and wording was considered, as well as possible follow-up questions and prompts to encourage an open and rich dialogue. Furthermore, to capture the positive experiences of the reintegration process, the interview schedule was guided by the underpinnings of Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) in order to determine aspects that facilitated a “successful” reintegration and sources of strength and school belonging based on its strong presence in the previous literature.

3.8.3 Piloting the Interview Schedule. Due to difficulties with recruitment and the small sample size in line with IPA research, it was not feasible to carry out a pilot study and not include the data in the analysis. The interview schedule was informally

piloted on two Trainee Educational Psychologists (TEPs) to evaluate whether the interview questions were appropriate and related to the research question to generate rich data without leading participants (Kallio et al., 2016; Craggs & Kelly, 2018). This provided an opportunity for the novice researcher to refine, rehearse and learn the schedule. The researcher was able to reflect with the colleagues who took part in these interviews and recognised the tendency of the researcher to move on to prompts and follow-up questions quite fast without creating an appropriate degree of space. Following this process, the researcher acknowledged the need to consciously slow down their pace and refer to the principles of attuned interactions (Kennedy & Landor, 2015). The researcher felt greater confidence to progress into the data collection phase of the research.

3.8.4 The Process of Conducting Interviews. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, flexibility in data collection was required to protect health and safety; therefore, interviews were scheduled to be conducted remotely using Microsoft Teams. To guarantee compliance with the data collection policies of the researcher's university training provider, an invitation to the meeting was emailed to participants from the researcher's university email account. The method outlined in the ethics registration form, as well as the Covid- 19 contingency plans, aided in determining that remote interviews were the best option. Although this alternative to in-person interviews is deemed an appropriate method of data collection for the purposes of this study, the limitations will be discussed in Chapter 5.

During this phase of the research, and in keeping with the hermeneutic phenomenology principles of IPA, the researcher's role is to be an attentive listener. By paying close attention to what the participant is saying, the researcher can bracket pre-existing concerns so that the participant is the sole focus of attention (Smith et al., 2009). To aid in establishing rapport, fostering trust, and facilitating the interview process, participants were informed at the beginning of each interview that there were no right or wrong answers and that the researcher was only interested in hearing about their experiences in as much detail as they wished to provide. Wanting to establish rapport, the researcher used warm-up questions, such as ‘How old are you?’ ‘Who do you live with?’ and ‘What do you like to do outside of school?’ Prompts were used by the researcher to clarify or expand on their responses, such as, ‘Can you tell me a bit more about that?’, and to elicit rich responses throughout

the interview process. Although consent was obtained prior to interviews, participants were advised of their right to withdraw and their confidentiality rights. The interview was recorded with the participants' consent and saved in accordance with data protection guidelines.

Participants were given the opportunity to debrief and ask the researcher any questions at the end of the interview and once the recording was stopped. The researcher then transcribed all interviews verbatim immediately after data collection. To maintain anonymity, any identifying information was deleted from the data throughout the process, each participant was allocated a pseudonym, and details about their school were concealed.

3.9 Assessing Research Quality and Validity

Traditional quantitative validity and reliability measures are considered inappropriate for qualitative research methodologies due to its idiographic and subjective nature (Smith et al., 2009). Yardley (2000) developed four principles to evaluate the quality of qualitative research in response to this. This is particularly important for data in relativist or constructivist form, which posits that knowledge about a phenomenon is made by an individual's interpretation of their perceived reality. Therefore, the participants detailed account and the researcher's analysis must be clearly evidenced (Willig et al., 2013). Yardley's (2000) good practice guidance will be followed and presented below, alongside how each principle was met in the present study, in accordance with this phenomenological research.

3.9.1 Sensitivity to Context. First principle that affects the extent to which qualitative research can be evaluated is its context sensitivity (Smith et al., 2000). This study's aim and design are to explore how the concept of individual and group identity, as well as perceptions and knowledge of oneself and others, are interconnected with sociocultural millieu, political, and historical settings. The research includes a comprehensive systematic literature review to inform the current study's rationale, which was used throughout the research (Chapter 2).

Throughout the interview process, the interviewer demonstrated sensitivity by placing importance on being an attentive listener throughout, showing empathy and building a good rapport, whilst maintaining curiosity about the participants' lived experiences. The researcher acknowledged the visible and invisible Social

GGRRAAACCEEESSS (Burnham, 2013) and negotiating power dynamics that can be unintentionally present. For instance, sensitivity to the researcher dominating the space, especially in the beginning when the rhythm and dynamic of the interview is more condensed, or the researcher reacting in a manner that may have referenced to a sense of judgement or leading bias for participants in their setting. In this interactional interview process, the researcher showed sensitivity to the context by reiterating the study's exploratory nature and making an effort to refrain from making judgements but rather to offer them a voice and space to share their experiences. In addition, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and reminded of their right to withdraw in order to address power imbalances. It is important to emphasise that, within the interviewer-interviewee dyad, both the researcher's position as a seeker of knowledge and the participants' position as experts on their own experiences were maintained throughout the research.

3.9.2 Commitment and Rigour. The second principle for evaluating the quality of qualitative data is the researcher's commitment to the research design and the rigour with which all components of the methodological procedure were carried out (Yardley, 2000). To establish a consistent and cohesive methodology, Smith et al's (2009) theoretical foundations for IPA guided and informed the research (2009). In to achieve a meaningful response to the research questions regarding the lived experiences of the phenomenon of interest, a purposive sample was also recruited according to strict criteria for reasonable homogeneity.

The researcher also committed to consistent approaches during the semi-structured interview process to obtain as rich idiographic data as possible, which was facilitated by the researcher’s skills acquired through her experiences as a TEP and the pre-prepared interview schedule for sufficient idiographic engagement. As well as this, to ensure robustness and confidence, the researcher piloted the interview schedule with colleagues. Following this, a systematic and transparent data analysis approach was implemented iterative cycles to ensure rigour and confirm the authenticity of participant transcripts and subsequent emerging themes (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2013). The data analysis approach produced a master table of themes that provided evidence and a transparent account of how raw data supported the concluding overarching themes, which further demonstrates rigour (Appendix J). Furthermore, the researcher took advantage of critical and reflective spaces,

including supervision and regular meetings with others doing IPA research, to enhance understanding and commitment to the process required to generate reliable results.

3.9.3 Transparency and Coherence. The third criterion of Yardley (2000) pertains to the clarity and coherence of the research process and arguments presented. As described previously, the thorough audit trail allows the reader to see how the findings were derived directly from the data by displaying extracts and quotes. Personal experiences and assumptions may bias the researcher's interpretations and meaning constructions, which is inherent to the interpretive nature of phenomenological and hermeneutic research (Smith & Osborn, 2015; Willig, 2013). This research demonstrates the researcher's commitment to reflexivity and awareness of their influence on the study as unavoidable and as an inherent component of the double hermeneutics in the IPA research (Smith et al., 2009) are demonstrated, as well as an explicit and conscious effort to identify and name known biases (Galletta, 2013).

Moreover, the researcher's commitment to engage in the process of reflexivity begins in the conceptual stages of study. Disclosing and reflecting on the primary reasons and influences for conducting research in the topic area in the introductory chapters and maintaining a reflective journal throughout the investigation acknowledges preconceived notions. While conducting the study, the researcher was aware of the necessity to "bracket off" assumptions (Smith et al., 2009). As the research progressed and more participants were interviewed, the process of bracketing grew increasingly significant, this process supports a more credible and accurate interpretation of the how participants made sense of their lived experiences. In an effort to minimise such biases and assumptions in the interpretation of participant data, the researcher immediately recorded her thoughts after each interview and before interviewing the next person, and also engaged in supervision with the director of studies. Nonetheless, it is unclear to what extent bracketing off can effectively avoid preconceptions. In an additional effort to improve the quality and validity of the findings, the researcher requested input during supervision to strengthen the credibility of the data trail presented. The researcher is sure that convincing conclusions can be drawn despite the tentative nature of this subjective analysis (Finlay, 2002; Smith et al., 2009).

3.9.4 Impact and Importance. Lastly, Yardley's (2000) final principle considers how impactful and important the qualitative research is. As referenced in the rationale for this research and in both the Introduction and chapter 2, the findings of the study have the possibility of benefiting individuals in the participant group and extends to a wider context. The long-term outcomes and trajectory for excluded young people are concerning, such as low academic attainment and youth offending (Timpson, 2019). This research seeks to be impactful by raising the profile of the population of an important yet underrepresented group of girls, with the awareness of how to support girls that are: potentially at risk of exclusions, have been excluded, during the reintegration process and sustainable reintegration.

3.10 Ethical Considerations.

Following the submission of an application, the Research Ethics Committee at University of East London (UEL) granted ethical approval (see Appendix E). The application adheres to the British Psychological Society's (BPS) 'Code of Ethics and Conduct' (2018b) and Code of Human Research Ethics (2014), as well as the Health and Care Professions Council's (HCPC) 'Standards of Conduct, Performance, and Ethics'. To ensure the safety and well-being of research participants, these documents give guidelines for psychologists in practice and researchers. The BPS (2014) "Code of Human Research Ethics" outlines four principles of behaviour and obligations, each of which will be discussed in regard to the present study.

3.10.1 Respect for Others' Autonomy, Privacy and Dignity. Before data collection, to ensure informed consent and in an effort to safeguard the rights of the participants, comprehensive information sheets (Appendix G H I) were sent to participants, their parents and Head teachers. This contained information regarding the research aims, participant commitment expectations, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw from the research prior to the transcription of interview data.

In an attempt to safeguard the rights of participants, verbal consent was also obtained on the day of interviews. All participants were given the opportunity to ask questions at this point and prior to the start of the recorded interviews. In addition to this, during the interviews, the researcher regularly checked participants understanding and it was made clear to participants to ask clarifying questions. This

ensured clarity and transparency, making sure that the researcher did not deceive the participants.

Confidentiality was maintained by removing any identifying details during the transcription stage and replacing names of participants with pseudonyms. The researcher informed participants of potential confidentiality limits such as disclosure of any safeguarding concerns. Further steps in relation to data collected were taken to ensure secure storage in accordance with legal guidelines and UEL's data protection policy. The recording function on Microsoft Teams was used to collect data, and once recorded on the researcher's UEL OneDrive, the recordings were erased from Teams, including the Microsoft Stream function.

3.10.2 Scientific Integrity. The quality of the research and its contribution to the development of knowledge gained is a key principle of ethical research. The quality and validity of the current research have been discussed above, alongside the rationale. The researcher formulated a research proposal for feedback before conducting the research and participated in regular supervision with a research supervisor from UEL and a fieldwork tutor, both qualified EPs, throughout the research to maintain a high standard of integrity.

3.10.3 Social Responsibility. The potential benefits and the purpose of the current research have been previously outlined. With little insight in the voice of this population, there is concern that current intervention and reintegration procedures are not meeting the potential gender-specific developmental and psychological needs (Osler., 2006). In Chapter 5, the dissemination of the current study's findings is discussed in length, including feedback to the primary beneficiaries, the participants, and presentation to EP and TEP colleagues within the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), where the current researcher is on placement. The findings can be disseminated to schools through EPs, who can advise schools on systemic or individualised adjustments that can improve the reintegration process and bring about changes in practice, as well as consider how relevant policies can be implemented to support this population and their families.

3.10.4 Maximising Benefit and Minimising Harm. The researcher was aware that reflecting on their lived experiences could elicit strong emotions, thus additional precautions were taken to reduce risk and protect against this. Participants were

informed of the risk for emotional disturbance owing to the sensitivity of the subject matter. Throughout the interview process, empathy and sensitivity were required to fulfil the researcher's duty of care to the participants. Prior experiences working with CYP with SEMH needs, as well as Doctoral programme training, prepared the researcher to recognise any indicators of distress exhibited by the CYP. In addition, the researcher reminded participants of their right to withdraw, ending or pausing the interview if required, providing a space for post-recording debriefing and questions, and notifying school staff that the pupil may require additional pastoral support on the day. If deemed appropriate, a pamphlet listing relevant support resources to which participants could be sent was also provided.

3.11 Data Analysis

Smith et al. (2009) systematically describe the process to IPA research data analysis. With the aim to interpret participant experiences using an iterative process of the hermeneutic circle, whereby the researchers frequently move between parts of the participant's account, to interpretative analysis of the whole data set. The staged framework recommended by Smith's et al (2009) informed the data analysis, although steps are used flexibility by virtue of participant individuality and understanding their lived experiences. Details of the six stages the researcher followed will be summarised in turn.

3.11.1 Stage 1: Reading and Re-reading. Reading the transcript and listening to the audio recording during the initial phase of data analysis immerses the researcher in the data. Following the completion of the first stage, brief notes on immediate thoughts and sentiments were recorded in a research diary to aid in the bracketing off process and avoid influencing the researcher's interpretations of the data. Through repeated readings of the transcript in parts and as a whole, the researcher was able to create an overall knowledge of the participant's participation in the process. The researcher also began to recognise trends and occasions in which the participant was able to naturally elaborate on their responses with minimum encouragement, as opposed to instances in which frequent or explicit probing was required.

3.11.2 Stage 2: Initial Noting. The second stage entails performing a line-by-line analysis of each interview transcript, which includes exploratory semantic comments

regarding the participant's thoughts and emotions. Smith et al. (2009) propose three distinct types of commentary: descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual. To do this, the researcher reformatted the initial the transcript into a table with corresponding line numbers and an additional column for initial noting (see Appendix K for an example). The three distinct categories of commentary recognised by Smith et al. (2009) are described in the next section.

1. Descriptive comments – This is the literal descriptions of participant's experiences related to key components (e.g., keywords, phrases and events) within the context of their lived experience.
2. Linguistic Comments – This includes allusions to the participant's word choice, pronoun usage, pauses, reluctance, repetition, intonation, and use of linguistic devices like metaphors.
3. Conceptual Comments –These comments center on the researcher's interpretative role of conceptual questions, demonstrating the double hermeneutics of IPA as the researcher begins to attribute meaning to the participant's own sense making based on how they were making sense of it. The iterative and inductive process of this step entailed assessing whether the evolving narrative altered the researcher's perception of the participant's account, demonstrating the researcher's reflective engagement with the interview transcript.

3.11.3 Stage 3: Developing Emergent Themes. The third stage shifts from the transcript itself to the initial notes generated from the previous stage. This involved using the initial notes to begin developing themes that encapsulate the researcher's interpretation by producing key words and phrases of the participant account. Keeping the research focus in mind, the researcher attempts to concentrate their sense-making on the area of interest. The titles of the emerging themes either reflected an interpretation of the participant's experience or a relevant psychological idea that guided the researchers' interpretation. To generate an audit trail, the emergent themes were noted in a column adjacent to the explanatory notes, together with the transcripts and line numbers for evidence (See X notes for example in Appendix K).

3.11.4 Stage 4: Searching for Connections Across Emergent Themes. The fourth stage involved using the chronological list of emergent themes developed in the previous stage to search for links across them, with the aim of formulating subordinate themes. The researcher created a working map of the emergent themes by printing out the typed list of themes and cutting each theme into individual strips of paper. Each strip of paper was spread out over a vast area, and the researcher visually examined them for similarities. Those concepts that did not fit inside the categories being created were eliminated, leaving just the most meaningful themes. To support the process of formulating subordinate themes, the following four techniques were used:

1. Abstraction – Clustering themes encapsulated within a superordinate title.
2. Subsumption – Assigning superordinate title to a theme that encompassed a number of existing emergent theme
3. Polarisation – Exploring grouping oppositional relationships between themes.
4. Numeration - As an indication of significance, pay special attention to the frequency with which emerging themes were identified.
5. Contextualisation – Identifying themes associated with key narratives or significant contextual moments.

The resulting subordinate themes were tabulated alongside pertinent emergent themes and excerpts from the transcript that corresponded to individual participant theme (see Appendix L for the tables of subordinate themes).

3.11.5 Stage 5: Moving to the Next Case. Fifthly, the procedure was repeated with each participant's account. The researcher was committed to preserving the idiographic nature of IPA, and as the need arose, additional attempts to bracket off assumptions were recorded prior to beginning the analysis of each consecutive participant transcript.

3.11.6 Stage 6: Looking for Patterns Across Cases – Developing Superordinate Themes. After identifying a group of subordinate themes for each participant, this stage of the analysis process consisted of identifying patterns across cases. To identify links across all subordinate themes into clusters of related concepts, the

same technique for grouping as described in step four was applied. Smith's et al (2009) advocate proving the validity of superordinate themes by demonstrating the recurrence of subordinate themes, as a continuation of the idiographic method. To be termed recurrent, a theme must appear in more than half of the cases (Smith et al., 2009). As with emerging, subordinate, and superordinate themes, the overarching themes paid special attention to similarities and variations throughout the accounts (Smith et al., 2009). In Chapter 4, a graphical representation of the cross-case superordinate and subordinate themes is shown.

3.12 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlined the researcher's approach to data collection and research methodology. Before describing the research purpose and design, the chapter started with exploring the philosophical underpinnings. After introducing the research methodology and processes, the theoretical orientation was considered. Then, information about the participants was provided, detailing how they were recruited for the research. The chapter concluded with an overview of the ethical considerations, an evaluation of the quality of the research, and the interpretative phenomenological analysis of the data. The findings of the research will be discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, the researcher's interpretation of the data collected from the three interviews will be discussed on a case-by-case basis to honour participant experiences, followed by an exploration of common themes across participants. In accordance with the idiographic nature of IPA, the researcher will briefly offer contextual information on each participant, including behavioural direct observation during the interview and any general patterns found in the data, before investigating the emergent superordinate and subordinate themes. This method of contextualising the findings attempts to preserve the hermeneutic process of both the researcher's interpretation of the data and the reader's sense making (Smith et al., 2009). To support the phenomenological aspect of participants' lived experiences, direct quotes from participants' interview transcripts will be provided for transparency and to demonstrate the researcher's interpretive contributions.

4.2 Brooke

Brooke is a 14-year-old girl who enjoys and considers mathematics to be her strongest subject. During the interview, Brooke was eager to discuss her experiences and provided a full narrative with little prompting. Brooke enrolled in her current secondary school in March of the preceding year and is currently in year 10. Brooke claims that she frequently changed schools owing to family relocations. Brooke mentioned that she had been excluded from her current school for a fixed-term period three times, for reasons ranging from her refusal to go to ‘relocation' (the internal school exclusion room) because she felt it was unfair to her involvement in a school fight that resulted in a five-day exclusion and a warning regarding risking PE. The researcher interpreted five superordinate themes and thirteen subordinate themes from Brooke's data analysis.

4.2.1 Superordinate Theme 1: School Inclusion Practices and Support

From Brooke’s interview there was a sense that elements related to school were instrumental in facilitating or inhibiting her reintegration experiences. This perception seemed to be situated on varying levels from within the classroom to the wider school environment. In addition to discussing the individualised support she received, Brooke also discussed some of the whole school practices that helped her

feel like she was a part of her school community. The three subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Teacher Characteristics
- Classroom environment and Engagement with Learning
- Supportive Practices

4.2.1.2 Subordinate theme 1: Teacher Characteristics. Brooke spoke about the impact of teacher characteristics in her account, and it appeared to be situated on a scale between supportive and negative teacher attributes. For example, when asked what the teachers did to support her in school, she confidently asserted;

"*I think they listened to me more. So, they listened to me and let me show them that this is like, I don't do it on purpose like. So, I think they listened and understood and were basically patient with me*" (319-323).

Following this, Brooke spoke of Maths as her favourite subject and that she would often call out answers in class signifying her engagement and willingness to be involved in the lesson and described her teacher as, "*the teacher, he's very stubborn*" (463) and "h*e's not lenient*" (468-498). These descriptions related to how attuned the teachers were towards Brooke's needs and the use of the words '*they listened and understood*' implied that this teacher was somebody who was attentive and had developed an attuned interaction with her. Whereas where Brooke felt that teachers were rigid and misunderstood her, this potentially contributed to some of her negative school-based experiences leading to her decreased sense of success.

Linked to this theme of teacher characteristics, was the feeling that some teachers had pre-conceived views about her, and Brooke reflected upon the power of labelling and judgement:

"I know they were just like; they didn't really care; they'd just see me as the naughty kid. So, they didn't really try and help me. But this school, I feel like they do everything in their power to help me, if that makes sense." (410-412)

Brooke described how she felt support and empathy from her current teachers who had high expectations which affected her self-belief that there is hope for positive change. Teachers' expectations of her appeared to influence her sense of belonging;

where the focus was on negative labels that were associated with her previous exclusions this in turn shaped teachers' interactions with her.

For Brooke, it was important to be part of a school culture that practices tolerance and understanding without feeling stigmatised and discriminated against;

"So, when after my fight exclusion I returned I felt like the school wanted me to come back into the school and have a fresh start." (143-145)

It appears that it was important to Brooke to have opportunities to reframe the narrative, to contribute positively and to feel like a valued member of the school community. In essence, having a 'fresh start' reinforces the belief that behaviour is a separate entity from her as a person and that change is possible.

4.2.1.3 Subordinate Theme 2: Classroom environment and Engagement with Learning. The difficulties Brooke encountered in the classroom, such as her perception that the work was "boring" prevented her from engaging in her learning and, in turn, she felt, contributed to her disruptive behaviour:

"I don't do it on purpose like, I do get distracted easily. So, I can't stay focused on a thing for too long if it's boring me." (321-322)

There was a sense from Brooke's description, that she struggled to feel academically integrated, she found it challenging to adhere to classroom rules, and needed a more individualised approach to learning and discipline:

"like in lessons when I'm in lessons, because it all starts off when I go to a lesson. So, it all starts off that something's happened in the lesson and then I take it outside the lesson" (310-313)

The quote illustrates how Brooke appears to be left with strong emotions that affect the rest of her day after being left with difficult emotions and no support to regulate them, possibly concealing more difficult and profound feelings that may have resulted from preconceptions of rejection and neglect.

4.2.1.4 Subordinate Theme 3: Supportive Practices. Brooke reflected on different features in school that facilitated her reintegration. Brooke acknowledged the importance of communication and collaborative support between interrelating

systems. For example, when asked about how her parents felt about her reintegration, Brooke referred to both home and school:

*"The school and mum was just scared that in case they led up to me getting permanently excluded***."** (221-223)

Alluding to the sense that there was a shared emotional concern for her, that validated and increased the concept of support and sense of school belonging for her. Synonymous with the feeling that both school and her mother wanted her to reach her potential, were the benefits of improved communication between staff in school.

Brooke described her individual learning support plan, through which teachers had a better understanding of her needs, and this appeared to be very reassuring for her:

"I feel a lot more happier 'cause I feel like they actually helped me get back into school […] letting teachers know that I've come back into school and then letting them know how I get destructive … distracted." (531-536)

The frequency of the practical supportive tools provided by the school mentioned in Brooke's account signifies the value she placed on them:

"They put me on that when I went on my PSP. So, they … this is when I say like they're helping me and actually want me […] to help me, to keep me calm they'll have a space." (340-344)

"it was really just the time out card. […] PSP they can only really mark me on my targets. So, when I went into lesson they was only allowed to mark me on my targets" (347-350)

Interestingly, Brooke reflected on the PSP and time-out card as tangible tools that enabled an element of negotiated and reciprocal control, whereby teachers were only "allowed" to comment on particular targets, and this was perceived as more manageable for Brooke to process.

4.2.2 Superordinate Theme 2: Interpersonal Relationships. Interpersonal relationships with others were instrumental for Brooke in fostering a positive sense of belonging. Brooke valued her relationships with others, there was a sense from Brooke's narrative that the intensity of these relationships impacted on her behaviour

and emotions. These interactions required individuals to be empathetic and willing to listen, while also providing support within a safe environment. The two subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Positive Relationships
- Negative Relationships

4.2.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Positive relationships. Prevalent in Brooke's account were the supportive practices of her teachers, parent and peers. She detailed how she felt understood and welcomed in school. The frequency with which Brooke spoke about positive relationships with her teachers implies this is significant in her life. Brooke's description of "getting along with teachers" (229,330) is intriguing and implies that she conceptualises the connection and interaction as acquired through mutual respect, which could be argued is divergent to traditional teacher-pupil hierarchical power relationships.

Brooke also spoke positively about several teachers, which indicated more emotional overtones throughout her account rather than academic:

"I go to my head of year and then I tell him and then he kind like he helps me, so he sits down, he talks to me, he calms me down, we go for a walk round the school and then he'd put me back into lesson." (330-334)

Here Brooke describes the teacher creating a co-regulation approach in a moment of stress, with attuned and responsive interactions, helping her feel emotionally supported when she is unable to self-regulate her emotions and behaviour.

Peers were experienced positively by Brooke and instrumental in providing emotional support and aiding her coping mechanisms:

"*They encourage me to do the good things […] they remind me of what will happen because when I blow up and when I'm in a bad mood I just forget everything and lose it. They calm me down and, and be like ... remember this, look this will happen and then I'm like, "oh yeah"." (516-529)*

Her reference to "calmed down" in both instances may signify that she herself often views her emotions as heightened, and it is this underlying emotional need that Brooke appears to view as important.

Brooke also reflected empathetically towards her family and the emotional implications on her mother, especially as it related to the risk of being permanently excluded:

"*Mum was very upset with my exclusion because she believed that I can do better in school." (88-89)*

"She was just scared that I wouldn't settle and I kept getting … because of my exclusions and my behaviour points they were just building up" (218-221)

Brooke's motives for a successful reintegration were significantly influenced by her varied thoughts and feelings around her mother's constant exposure to her exclusions. Brooke frequently mentioned how she wanted to change her behaviour because she did not want to worry, upset, or disappoint her mother.

4.2.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Negative Relationships. Brooke also spoke about the impact of negative relationships with teachers and peers, this emerged especially when she reflected on past exclusions.

Interestingly, Brooke perceived some teachers as conspiring to get her excluded. This reflects the distrust she has with adults:

"But I believe there's certain teachers that like seeing me get told off (…) Yeah, like seeing me get told off or like seeing me in relocation or excluded." (253-255)

Brooke describes the influence of exclusions on her confidence in adults in school systems, where she should feel safe. This suggests Brooke has grown to believe that she needs to be cautious of others and how staff behave in ways she deemed illegitimate the authority assigned to their role or misusing their power.

Brooke also reflected on her agency to change through evaluating friendships:

"Because I believe certain people you're around causes certain behaviour. So, If you're around someone that's naughty, you're obviously gonna be naughty and at that time I was around friends that weren't as good and weren't pushing me to stay in school. They were just pushing me to basically being out of school and getting excluded and not having best behaviour." (125-130)

Reflecting on her exclusion experiences, Brooke described pulling herself away from negative influences:

“So, I pulled myself away from her and like my behaviour has got a lot better, so I haven’t had exclusions in a long time like, I can’t … my last exclusion was for that fight.” (233-235)

Brooke appeared to recognise how negative peer relationships influenced her behaviour. Brooke’s use of the word ‘push’ implies a sense of force and coerced allegiance between peers and at times feeling a sense of loyalty to friends

4.2.3 Superordinate Theme 3: Self-efficacy and personal agency

Brooke's account was driven by the concept of self-efficacy and her awareness of what she perceived as being within her capacity to impact change and feel integrated. This emerged in particular, but not entirely, in relation to decisions regarding exclusions and the results of her actions. The two subordinate themes explored within this subject are:

- Exercising Control and Actions
- Self-identity and Managing Others' Perceptions

4.2.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Exercising control and Actions. Brooke demonstrated her sense of personal agency in relation to avoiding trouble and getting her emotional needs met in school. Interestingly, Brooke use of words “push” and “pull” in relation to either being drawn to or avoiding events, is appears to be located between intrinsic and extrinsic loci of control. Furthermore, Brooke’s sense of personal agency was reinforced through resources made accessible to her, for example her time-out card:

“So, now when I have this time out pass I feel more (…) I can leave without having a go at the teacher so, if the teacher starts or I’m like not very happy, (…) So, I go and find a teacher that understands and knows that I’m not doing it like I’m not trying to argue with you, I just need time out basically.” (252-258)

Brooke describes the frequency with which she used this suggests that her requests were often met positively. Her ability to access resources independently to help her regulate her emotions, reinforcing her capacity as a self-regulated and agentic learner.

There is an understandable attempt in Brooke's account to resist the school's decisions she deemed inherently unfair and unjust, causing her to look for reasons outside of her control as to why this may be when she felt she had done nothing wrong:

"The first time it's because I refused to go relocation because they sent me to relocation for something I didn't do." (68-70)

"So, like if you're having a fight, it's both of you that are fighting. But when I got excluded it was only me that got excluded for the fight. (…) So, I don't think that was very fair." (68-71)

In light of this, it is interesting to consider where Brooke perceives a sense of injustice and as such, questions are raised as to how actively involved she was in the decision-making process. For Brooke, there was an overwhelming sense of unfairness, she was very cognisant of the need for equal distribution of punishment, and she saw this as essential in the culture and ethos of her school.

"*So, when after my fight exclusion I returned I felt like the school wanted me to come back into the school and have a fresh start. But they put me in relocation the day I come back so there was like … so I had like basically two consequences. (…) So, when I come back I thought that was a bit unfair so I was … I argued with the teacher about that (…) So, at that time when I come back I didn't feel like it was very fair when I come back into the school*." (143-153)

This sense of injustice seemed to have a bidirectional negative correlation with the preceding theme, "Negative Relationships"; Negative perceptions in one theme may have reinforced negative perceptions in the other, creating a negative feedback cycle.

4.2.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Self-identity and Managing Others' Perceptions.
Brooke's sense of self-identity often coincided with her perception of how adults viewed her. Brooke's perspective was dominated by the school's adult support, and feeling understood proved important to her:

"Ehm … well they actually understood, I feel like they understood me after my exclusion 'cause my last exclusion was the fight. So, after that exclusion I felt like they understood me and was … like … my ways basically." 161-164)

Brooke's repetition of "understood" signifies the importance of this concept and because of this understanding. The quote also illustrates how being understood led to a sense that staff members were supporting Brooke, which prompted her to start making her own attempts to become attuned to them.

As well as demonstrating self-awareness related to her own emotional needs, Brooke reflected on her strengths and the progress she has made:

"I feel like that report helped me an awful lot and from the beginning of the report to now the end of it, I feel like I've done so well, so well. Because it is basically like a scare." (294-296)

Whilst Brooke recognised her progress, there is a sense of vulnerability and uncertainty with the word 'scare'.

Brooke appeared to normalise the potentially challenging, concerning, and distressing situations she experienced by saying she feels 'ok', which suggests she was unbothered by the exclusions themselves but recognised the resources and support made available to as a result of them:

"I felt ok because of … it's happened so many times I feel like, I feel ok about it now. Like, now I feel like school's gonna go well for me because I've had all them exclusions, I've had PSP, like I've had all of that, I feel like the school are now supporting me and helping me to do better, like I know they want me to do better and want me to go somewhere." (431-436)

This quote depicts Brooke sense of confidence following the exclusions, suggesting that the exclusions were necessary to access the relevant support to meet her needs.

4.2.4 Superordinate Theme 4: Belonging and Inclusion

Brooke's account suggests that the sense of belonging was experienced through feeling welcomed in her school. In addition to this, her sense of social inclusion reinforced her sense of belonging. These ideas are illustrated in the subordinate themes below:

- Feeling welcomed and Connected to school
- Changing schools and Feeling rejected

4.2.4.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Feeling welcomed and Connected to school. Brooke expressed a link between school support and her perception of belonging. The school's provision of tangible support strategies appeared to convey to her that she mattered, that she belonged, and that she was welcome:

"They were just basically saying that they want me to stay in school and they don't want me to keep getting exclusions. So, I actually felt welcomed after my exclusion." (157-159)

Belonging then, for Brooke, was associated with felling settled and wanted, rather than feeling pressurised to suppress difficult emotions in order to comply with school rules and expectations:

"I feel a lot more settled in school. Like … I like being here now, like before, I never used to really like coming to school, I used to take days off all the time, like I was never really in school and then the days I was in school, I was just getting told off, relocation or excluded. But now I feel like a lot more settled, like the school's … I'm actually getting along with the all the teachers in the school." (238-243)

Brooke reflected on how she felt "settled" and is "getting along with teachers" which implies that she views school belonging as a shared and reciprocal process. This was further reinforced in Brooke's interview:

"Cause when I got excluded I feel like they was against me. But now I've finally realised they're not actually against me, they're trying to help me." (245-247)

The way that Brooke uses the term "against" so repeatedly in this section indicates that she felt threatened and views belonging as the feeling safety and being wholly accepted by the school community.

4.2.4.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Changing schools and Feeling rejected. Speaking of the impact of changing schools, Brooke described feeling unsettled, angry and rejected and the difficulties managing these emotions led to her exclusions:

"When I first come to school, like when I first started the school so, because I moved so many times that I didn't think the school was the one for me, so I thought the school was against me so. I didn't really feel settled in the school; and then I was

taking my anger out on the wrong people and then they … it led to exclusion." (109-112)

The quote depicts how the lack of belonging and not having the appropriate support to process or manage these emotions can lead to maladaptive coping mechanisms.

Brooke continued to recall the of the challenges she faced from moving schools on several occasions and feeling displaced, she appeared to reflect on the varying practices which enabled her to recognise a sense of school belonging:

"I've moved to so many different schools, because I have been to so many different schools, I finally felt settled in this school, like they weren't this … I feel like this is the only school that they're not actually against me." (397-400)

Brooke's use of words here alludes to a pervasive lack of holding and containment throughout her account. She recounts feeling emotionally and behaviorally unsupported and being let down by schools, which may have reinforced her feelings of rejection and neglect.

4.3 Alana

Alana is a 13-year-old girl who lives at home with her mother, one older and two younger siblings. She is passionate about PE, debate, and religions. Alana's account centred on her ability to fully participate in school life and her sense of social and academic inclusion in school. Alana was excluded for the first time in year 8 due to a violent altercation with multiple peers. Alana believes that all future exclusions were related to the initial incident. Alana participated in a two-week off-school site programme designed to improve her social, emotional, and behavioural skills.

The analysis and interpretation of Alana's experiences identified four superordinate themes and nine subordinate themes. Alana often described herself as a person who valued education and spoke of her responsibility to protect her family. This is demonstrated in the fact that the 'Principles, Values, and Loyalty' superordinate theme contains the greatest number of Alana's subordinate themes (Appendix A). When Alana reflected on her experiences surrounding the incidents that led to her exclusions, she frequently laughed or covered her face, indicating to the researcher both the intensity of these emotions and what appeared to be a small but noticeable embarrassment or lack of familiarity in having to express such reflections.

4.3.1 Superordinate Theme 1: Peer Relations.

Alana reflected on her friendships with peers and her sense of belonging and connection as a member of a peer group. She described this as instrumental to her social integration experiences in school. She appeared to reflect on the challenges with friendship dynamics and factors affecting friendships, often relating to school as a social environment, the connection with peers appearing to be her motivation for staying in school. The two subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Negotiating Friendship Dynamics
- Contributing elements Affecting Peer Relations

4.3.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Negotiating Friendship Dynamics. Central to Alana's school experiences were the friendships dynamics, she spoke about the relationships between friendship networks and the interactional and dynamic elements that developed over time. She recognised how mutual friends either improved or hindered relationships and friendships groups. Furthermore, Alana described the challenges and managing conflict with peers, that also posed a risk to the success of her reintegration:

"*But then there was this girl called Claire and we used to be friends with her for years, like, beyond years. Well then, I don't know, there was a whole situation between her and my sister and they stopped being friends. So, we stopped being friends, but then she was the one who indicated like everything, and made it all happen, like all of it. (…) She was really confused because she hadn't said anything, so then after 'S' started saying "yeah, it was me", (…) I don't understand like, you shouldn't be getting yourself involved and starting things that don't need to be started*" (37-49)

Alana spoke about her concerns around gossiping and arguments between pupils, suggesting that having secure and trusting friendships is something she valued:

"I had came up and there was this girl with me and she's like, kind of like friends with them or whatever (…) but I'm not gonna stop you from being friends with whoever you want, that's your business. So, it was fine with her and I had went to get my stuff and then after we had walked out and then the girl goes like to me "oh do you know what she just said about you?" (310-316)

It's interesting to note that Alana refers to her friend in this quote as "this girl" rather than by name, implying that she was cautious of the 'friendship' and that there was a lack of trust and heightened tension with peers, both of which had an influence on her sense of belonging.

Alana acknowledged that her relationships with peers posed a risk to her reintegration since she was concerned about how her peers might react:

“don’t really want to long things out with them I just want it to be deaded off like. You don’t have to like me, of course you don’t have to like me […] two years for like two years. […] it’s just weird you know, because, like they all used to be our friends. Like we used to be all very close to everyone.” (358-363)

Alana uses the vernacular phrase "deaded off" to express her wish for the conflict to be resolved. The persistent conflict between Alana and her peers threatened her social relationships, which was linked to emotional stress.

4.3.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Contributing elements Affecting Peer Relations.

Alana associated supportive peer relations with relationships that motivated her to do well and feel part of a group, suggesting that she found that peers increased her sense of belonging:

“All of my form is like … I just love my form like. Sometimes when it does come to this situation I always think about them because I actually love them so much and also my friends that are in the other forms as well, they always help me out and everything like … I do … with them, it’s not even with me that they do it, like they do it with other girls like, they do it all the time, like … It’s not just me” (497-503)

Alana particularly valued her supportive year group at school partly because this had formed part of her identity around belonging and as she describes working together and helping each other out.

Alana makes reference to her group identity, equating membership in friendship groups with a sense of school belonging:

“… he never wants me to get excluded… because in class, like I’m always the one arguing and stuff like, like we’re gonna need you here like, we just need you and he

always helps me out like. He always says like look, when it comes to new situations you've either got to like think about the consequences" (487-491)

Here, Alana's choice of words '*we're gonna need you here*' further strengthens her sense of purpose within the group and subsequently reinforces her belongingness in school.

Alana reflected on her concerns about how her peers would react and described the level of excitement her peers expressed on her return from exclusion. She demonstrated feeling overwhelmed by the interrogative atmosphere:

"Oh, when I returned to school it was … it was all crazy like, everyone was asking like, are you OK, oh what happened? Oh, this is tough. Err … like all this like, if you were there you were there like, if you weren't you weren't like. No, I'm going go back into explaining like." (262-265)

Interestingly, speaking of the attention from peers, Alana focused on the discomfort in the potential judgement of her, suggesting that it is important to respect boundaries and she values advocating for this within her relationships with peers:

*"It just felt so weird like, after like everyone's looking at you like "oh – ah – she's the one who got into the fight", "oh she disrespect…" like, it's the attention, I don't like that attention like, I hate people looking at me like (…) if you were in the same situation I wouldn't do that to you, I'd wouldn't gossip, yeah, but I wouldn't have done that, like I would genuinely feel bad for you like." (*287-292)

The experience of Alana advocating for respecting personal boundaries will be explored further in the fourth superordinate theme 'Principles, Values and Loyalty'.

Alana spoke of the level of uncertainty in knowing how to predict and respond to unresolved tensions with peers involved in incidents that resulted in the exclusions:

"When I just saw them there, back like, it just made me so angry because like after everything you lot done to my sister (…), how can you be back. […] they'd always be there. Like, always hang out, always trying to come to me in a group or try and say something (…) 'cos they know I get angry easy and they know I'm the one to retaliate." (268-277)

“Every time I’d see them I would always feel like this type of anger and I would just come and I would be like, I just wanted to say something and do something and everything.” (610-613)

When Alana reflected on her experiences with fighting in school, she repeatedly expressed her anger in explicit and sometimes even implicit ways. Perhaps she felt angry as a secondary emotion, concealing perhaps more difficult and complex feelings that may have stemmed from perceptions of injustice or unfairness.

4.3.2 Superordinate Theme 2: School Inclusive Practices as Belonging

For Alana, it appears that her sense of school belonging is related to the degree of her social and educational inclusion. Alana spoke of factors which facilitated experiences of belonging, for example, how supportive her teachers were and inclusive classroom practices. These are explored in the subordinate themes below:

- Teachers are Supportive and Understanding
- Academic Participation and Integration

4.3.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Teachers are Supportive and Understanding. As well as peer relations, Alana valued the positive and supportive relationships she developed with her teachers. Making and maintaining deep relationships with teachers was important for Alana's emotional wellbeing and can be interpreted as linking to her sense of belonging within school:

“Like me and my head of year, (…) she helped me so much, like. Like me and her like in year 7 and 8 like, we weren’t really like … like I liked her but we didn’t really like talk. (…) but then after that I got really close with Miss, like she would always help me out and everything. (…) I was a good pupil like, (…) it’s kind of like a good thing these teachers, because like, if I was to move to another school like, I would just feel like, very like, I dunno who to talk to. But with my teachers here like, they’ll understand everything and anything like. It’s just so calm like, especially Mr ‘V’ like. He’ll understand that’s why I always talk to him, I come to him most, I come to him first and everything” (370-386)

When Alana uses the word "close," she means that they know each other better. Trust, respect, and acceptance were important components in the development of this relationship. She reinforces this by saying:

“I love my teachers; my teachers are so like respectful.” (405)

Opportunities to talk in a safe space were also important to Alana:

“My mentor and ‘J’ like, he was really, like, that guy has been the most helpful guy, like, I will probably ever have like. He’s on the level of Mr ‘V’ as well, I like, it’s just like crazy. He would always like sit and listen to me for ages, just talking, just talking and he would always like help me.” (578-583)

Following the incident, Alana gradually grew close to a number of trustworthy adults, which appeared to promote her sense of safety and wellbeing. She also felt more accepted and included by different adults in the school context when she felt heard and listened to.

Furthermore, Alana made several references to the teachers’ high expectations of her and motivational praise with delight, suggesting that her sense of connectedness to the school is also related to self-esteem and resilience:

“It makes me feel happy when I get like compliments from teachers like … ‘Cos you’re a teacher like, it, it, like it just makes me feel good ‘cos you’re a teacher and be like […] compliments like that I’m reminded and stuff like, it makes me feel good.” (530-534)

For Alana, the teachers' acknowledgement and feedback are valued and appreciated because they hold a position of authority and respect.

Alana reported that praise and acknowledgment from others for her own accomplishments and efforts strengthened her determination and motivation:

“*She even said like, to Mr ‘V’ that I was really good like, she complimented me a lot. That’s what I like, it just makes me feel like, so good, so like it just makes me never want to misbehave again.” (561-563)*

While receiving praise increased Alana's self-confidence and motivation that change was possible, it appeared that the teachers' positive comments about her work among themselves meant more to Alana.

4.3.2.2. Subordinate Theme 2: Academic Participation and Integration. Feeling included in school life and being able to actively participate in school-based learning was central to Alana’s account. For Alana, classroom learning would be improved

through opportunities which involve practical activities and collaborative learning experiences:

"Like teamwork and all of that stuff like, it was just really like, like, we'd always have something to do, which I love because I love being active like. I'd do literally any job that you asked me like, I'd do anything to keep me like going like, I just don't like sitting there just doing nothing." (555-559)

Alana's use of '*teamwork*' suggests the importance and significance of working together in a classroom environment that fosters a collaborative climate that enhances the feeling of the group as a whole with mutual goals and understanding.

For Alana, achieving her academic potential was important. The concept in the quote below of still having time demonstrates her belief in her own capacity for progress. Furthermore, Alana demonstrated an understanding of self-agency in relation to intentionality and academic success:

"You know, they're ruining their own education. But for me, I still have time and I still need to learn because like I have to be the best I can be." (365-367)

Alana referred to practical tools that the school has put in place to support and monitor her reintegration following the exclusions.

"I used to look at my report as if it's my best friend like. I would look at it like, do I really want to do this again, do I really want to go back on it." (520-521)

Being able to access resources through her own initiative offered Alana more self-agency. Being on report appeared to facilitate managing challenging situations at school.

In addition to difficulties regulating her emotions, Alana described challenges in the classroom setting that affected her focus and attention:

"When I was there [Alternative Provision] it was just it all felt so calm, because I feel like there's less people there, like, there was only like 7 of us there and, like the whole thing, so I feel like when there's not like enough people I can concentrate, I can do what I need to do and I won't like … like I won't have anything like, nothing to get angry about or anything." (546-550)

Alana was aware of the need for access to a calm and small classroom setting, which she had experienced when attending the alternative provision.

Whilst having an inclusive and smaller classroom size was beneficial, Alana reflected on the desire to remain in her mainstream school:

*“You know what the consequences are going to be, because they were gonna send me AP as well, so like, it was just like, I always keep on thinking of that, like I **don’t** want to go there and have to restart again.” (461-464)*

Alana's emphasis on the term "don't" and her head-shaking in the previous quote demonstrate her emotional commitment to avoiding the AP.

Alana's description suggests she had a strong sense of belonging and connection to her current school, which she attributed to collaboration and the value of working together as a unit rather than alone:

“I just love my form like. Sometimes when it does come to this situation I always think about them because I actually love them so much and also my friends that are in the other forms as well, they always help me out and everything like.” (497-501)

Alana uses the term "love" to express the depth of her emotional connection to her year group, which appears to be a supportive group that reflects the school's principles and culture.

4.3.3 Superordinate Theme 3: Impact of exclusions on emotional and mental wellbeing

Alana spoke openly about intense feelings such as anger, anxiety, panic, and the desire for a fresh start. She discussed emotional responses and coping mechanisms, such as arguing, intentionally avoiding trouble, and talking to school staff. These ideas are elaborated upon in further detail in the subordinate themes below, these include:

- Impact of Support Post-exclusions.
- Negative Emotions Post-exclusion

4.3.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Impact of Support Post-exclusions. For Alana, the emotional support she received following her exclusions was highly valued and

made her feel respected and valued, which had a significant impact on how she behaved:

“Like me and her like in year 7 and 8 like, we weren’t really like, like I liked her but we didn’t really like talk. Like, of course she knew how I was when I was in the year, but then after that I got really close” (371-374)

Alana spoke of feeling closer to her teacher, which suggests that there had been minimal prior interaction and communication. She emphasised the need and value of being able to interact with others and form relationships:

“I don’t like really like opening up or like telling them about my situation, because I always feel like it will get around to someone else and then someone else and someone else and I just won’t say anything, but now here in the school like, I can say anything like” (467-470)

Moreover, where Alana previously struggled with communicating and expressing herself, she describes a sense of entrenched trustworthiness and safety in her relationships with teachers.

In Alana's account, there was a strong sense of autonomy and satisfaction; she inadvertently valued having a voice and being encouraged to be independent:

“But no one’s actually heard the full story of like everything, everything, now I’ve just like said it all like, everything.” (639-641)

4.3.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Negative emotions post-exclusion. Although Alana expressed anger at being excluded, which was directed towards her peers and teachers, there was a feeling of disappointment and anger at herself for her actions:

“Tension was still there because the girls were still there so … it was just like really like heated, like you can feel the heat of that from everywhere […] I don’t want anything to happen again like, what am I going to do like, I didn’t really know what to do.” (66-70)

Alana also spoke of feeling disappointed by teachers for not preventing the fights from happening in the school:

“I started screaming and I was like “Oh you dumb teachers, all of this that” I started screaming, I was angry, I was so angry, after I found Miss ‘D’ I was like Miss ‘D’ like how are letting this happen and everything?” (151-154)

Alana saw the teachers' responsibilities as safeguarding and protecting her as well. She further stated that school was not a "boxing ring." It was evident that her perception of schools as safe places had been impacted by the past violent incidents. This was connected with an increased sense of fear and a sense of insecurity at school:

“We’re meant to be going to school, like, I’m not going into school like in a boxing ring like, that’s not what I’m here for.” (244-245)

“My mum’s just worried about like she just wants us to be safe, like she wants us to go into school and be safe, like, because when every time we go into school she doesn't feel quite safe.” (349-351)

Alana reflected on how vigilant she was at all times. In the past, this strategy may have been helpful in preventing classroom violence, but it was not always an effective one:

“Like me, all the time, all the time like, everywhere I go I’ll always walk … like I’ll always watch what I’m doing like. I’ll be more careful where I’m going. What I’m saying to everyone who I’m talking, so, everything.” (353-356)

In addition, Alana spoke about how the confrontations affected her life away from school and indicated how she felt socially isolated and trapped as a result:

“It’s just always the same, it’s just so boring now. Like before, we used to have a little bit of freedom.” (344-346)

“*So then just after was like, because my mum picked us up like everywhere. She don’t let us walk on our own, nothing, like, just feel trapped.” (324-325)*

As a result of her social isolation and heightened alertness, Alana experienced emotional exhaustion:

“I was kind of like tired, I’m not gonna come in and fight anymore like, I’m just tired I don’t know what to do anymore.” (280-282)

4.3.4 Superordinate Theme 4: Principles, Values & Loyalty

Alana's account encompasses strong values that demonstrate how she views relationships and the concepts of loyalty and respect, which are significant components of her school experience. The three subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Developing Values and Morals
- Loyalty and Responsibility Towards Family
- Judging Fairness and Accountability

4.3.4.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Developing Values and Morals. Alana placed great importance on how others treated her at school because she associated personal boundaries and high expectations for others with her own morals and principles of character:

"If you were in the same situation, I wouldn't do that to you, I'd wouldn't gossip, yeah, but I wouldn't have done that, like I would genuinely feel bad for you like." (290-292)

Alana expressed a level of discomfort that the incident involved older peers:

"I don't really like beefing with Olders like, I don't like … it's just weird for me." (184-185)

Alana attempted to make sense of a moral dilemma, where respect for elders appeared important. The concept of respect was pertinent in her account:

"At the same time the girls […] they're so disrespectful they don't even listen when they need to like, like they just don't listen whatsoever, they're just disrespectful towards teachers." (230-233)

This implies that Alana felt it was a good indication and a desirable characteristic when pupils showed respect for teachers in positions of authority. Teachers also seemed to be Alana's protectors, which increased her sense of security at school.

Alana mentioned how being noticed as a good pupil strengthened her sense of self-efficacy and social identity, which aided in making her feel like she belonged in school:

“My report was good like, it was really really good like, it was improving every day and every week I was getting better and better.” (173-174)

The way that Alana spoke of the teacher's surprise that she was on report suggests that it was important for her sense of identity not to be negatively stereotyped:

“Some teachers mostly would just be “oh I don’t know why you’re on report, you’re so good with me and everything.” (526-528)

This illustrates that it was important to keep Alana's identity from being diminished as a result of the fights and exclusions.

4.3.4.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Loyalty and Responsibility Towards Family. A central theme in Alana’s account was around her commitment to and responsibility to her family members. Alana spoke about defending her family and the value of loyalty:

“When it comes to my family I’m literally the most defensive person you can ever come across. Like, I love my family to bit like, I won’t let anything happen. I will get really angry. […] but when it comes to my family, it’s just like a different level like. […] I don’t like people like talking bad about my family. Like, I even say like, it comes across like you’re trying to talk bad about me because they’re literally my blood […] like I knew like, of course it’s going to have consequences what I’ve done.” (78-87)

Alana discussed taking responsibility for her actions and describing her strong commitment to protecting her family. Even if it is contrary to her beliefs, Alana's use of the phrase "my blood" implies that this value happens automatically.

Thinking further about her experiences, Alana reflected on these developing values which were reinforced by a shared understanding from teachers.

“*I know what I’ve done like – it’s just bad in a way like, but the same time it’s my family which Mr ‘V’ actually understands and most teachers do.” (534-536)*

The motivation and desire to defend and protect her family can be seen to emerge from the point Alana expressed her empathy for her mother:

“My mum like, seeing my mum so worried. It’s just like, I don’t like that because obviously that’s my family, she’s my mum like, seeing my mum crying and everything like, that’s just so sad.” (332-335)

“I’m still angry like, what can I do like? I don’t know what to do like. They’ve touched my family, they’ve touched me, they’ve even like hurt my mum. Not hurt my mum, like my mum’s like, mentally been hurt.” (624-627)

The words "I'm still angry" and "mentally hurt," that Alana used to describe the effect on her mother, imply that the family is still experiencing a considerable measure of emotional and mental stress.

4.3.4.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Judging fairness and accountability. Alana emphasised fair treatment as being linked to consistent and just disciplinary measures. Alana occasionally felt as though she had received unfair treatment, particularly when she felt she was acting in self-defense and thought the severity of the punishment was excessive:

“Why was I excluded, like, they came up to me, they hit me first, they said all this and I didn’t do anything and I started getting really angry with them because I didn’t do anything.” (615-622)

Alana spoke about a situation where she felt her discipline was disproportionate for the offence or disproportionately harsh compared to her peers:

“Sometimes I always feel like, when they don’t get as much as in trouble as I get in.” (394-397)

Although Alana accepted responsibility for her actions and valued sharing her feelings with school staff and learning coping mechanisms, there is a sense that Alana was acting impulsively because she was experiencing heightened emotional stress due unresolved tensions with her peers:

“*I knew what I’d done was wrong, but I knew what I’d done was wrong like, it was completely wrong.” (75-77)*

“Although, at the same time when I do get angry like, I just can’t control it like, I dunno what to do like, I’m just getting in a mood, but then after when I do do it, that feels so guilty because I would just like think about what I’ve just done again, so I would just be like “oh what did I just do?” (564-568)

While Alana perceives she has been mistreated, there is a contradiction between viewing her behaviour through the perspective of school rules and the justice system

and her personal beliefs. It is interesting to see how she tries to make sense of her anger and guilt divide.

4.4 Leigh.

Leigh is a 14-year-old girl. She enjoys creative and practical school subjects, as well as socialising with family and friends. Leigh consistently described herself as a person who struggled to regulate her emotions and who preferred a school environment with opportunity to self-regulation and space to reflect. The majority of Leigh's subordinate themes within the superordinate theme "Coping mechanisms and Emotional health" reflect this (Appendix L).

Leigh experienced several fixed-term exclusions and told me she was asked to leave her previous school without a formal permanent exclusion. According to Leigh she was excluded for ‘minor things’ (25), mainly for refusing to go to relocation and not handing in her mobile phone. By embracing restorative practices to prevent exclusions, she recognised the opportunity to apologise and make amends. The analysis and interpretations of Leigh's interview transcripts revealed the existence of three superordinate themes and nine subordinate themes.

4.4.1 Superordinate Theme 1: Relationships

Relationships with peers, teachers, and family members contributed to Leigh's positive and negative school experiences. Relationships between emotional well-being and a sense of school belonging have been associated to concepts such as peer relatedness, attuned teacher interactions, and family dynamics. The three subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Peer Relations
- Teacher Relationships
- Family Relations

4.4.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Peer Relations. Leigh spoke about her worries with establishing new friendships, how supportive and encouraging peers help the reintegration processes and feeling determined to try hardest for her friends:

“They’re obviously quite annoyed (smiles) because I said I’d ehm I’d try my hardest this year, and then I came back and got excluded.” (65-66)

Leigh expresses concerns about being accepted by her peers and making friends in a new school, indicating that she values this and that it may have been more difficult for her to do so in her previous school:

"Everyone already knew everyone, everyone was already in their forms; and it was just like, I'm gonna be like … a random really. It just felt a bit like … I just felt nervous." (133-135)

Leigh also spoke about how she found it difficult to manage her friendships with other girls because she found arguments and confrontations to be too stressful:

"I didn't really get along with a lot of the pupils, because obviously where it's an all-girls schools it's just like there's always fights and arguments and it was just too much for me." (316-318)

A social identity struggle and the emotional significance to Leigh's feeling of identification among girls, which influences her self-esteem and sense of belonging, are suggested by her assertion that friendships with boys were more manageable:

"Obviously there's like, I can't necessarily get rid of girls and go to an all-boys school […] But it was where there was so many girls around […] they would just start arguments for no reason." 320-324)

Leigh's concerns about establishing friends, which are based on her interactions with her peers and gender group in her previous school, as well as her belief that all schools are the same, have an effect on her sense of belonging.

4.4.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Teacher Relationships. Leigh reflected on the positive practices and relationships she had with her teachers in terms of both emotional and academic support. She made references to teachers having high expectations and upholding them, which suggests that Leigh appreciated feeling respected and valued by the staff at her school:

"*I feel like there are some that are like, well that's your punishment, you've got to take it. But I know there are some that are like, but she's been trying and like she was doing well and then she went and got into trouble and got excluded. And I feel like it's just like, I let some of them down because of how hard I've been trying for them." (69-73)*

“I think some of them do hope for the best for me, they just try and put it in a more strict way so I’ll understand better” (144-145)

Leigh also spoke about school staff that were approachable and understanding, highlighting the calming and containing impact of these instances:

“There’s like certain teachers that don’t teach me that I’ll go to my problems with and they will explain things easier for me, so, when I go … when I do go back to that lesson I’ll know what to do.” (156-159)

“I think some of the teachers can understand where I’ve had so much time off so I’m dealing with the other issues at home. But it’s like … I don’t know … it’s just sometimes you need about 5 or 10 minutes just to like leave and come back and process everything.” (196-199)

Leigh also expressed concerns that some teachers had and felt that this narrative may cloud teachers’ judgements or influence the way teachers interacted with her:

“They’re just easy to talk to and with certain teachers, where I’ve had a bad experience with them, I feel like I can’t go to them to talk to them because I feel like I’m gonna be judged in what I’ve done and my decision. So, if I know if there’s someone there that I can talk to I’m gonna go to them.” (162-165)

Leigh referred to having a sense of freedom and autonomy when teachers respected her wishes and views, strengthening her feeling of being heard:

“I could be annoyed with something that’s happened at home and then gone to my lesson, the teacher’s asked me “what’s wrong?” and I’ve said “nothing” and then we’ve got in a little bit of an argument and then I’ve said “Miss, can I time out?” and they’ll be like “yes, sure”.” (203-207)

The time-out card supported Leigh's efforts to rebalance the distribution of power and authority within the system, giving her a sense of control, which she perceived as important.

4.4.1.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Family Relations. Leigh recognised that there were underlying emotional difficulties at home that were affecting her emotional and mental wellbeing and spoke about these very early in the interview. Leigh

emphasised how she felt "distressed" and "weighed down" (49–50), which impacted her motivation and perseverance in school:

“I was having like a lot of like, not necessarily home issues, but family issues with my dad and my dad’s side of the family because I had stopped seeing my dad and he was causing me a lot of problems for it. So it obviously distress and that weighed me down and then the school trying to excluded me and all of this, you know, it was just quite annoying ...” (47-51)

Leigh was worried about her father’s reaction and valued having an adult to speak to about her concerns;

“I don’t think dad knew I was going to the PRU and then by the end of it he had found out. So, it was {…} again a tug of war with dad because he was like “you’re coming to live with me” and obviously I didn’t want to. So, it was quite difficult, and I had to, I needed to have someone to speak to like about.” (331-335)

It's interesting how the metaphor of a physical and emotional tug of war implies that Leigh was pushed in two different directions and stuck in the middle.

4.4.2 Superordinate Theme 2: Making choices, Self-determination and Motivation.

Leigh described how her feelings and determination were influenced by the degree of control or choice she was experiencing at the time. As she considered the underlying emotions, her responses, and associated coping mechanisms, Leigh displayed a high level of self-awareness. The three subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Self-awareness and Agency
- Determination and Motivations
- Coping mechanisms and Emotional wellbeing

4.4.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Self-awareness and Agency. Leigh reflected on her thoughts, actions, and feelings and demonstrated insight as to how they matched her values and attitude. Leigh showed a sense of personal agency through using her capacity to control her own behaviour, in addition to having awareness of her own needs and strengths:

“I feel a little bit relaxed because it’s over, but I know I’m very hot headed and in the meetings I have to bite my tongue a lot, so I won’t just snap.” (98-99)

This quote shows Leigh’s attempts to avoid getting into arguments with teachers, which suggests she wanted her reintegration to be successful after being permanently excluded from her previous school and her underlying fear of another permanent exclusion.

Leigh demonstrated an awareness of how her interactions with teachers affected how she interpreted feedback:

“It’s like certain teachers can say certain things and in my head I’ll take it. I can either take it in the wrong way or in the right way and if I take it in the wrong way it’s just instantly I’m on defence mode.” (102-104)

Leigh's comment about being in "defence mode" alludes to an emotional defensive position to protect herself from negative emotion and assume responsibility of a behavior she feels she is being accused of.

Leigh's comments on using her time-out card can be interpreted as showing agency and self-regulation:

“Like, if I’m in a really bad mood and I know I can’t be in that lesson because I know I’m gonna do any of the work, I’m gonna get sent to relo’, I’ll just time-out, go talk to the teacher for about 5-10 minutes and then go back to my lesson, and get on with it.” (190-193)

Leigh’s self-awareness was further demonstrated:

“I think it’s definitely talking to someone, because it’s someone that I can explain to them how I feel about the situation and they can give me advice on how to deal with it. But I mainly do think it’s myself from like … being able to talk to them people and having the courage to tell people what’s going on.” (253-256)

Leigh confidently acknowledges having the ‘courage’ to speak to adults openly about her emotions and feelings, Leigh shared that “*I’m not really a person who’ll just say like I feel.” (283).* Leigh's communication and disclosure of underlying emotions seemed to change, suggesting that she felt motivated to change her behaviour.

4.4.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Determination and Motivations. Both Leigh's potential for resilience and determination were linked to her need for autonomy and relatedness. Leigh reflected on how often she was sent to 'relocation' (when children are removed from the classroom and placed in a designated location separate from their peers):

"It depends on the teacher really. If it's a lesson that I like and a teacher that I get along with I'm never really in there. "(38-39)

The frequency of internal exclusions and degree of classroom engagement were dependent upon the teacher, for Leigh relatedness with teachers was instrumental in nurturing her sense of belonging and academic motivation.

Leigh reflected on the timing of her first exclusion when she started the school:

"I was quite annoyed because I think it was like quite early on in the year where I had just started and I was like, I was really quite fed up with my old school and being excluded and stuff like that so I was just like 'well, what's the point' I feel like I haven't made a difference." (119-122)

Since she felt her efforts were going unnoticed and she was not meeting school expectations, Leigh described feeling demotivated and frustrated as a result of her repeated exclusions. This sense of helplessness is emphasised even further:

"I'm over it, just send me home, like I don't care if I'll be excluded" (246-247)

Leigh's "I'm over it" expression indicates a dejected attitude as a result of having experienced strong emotions around her exclusions; she is less bothered with her exclusions and is therefore an ineffective disciplinary measure.

Leigh reflected on positive teacher approaches and the trajectory of her future:

"I'm not really good with babying, but I'm not really good with like, you can't be militant on me. Like you have to explain it to me in a way where I'll want to do it. Because [..] if it's boring I'm not gonna want to do it. But if it's […] putting something towards my future and what I want to do and stuff like that, I'm gonna want to do it, because I know that's where I need to get … to do what I want to do." (148-153)

Leigh discusses how her sense of agency and ownership increases when she is determined to meet her long-term goals. This was made stronger when teachers

maintained a good balance between discipline and a supportive and encouraging learning environment.

4.4.2.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Coping mechanisms and Emotional wellbeing.

Leigh reflected on her coping mechanisms and the support systems she had in place to help her manage her emotional responses. Leigh listed prominent strategies including talking to a trusted adult, utilising a time-out card, and choosing a calm, reflective space as the coping strategies. Leigh openly spoke about strong emotions including anger, distress, frustration, and annoyance. These feelings were occasionally explicitly linked to issues at home and the exclusions:

"I think some of the teachers can understand where I've had so much time off so I'm dealing with the other issues at home. […] it's just sometimes you need about 5 or 10 minutes just to like leave and come back and process everything." (196-199)

Leigh further reflected;

"Obviously it's quite annoying because if you put an angry pupil in there the only places they can go is through behind that door, so meeting rooms and teacher's offices. It's like there is no escape." (364-366)

Leigh's described contrasting experiences of the relocation room as both 'calming' and feeling trapped, these complex emotions appear to be significantly influenced by the presence of a supportive and attuned adult facilitating an emotion coregulatory experience.

Reflecting on the support systems that were in place, Leigh referred to talking to a few key adults in her current school, including an external school mentor:

"He's just there to like, be support towards my family problems and school issues. So, if there's anything that's happened in the week since he's seen me he's then there, after all that's happened, to talk to and explain the situation to. And he gives really good advice; and I think he is a big like part of … my … not so much progress, but it is just like how far I've come from all of that." (237-243)

These coping strategies were felt to have a positive effect on Leigh's academic progress and sense of belonging.

4.4.3 Superordinate Theme 3: Fairness and Exclusions

A final theme that emerged from Leigh's narrative was around fairness, belonging, attendance and opportunities for second chances. A culture of tolerance, flexibility, understanding and restorative justice was important to Leigh, although she acknowledged there should be consequences for not following school rules, what was important to her was having opportunities to redeem herself and feel like a valued school member. The three subordinate themes developed within this theme are:

- Discipline and Fairness
- Belonging and Educational Absence
- Stereotyping and Second Chances

4.4.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Discipline and Fairness. Leigh discussed the exclusions and reflected about the justifications, implications, and overall fairness of the decision to exclude her. The exclusion was viewed disproportionate to the offence, the punitive approach of discipline, and the absence of participation in the process were all seen as equality issues:

"They could have sat down with me and spoken about the situation before the exclusion […] if they would have left me 5 minutes, come back, had a meeting with me, I would have seen where I'd gone wrong, I would have apologised and we could have moved on and I wouldn't have had the exclusion. But it's the fact that they're so … if you've done that wrong we're gonna exclude you!" (265-270)

Leigh describes the concept of restorative justice, which involves a mutual process of identifying the behaviour, expressing remorse, and having the opportunity to forgive and repent. Leigh is left feeling upset and vulnerable, while the exclusion itself is perceived as harsh and abrupt. Leigh further notes:

"My last exclusion, but where no one had left me be, like I had left the room and teachers were constantly following me, I didn't have a chance to like have my own moment and think about where I went wrong to then apologise. I just felt like I was constantly be pressured to apologise and I didn't want to do it." (358-361)

According to Leigh, when teachers demanded an apology, it was counterproductive to feel under such intense pressure to do so at a time when emotions were running high. Leigh's choice of words 'chance' and 'moment' suggests that she values having a reflective space to regulate and an environment that creates a sense of safety in order to process a situation.

Leigh felt that exclusions are ineffective and a 'pointless' forms of discipline:

"I just I feel like a lot of exclusions are pointless because you're just putting that kid in a position where you're annoying them even more to the point where they don't want to be here. So, I feel like, if you could sit down that kid, wait for them to calm down then have a meeting with them or whatever, or talk to them and explain where they've gone wrong. And if that kid could turn around and apologise and go "I see where I've gone wrong, I'm sorry" then there's no reason to exclude. But it's just … if the kid doesn't want to apologise there are going to be obviously further consequences, like no one can stop that, but it's just a bit difficult to constantly knuckle down on kids at such a young age. (347-355)

It's noteworthy that Leigh chose the phrase "knuckle down on kids" since it illustrates the concept of shifting away from the strict rules and discipline that are forced on children "at such a young age" and placing the focus on their growth.

4.4.3.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Belonging and Educational Absence. Leigh reflected on the constant battle with schools and spoke of feeling stuck:

"At either one of them because I couldn't leave C and then I hadn't been accepted to either of them so it was a bit of, again, of tug of war with because it's like, I'm leaving, but I still need to be here, but I don't want to be here." (310- 312)

Leigh described herself as being in a vulnerable position where she had to decide whether to continue attending a school that she was aware did not want her, which only served to strengthen her sense of rejection and lack of school belonging:

"It was an optional move but there was a lot of miscommunications between the two schools and then I think by the end of my time at C they just said to me like, "you need to leave" like "you're not a pupil here anymore"." (128-130)

Interestingly, Leigh's "miscommunication" between the two schools brought attention to the little transitional support she received and the potential legal implications surrounding vulnerable children at risk of exclusions.

Leigh spoke about the impact of disrupted school experiences due to long periods of absence from mainstream education setting:

“It was the fact that where I was constantly off, it wasn’t helping me […] it was then that I was missing that opportunity of coming back into mainstream school and doing my work and doing it face to face.” (173- 177)

Combining exclusions and COVID-19 had an impact on Leigh's participation in curriculum-based learning. She felt that in-person teaching in a classroom setting provided a more supportive and productive learning environment.

4.4.3.3 Subordinate Theme 3: Stereotyping and Second Chances. Leigh spoke about negative stereotypes and fear of being judged by teachers. She described her sense of belonging being impacted by the stigma associated with being excluded:

“It’s a waste of time because they’re like, certain teachers will always hold grudge. Like they’ll always remember you for that certain thing. Like Miss Smith, sometimes I feel like she’ll always remember me as like the person she excluded. Like there’s no valid reason for a meeting. And then I feel like if I say something wrong, I’m gonna get in even more trouble.” (81-85)

Leigh's sense of acceptance, belonging, and safety, as well as her interactions with staff and inclusion, appear to be impacted by teachers' perceptions of her and the narratives they held about her. Leigh's account gave the impression that she felt stereotypes caused teachers to make unfair and prejudiced disciplinary decisions and that as a result, she was silenced in order to avoid further problems.

Leigh reflected on concerns in relation to the ongoing impact the exclusions will have on her future and feeling powerless to change the outcome:

“Obviously I feel a bit annoyed because I know that’s gonna be there for like, on my report so for future colleges and Uni and stuff like that. But obviously it’s like, there’s not really much I can do about that.” (138-141)

Leigh expressed concern about her "report" and appeared to anticipate that adults would react differently to her as a result, limiting her options and ability to succeed in achieving her desired goals.

4.5 Overarching themes across participants

Following the completion of individual case analysis, the researcher identified overarching themes recurrent across participants through reviewing subordinate themes and nuances in the experiences of each participant. When a subordinate theme was present or had strong links in two or more interview transcripts, these themes were reviewed, and new themes were created. As illustrated in Figure 4.1, findings will be described under the subordinate theme associated with each overarching theme.

Figure 4.1: Overarching themes and corresponding subordinate themes.

4.5.1 Overarching Theme 1: Fairness, Respect and Accountability.

The first overarching theme was drawn from all participants' comments regarding how they perceived the fairness of their experiences and how respected and acknowledged they felt in school.

4.5.1.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Feeling Heard and Understood.

This theme was referenced across all three participants accounts. Participants spoke about how much they valued talking to adults, this was an important element of their experiences of reintegration. When describing the warm or hostile environments, all three participants referred to attuned teacher interactions including listening and showing an interest in them:

The teachers understanding me has helped me get back into school, knowing that they're not against me has made me come back into school and just know that they're there to help me has let me come back into school. (Brooke, 567-571)

"Certain teachers that don't teach me that I'll go to my problems with and they will explain things easier for me." (Leigh, 157-158)

"He's on the level of Mr 'V' as well, I like, it's just like crazy. He would always like sit and listen to me for ages, just talking, just talking and he would always like help me." (Alana, 581-583)

For Brooke, feeling understood was linked to her sense of belonging and facilitated her reintegration process. Both Leigh and Alana recognised how talking benefitted them and describes teachers meeting their needs through showing active listening and through feeling cared for and respected. Participants referred to a sense of freedom in expressing themselves and feeling that their voice was heard.

4.5.1.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Disciplinary Practices and Decision-Making Processes

All participants reflected on the school's culture and ethos in relation to disciplinary practices and decision-making approaches. The overall fairness and perceived over-use of exclusions, which seemed punitive and ineffective, was expressed, with teachers being too quick to use exclusions as a form of punishment. This often led to participants feeling unfairly treated:

"They could have sat down with me and spoken about the situation before the exclusion […] But it's the fact that they're so … if you've done that wrong we're gonna exclude you!" (Leigh, 265-270)

"I just … I feel like a lot of exclusions are pointless because you're just putting that kid in a position where you're annoying them even more to the point where they don't want to be here." (Leigh, 347-349)

“Ehm, well I like being in school so being excluded […] I don’t think it was fair why I got excluded the first two times. And the third time actually.” (Brooke, 56-59)

In response to the harshness of excluding children, Leigh felt strongly about the oppressive approach and spoke about alternative methods of behaviour management that adhered to restorative and reflective principles (see 4.4.3.1)

Although Alana identified with the school's decision and perceived the disciplinary action to be proportionate to her offence, there was a sense of regret in relation to her behaviour:

“I knew what I’d done was wrong, but I knew what I’d done was wrong like, it was completely wrong.” (Alana, 75-77)

Active participation in the processes involved in decision-making was described by Alana (“*when we had my meeting after that, when they started explaining it and how it really really was, that’s when I started understanding” (619-621).* Whereas Leigh commented on the lack of involvement and described the meetings as a ‘waste of time’ (Leigh, 77-78) and Brooke used adult speech when describing the reasons for exclusion, suggesting a passive involvement (Brooke; lines 46-54). This demonstrates a lack of autonomy and a feeling of helplessness, since decisions were being made for them.

4.5.2 Overarching Theme 2: Participation and Inclusion.

Academic participation and inclusion were related to participants’ sense of safety and belongingness in school through building trusting relationships and feelings of rejection.

4.5.2.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Building trust and Relationships

All participants described positive and negative aspects of their relationships with teachers, leading to a sense of trust towards the school:

‘Cause when I got excluded I feel like they was against me. But now I’ve finally realised they’re not actually against me, they’re trying to help me. (Brooke, 244-246)

“Miss ‘D’ […] And she even said like, to Mr ‘V’ that I was really good like, she complimented me a lot. That’s what I like, it just makes me feel like, so good, so like it just makes me never want to misbehave again.” (Alana, 555-563)

“Some teachers I get along with […] I think some of them do hope for the best for me, they just try and put it in a more strict way so I’ll understand better.” (Leigh, 144-145)

All participants attributed the majority of positive changes to the characteristics and relationships of school staff.

Participants praised friendly staff and identified teachers as having abused their power, since there is a perception that certain teachers' persistently negative view of their behaviour constitutes an abuse of authority:

“Where I’ve had a bad experience with them, I feel like I can’t go to them to talk to them because I feel like I’m gonna be judged in what I’ve done and my decision.” (Leigh, 162-165)

“I feel like certain teachers would push me so I fall basically.” (Brooke, 269)

“*I believe there’s certain teachers that like seeing me get told off, if that makes sense.[…] Yeah, like seeing me get told off or like seeing me in relocation or excluded.” (Brooke, 252-255)*

The idea of the teachers conspiring to try and exclude Leigh is interesting and relates to the lack of trust in school staff due to repetitive exclusions.

For Alana, building positive relationships was based upon trusting staff judgement and fairness:

“Like she doesn’t take sides you know, like she’s a bit fair. So, that’s what I like about her.” (Alana, 386-393)

4.5.2.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Feeling rejected.

This includes the participants' experience to isolation, rejection, and disruption, which led to feelings of anger and mistrust towards schools:

“Like the times I got exclusion […] I didn’t really care about school at the time because […] I moved so many times […] I thought the school was against me so. I didn’t really feel settled in the school; and then I was taking my anger out on the wrong people and then they … it led to exclusion.” (Brooke, 106-112)

“I hadn’t been accepted to either of them … so it was a bit of, again, of tug of war with because it’s like, I’m leaving, but I still need to be here, but I don’t want to be here.” (Leigh, 310-312)

For Leigh, returning to her previous school following multiple fixed-term exclusions, caused feelings associated with failure and defeat.

Interestingly, Alana was the only participant who spoke about peer rejection:

“There’s always one friend saying they’ll back up a friend and then other friends saying they’re gonna do the same thing and then it just all gets bigger and bigger and bigger and it just gets like messy.” (Alana, 445-450)

Brooke questioned her sense of belonging and feeling accepted in her previous school which appeared to create uncertainty and which impacted her emotional and mental wellbeing:

“Do I feel like I’m wanted here?” (Brooke, 549)

Leigh also expressed concerns regarding the use of a relocation room. She described the negative feelings experienced after being left in such a room;

“It feels like quite caged in. It feels […] very stressful and sometimes it does make you feel a little claustrophobic because it’s like I can’t leave. Like, I feel like I’m in here with everyone else and I’m not allowed to go nowhere.” (Leigh, 368-370)

“Do I feel like I’m wanted here?” (Brooke, 549)

4.5.3 Overarching Theme 3: Self-determination and Personal Agency.

All of the participants showed insight into their intrinsic motivations and into factors that increased personal agency and determination to help them feel hopeful and aspire.

4.5.3.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Aspirations and Outcomes.

Participants spoke about their motivation to work hard and the importance of achieving a good education. There was a sense that participants attributed their self drive and determination to teachers who reinforced aspirations and actively supporting them by trying to meet their needs.

“I returned I felt like the school wanted me to come back into the school and have a fresh start.” (Brooke, 143-145)

“I feel like the school are now supporting me and helping me to do better, like I know they want me to do better and want me to go somewhere.” (Brooke, 434-435)

“I still have time and I still need to learn because […] I have to be the best I can be.” (Alana, 364-367)

“But now it’s like I want to try and […] I just want to be able to do my schoolwork, get on with my GCSE’s and then leave and go to college.” (Leigh, 247-250)

Equal to working hard, participants appeared to associate qualifications such as GCSEs with doing well and opportunities for the future, leading to increased motivations to reach their academic potential.

4.5.3.1 Subordinate Theme 2: Stereotyping and Managing Others’ Perceptions.

Participants expressed concerns about the narratives and preconceptions others held of them. There appeared to be an underlying stereotype threat, leading to state of anxiety that the negative stigma will impact the way others interacted with them:

“Like the schools before, my previous schools they were … I know they were just like; they didn’t really care; they’d just see me as the naughty kid. So, they didn’t really try and help me.” (Brooke, 408-411)

“certain teachers will always hold grudge.” (Leigh, 82)

“it just felt so weird like, after like everyone’s looking at you like “oh – ah – she’s the one who got into the fight”, “oh she disrespect…” like, it’s the attention, I don’t like that attention like, I hate people looking at me like.” (Alana, 287-290)

Brooke and Leigh felt that school staff preconceptions led to them making less effort to support them which impacted on their sense of identity being devalued. Alana experienced a social identity threat with her peers and reflected on the negative attention from peers and judgment.

All participants referred to the positive praise received by staff members and attempts to change behaviour to manage expectations of them. They all appeared to have concluded that they must try and avoid trouble by independently accessing the

resource made available to them and ensuring behaviour was in line with teacher expectations. Alana and Brooke's decisions to avoid the negative perceptions of others regardless of what their peers do are evident in their accounts:

"If I see them in a place where I want to go I won't go there I will just go the other way or like find somewhere else." (Alana, 295-298)

"I pulled myself away from her and like my behaviour has got a lot better, so I haven't had exclusions in a long time like. (Brooke, 232-234)

4.5.4 Overarching Theme 4: Frustrations, Fear and Fighting

The participants' accounts of their emotions and the coping mechanisms they had developed at school reflected the final overarching theme.

4.5.4.1 Subordinate Theme 1: Uncontained Emotions

All participants commented on the intense emotions they felt and emphasised the constant fear of permanent exclusion:

"*My PSP was always scaring me that I'm gonna get permed; I'm gonna get permed no matter what I do, I'm gonna get permed." (Brooke, 385-386)*

"Like I'll always watch what I'm doing like. I'll be more careful where I'm going. What I'm saying to everyone who I'm talking." (Alana, 353-357)

Brooke and Alana described feeling hypervigilant, these negative feelings seemed to be exacerbated by the fears and uncertainty that this was their last chance. Leigh and Brooke spoke about feeling trapped:

"It's quite annoying because if you put an angry pupil in there the only places they can go is through behind that door, so meeting rooms and teachers offices. It's like there is no escape." (Leigh, 364-366)

"Before it I felt trapped when I didn't have a time out card." (Brooke, 441)

All the participants spoke about underlying frustrations and anger that they emphasised throughout the interview:

"*I think I was taking my anger out on the wrong people. So, I weren't very happy at the time so I'd come in school and like argue with the teachers that led to relocation."* (Brooke, 99-103)

“My anger towards things […] I used to just be extremely hot headed […] “I’m over it, just send me home, like I don’t care if I’ll be excluded”.” (Leigh, 245-247)

“Yeah, from my second exclusion I’ve … I was so angry like, I was … like … I just wanted like to get my revenge, like, I just wanted to just grab one of them and start again right there.” (Alana, 607-609)

It was interesting that during Alana's interview there appeared to be a conflict of emotions, as she expressed regret for her actions but stated that she would do them again. The participants' descriptions of their complicated emotional experiences demonstrate the profound and remarkable emotional impact of this process.

4.5.4.2 Subordinate Theme 2: Developing Coping strategies.

Following on from the participant’s difficult emotional challenges, all participants spoke about their own coping strategies and support systems that helped them manage. The coping strategies named by participants included a time-out card, a reflective space to calm down and talking:

“My time out card is for Mr. ‘M’ so, I go to my head of year and then I tell him and then he kinda like he helps me, so he sits down, he talks to me, he calms me down, we go for a walk round the school.” (Brooke, 325-338)

“Being able to talk to them people and having the courage to tell people what’s going on.” (Leigh, 254-256)

“You know when you can like feel what’s gonna happen he always says “you can go and speak to one of us and we will help you like sort it out”” (Alana, 466-478)

Participants recognised the value in sharing feelings and voicing their difficulties with trusted adults. All participants specified which adult they chose to speak to, which suggests the need for space and establishing trusted relationships to be supported without feeling judged.

4.6 Summary of findings

This chapter described how the individual and overarching themes emerged from the data gathered from the participants and analysed the wide variety of individual experiences and challenges. Each participant's superordinate and subordinate themes were presented alongside interpretations of their

lived experiences. The overarching themes were then elaborated upon. These findings will be explored in Chapter Five with relation to existing literature and theoretical theories, as well as their implications for practice.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Chapter Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the research findings and provide a reflective synthesis. In response to the research question, the findings will be presented in accordance with the cross-case analysis's overarching themes. Within the four overarching themes, literature and pertinent psychological theories will be used to discuss the findings. The implications of the research study, as well as its strengths and limitations, will be discussed. In conclusion, the researcher will reflect on the process and discuss dissemination plans.

5.2 Synthesis of the Research Findings

This study sought to explore girls' lived experiences of the reintegration processes following a school exclusion and to answer two research questions:

1) How do girls experience the reintegration process following exclusion from a mainstream secondary school?

2) What are girls' views of what works in the reintegration process following exclusion from a mainstream school?

The analysis of the interviews with the three participants identifies four overarching themes, which will be presented in the same order as in the previous chapter:

- Fairness, Respect and Accountability
- Participation and Inclusion
- Self-determination and Personal Agency
- Frustrations, Fear and Fighting

5.2.1 Fairness, Respect and Accountability

Participants' attempts to make sense of the reasons they were excluded, and the decision-making processes generated the first overarching theme. Participants focused on the school's disciplinary culture and practices, expressing a desire for fair treatment and consistency in disciplinary proceedings, and discussed the importance of feeling understood.

In answer to the first research question, participants' reintegration experiences varied in nature, describing both passive and active participation in the processes. All participants placed great emphasis on feeling valued and understood, where staff demonstrated care, respect and felt acknowledged by staff. All the participants had experienced at least three exclusions, two participants felt they had received limited support from their previous school and did not feel they had had a voice within the decision-making process, leading to a sense of injustice and resentment. The reality that the participants had to change schools suggests that the issue was 'within-child' (Billington, 2000) and hence related to their sense of belonging, even though they were not permanently excluded. This gives support to earlier research finding that the disproportionately high number of disciplinary actions experienced by Black pupils impaired their sense of belonging in the classroom (Bottiani et al., 2017). Alana commented that she felt supported and understood her actions following her reintegration meeting, which highlighted the importance of feeling heard through a supportive process following an exclusion.

The current study's findings are consistent with those of Atkinson and Rowley (2019) and Jalali and Morgan (2018), confirming that the attuned interactions described by all participants in regard to feeling heard. The value of a nurturing school environment, characterised by friendly, positive, and responsive adult-child interactions, was exemplified by the participants' perceptions of the school staff's empathy, which reinforced a sense of feeling valued and respected. The participants spoke of this interaction as reciprocal, noting that when teachers treated them with respect, they would show respect in return. It is interesting to note that participants tended to attribute adults, rather than themselves, with initiating this reciprocal relationship.

In addition, the participants' desire for autonomy is clearly important, in addition to maintaining a sense of ownership and control over their time spent in school. With this in mind, Corrigan (2014) emphasised the significance of collaborating with young people and appreciating their input during the reintegration process in order to achieve a more thorough and comprehensive understanding of needs.

In the present study, Leigh and Brooke acknowledged they struggled to manage their emotions and placed a value on a school culture that viewed mistakes

as teachable moments, for learning and developing social and emotional skills. Where teacher-pupil relationships were strained, following a confrontation in a classroom, both Leigh and Brooke commented on the continuing relationship breakdown and the negative impact on their emotional and mental well-being. Leigh alluded to the concept of restorative justice through a focus on building relationships and repairing harm to address misbehavior rather than oppressive disciplinary practices. The findings reflect the suggestions by Atkinson and Rowley (2019) of offering educative and restorative behaviour support through a person-centered approach to pupils' reintegration into mainstream education.

5.2.1.2 Links to Theoretical Frameworks.

Intersectionality is better understood as a theoretical framework since it integrates elements of various theories, much like ecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The Ecological Systems Theory addresses the interdependent systems in a child's surroundings and how these multiple systems impact their development. The microsystem comprises the influences and relationships that have direct interaction with the CYP, such as family and school. It is evident from the findings that the participants appreciated participating in and understanding the decision-making process. Positive collaborative interactions between the family and school systems, including a joint systematic approach to problem-solving, enable the development of a shared understanding and the establishment of productive ways for both systems to function together. Pillay et al. (2013) considered the potential risk and resilience factors involved in the reintegration process and emphasised the need for each system involved to collaborate effectively for sustainable reintegration. The intersectionality theory emphasises how systems of power (re)produce racial and gender inequality by limiting the implementation of anti-discrimination law and rhetoric (Harris et al., 2019). To appropriately acknowledge the impact of socioeconomic, political, and cultural factors on the developmental stages and identity formation of children and adolescents, EPs are best positioned to advocate for the implementation of anti-oppressive practices highlighted by intersectionality in educational settings.

As evidenced by the participants, self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and theories of adolescent development (Allen et al., 1994) support the

need for environments that promote pupils' autonomy, relatedness, and competence. In addition, research demonstrates that socioenvironmental factors, such as Alana's teacher's efforts to acknowledge and treat her with respect, have a significant impact on self-deterministic behaviour (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2008). According to SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000), to foster a sense of competence in their pupils, teachers should give immediate feedback and extend and challenge them. Feedback, when offered appropriately, not only helps teachers understand how each pupil is doing, but it also helps pupils feel good about their accomplishments when they do well and receive positive feedback. Additionally, pupils experience a sense of relatedness when they notice that others are listening and responding. As a result, intrinsic motivation is more likely to occur and goal completion is more likely for pupils who are more actively participating in setting educational goals.

5.2.2 Participation and inclusion. Participants, reflecting on this theme, identified the difficulties and efforts involved in establishing trustworthy relationships with school staff that contributed to their sense of belonging and inclusion.

Following exclusions, participants experienced difficulty establishing trusting relationships with teachers and valued approachable staff who demonstrated genuine concern, recognising the time and effort required to build trustworthy relationships. Interestingly, all individuals attributed their positive relationships to emotional support rather than academic support. Two of the participants described negative interactions with school staff, despite the fact that all participants described positive relationships and interactions with school staff. Feelings of distrust and anxiety of being judged accompanied the participants' endeavors to make sense of these experiences. Both of these participants implied that this was a barrier to their academic engagement and exacerbated feelings of being targeted and antagonism. These findings mirror Jalali and Morgan (2018) and Gersch and Nolan’s (1994) findings, where excluded pupils felt they were disliked, and that their behaviour was always perceived negatively by teachers because they were labelled as problematic. In contrast to current research, most of the participants in Gersch and Nolan’s (1994) study reported they were more concerned about how their peers might perceive them rather than their teachers' perception of them in relation to reintegration. This finding reflected Alana’s worries; however, the other two participants spoke at length

about their concerns about teachers' preconceptions which will be explored in more detail in section 5.3.

This thesis contributes to the vast body of research demonstrating that relationships are important to reintegration (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Hart, 2013; Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Pillay et al., 2013). The participants' focus on relationships with teachers and peers is consistent with literature on other young people's perceptions of school belonging, including Pillay et al. (2013). Gersch & Nolan (1994), Pillay et al. (2013) and Levinson and Thompson (2016) all drew upon participants' responses in relation to reintegration and found that a supportive adult was a key feature. Teachers' positive reinforcement approaches such as praise and reward systems were seen to build self-esteem and hope (Hart, 2013; Pillay et al., 2013). Participants in the study commented on the positive reinforcement from teachers and high expectations strengthening their sense of belonging. For the most part, the participants had positive experiences with teachers, the participants referred to examples of receiving support from a wide range of staff, rather than a key preferred adult as identified in previous research (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019). Developing trusting relationships with more adults may strengthen the young person's sense of appreciation and value, not only does it allow continuity when staff are absent, but positive relationships amongst all school community members has multiple and interrelated effects on pupil behaviour and academic achievements (Roffey, 2012). This, along with the wider studies, can be viewed as contributing to the pupil-teacher attachment, stressing the significance of adult relationships in schools as a large contributor to a child's sense of belonging.

Internal isolation was described as being more constrictive by participants than an external exclusion, which may account for why this was described more negatively. This relates to self-determination theory, which contends that autonomy is necessary for motivation in humans (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In fact, internal isolation takes away their autonomy. In addition, opportunities for connections with peers and adults are seen to be particularly crucial during adolescence (Tarrant, 2002), thus participants' isolation from both groups is likely to be very unsettling. According to Craggs and Kelly's (2018b) meta-synthesis, perceptions of rejection on school belonging could lead to CYP engaging in more challenging behaviours to feel 'in-group membership' in an effort to seek belonging and a sense of security. Brooke

and Leigh referred to arguing with teachers and being sent to ‘relo’ on many occasions, interestingly, they both used this abbreviated term, which suggested a way of normalising and minimising an unpleasant experience or a strategy of protecting themselves from repetitive risk of permanent exclusion and rejection. The previously reviewed literature similarly named aspects of rejection, isolation and resentment as a result of repetitive exclusions and highlighted the vulnerability experienced by CYP in the process (Gersch & Nolan 1994).

5.2.2.2 Links to Theoretical Frameworks.

In an effort to make sense of their interactions with teacher's, the participants made references to notions connected to attachment and their readiness to learn. According to attachment theory, a child and its caregiver develop emotional attachments that, depending on the nature and quality of their relationships, contribute to regulate a child's anxiety and uncertainty since they have a secure base from which to explore their environment (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970; Bowlby, 1969). Children may acquire feelings of mistrust and difficulties expressing their emotions if they are not exposed to attuned interactions and predictability at a young age (Bowlby, 1969; 1988).

There is a wealth of literature on the advantages of having positive pupil-teacher connections, and studies indicate that these relationships are the best indicators of pupil sense of belonging. Girls had much lower levels of school belonging than boys, according to Maurizi et al.’s (2013) research. Like Shochet et al. (2006), who discovered that girls' anxiety was predicted by their school belonging, the interaction analysis by Gummadam et al. (2016), found that pupils with the lowest sense of self-worth also had the lowest sense of school belonging, are significant findings for schools. Therefore, the paradigm of attachment theory has ramifications for the roles of school staff in establishing relationships and creating learning-secure classroom environments (Geddes, 2006; Maslow, 1943).

5.2.3 Self-determination and Personal Agency

Following reflections on how participants experienced participation and inclusion, the next overarching theme emerged from participant’s experiences of self-determination and personal agency. In this, participants reflected on factors impacting their aspirations and managing others’ perceptions of themselves.

Participants' sense of agency was viewed as being bolstered by the school's resources, such as access to a safe space and a time-out card when needed, and by the school's supportive and understanding staff. In addition to gaining insight into their strengths and needs, participants valued autonomy for their individual learning and self-regulation support. This increased the participants' self-determination and autonomy through the development of a sense of agency in their learning. Positive emotions such as hope and optimism, as well as higher self-esteem and self-efficacy (Faircloth, 2009), have been linked to a positive sense of school belonging (Rechsly et al., 2008).

The present findings support those of Atkinson and Rowley (2019), who found that CYP valued a calming space and a teacher who supported their self-regulation and control their emotions. Additionally, Hart (2013) found that CYP learning ethos was linked to the personalised learning experiences, alongside opportunities to develop life skills that are offered through a ‘family and nurturing atmosphere’ (p.205) assisted the reintegration process. However, similar to the study’s findings, much of the research reviewed showed that emotional regulation and behavioural needs were not understood and frequently managed with punitive disciplinary approaches and exclusive practices (Pillay et al., 2013; Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Jalali & Morgan, 2018). Jalali and Morgan (2018) demonstrated that a child's sense of injustice and dissonance can exacerbate a negative impact on their view on themselves and their self-esteem and motivation. Levinson and Thompson (2016) and Atkinson and Rowley (2019) highlighted the effects of labelling and the stigma associated with it are likely to impact experiences of belonging and the sense of one’s identity being devalued, which often results in a negative self-perception and low self-esteem. The present study highlights the importance of fostering an environment where CYP have opportunities for a ‘fresh start’ (Brooke, 145), with staff in the school do not 'hold grudge’ (Leigh 82), before the reintegration process started and forming judgements based on previous actions. Returning to mainstream education without any preconceptions may help children create a fresh, positive self-perception and as found by Levinson and Thomson (2016) can alter how others perceive and respond to them, thereby reinforcing a more positive sense of self. Gersch and Nolan (1994) found that pupils who were excluded from their previous school believed that their new teachers dislike them

and judged all of their behaviours negatively since they were always labelled as problematic.

Individual attributes and pupil characteristics, such as positive attitude on the future, motivation and optimism were recognised by Pillay et al. (2013), Hart (2013), and Atkinson and Rowley (2019) as contributing factors to reintegration success. These studies included the voice of pupils regarding reintegration practices. Similarly, all the participants in this study reported a desire to be successful and to achieve their full potential. The pupils discussed their aspirations for the future and acknowledged the value of education in helping them secure a positive future. This may be seen as a mature attitude expressed by CYP who are approaching adulthood and considering long-term plans. Despite feelings of second chances and motivations to achieve positive outcomes, the participants alluded to a sense of regret in relation to their multiple fixed-term exclusions due to the stress, missing out on educational experiences and loss of friendships. Along with the feelings of injustice, there was a sense of relief, particularly described by Alana and Leigh following the completion of their pastoral support plan, this suggests participants hoped for more preventative support offered sooner to avoid the negative emotions associated with feeling at risk of permanent exclusion.

5.2.3.2 Links to Theoretical Frameworks.

The dichotomy between self-stigma, which results in feelings of shame, and social stigma, which leads to stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination, is discussed in social cognitive theoretical perspectives that attempt to understand the process and effects of stigma (Corrigan & Watson, 2002; Watson, 2005; Goffman, 1963). In connection to CYP being excluded from school, the effects of stigma can be observed in their reluctance to disclose their problems and their hesitancy to share information with individuals outside the family. Sociological theoretical frameworks emphasise how stigma is constructed through interpersonal interactions and how social settings contribute to its continuation, impacting Self-esteem and confidence in one's future (Corrigan & Watson, 2002; Watson & River, 2005). Interestingly, Watson and River (2005) further expand on research that not everyone loses their self-esteem as a result of stigma. While some people are energised and empowered by stigma, others remain unaffected and relatively indifferent. According to Deci and

Ryan's (1985) SDT, humans have an innate need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, which is one of the three components that contribute to intrinsic motivation. When these needs are satisfied within the school environment, the natural motivation of CYP to engage in classroom learning increases (Goldman et al., 2017).

Similar to the findings of the literature study, which showed that pupils who were excluded were stigmatised and resented labelling (Gersch & Nolan, 1994; Levinson & Thompson, 2016; Atkinson & Rowley, 2019). The best way to support individuals who are navigating the difficulties of an intersectional existence depends on a number of important elements. In keeping with Social Identity Theory, all participants were capable of contemplating the social contexts in which their identities existed (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to this theory, individuals identify themselves as members of important in-groups that join individuals with similar qualities together and set themselves apart from others who belong to out-groups. Individuals also have a tendency to view their in-groups more positively than their out-groups. Participants in this study were able to identify with and/or compare themselves to a desirable group by identifying various elements of themselves with significant aspects of their lives, such as their desired character traits or particular interpersonal abilities. Social categories (and subsequently identities), according to proponents of intersectionality theory, are mutually constitutive. As a result, the experience of race is viewed through the lens of gender and the social identity "Black female" rather than the distinct identities of "Black" and "female" becomes the subject of the inquiry (Rogers et al., 2015). Their results provide credence to the intersectionality theory that racial identity and gender identity may be connected but distinct identity constructs.

5.2.4 Frustrations, Fear and Fighting

The final overarching theme emerged from the emotional impact of the reintegration process, which participants experienced after identifying their hopes and developing a sense of safety at school. Participants reflected on their fear of permanent exclusion, which created an atmosphere of frustration and fighting alone to cope.

The experience of repetitive forms of exclusions, including fixed-term, permanent, attending an AP and feeling forced to leave a school, was seen to result in a mix of powerful emotions. Participants named feeling powerless, anxious and hopeless when reflecting on their experiences. Where participants recognised the emotive and traumatic nature of their experiences and described maladaptive coping strategies as a result of not having anywhere to process and contain their emotions, such as fighting with peers and school staff or withdrawing from lessons. The Fight-or-flight reactions are unhealthy coping mechanisms that not only harm young people's relationships with teachers and peers, but also hinder their ability to engage in learning. The participants seemed to recognise how their past actions affected them and other people, and they felt more equipped to manage their frustrations and anger following their reintegration meeting. This was perhaps encouraged by supportive staff relationships and strengthening their awareness of their own and others' emotions, as well as the provision of strategies for regulating their emotions and managing conflict, may have contributed to this.

Unsurprisingly, the emphasis placed on emotional responses and wellbeing by participants during the reintegration process related to their sense of school belonging. The anxiety and fear experienced by participants was comparable to that of Pillay et al.'s (2013) study, which considered the long-term risk factors of these emotions, such as low levels of attainment and engagement in learning. Findings by Levinson and Thompson (2016) highlighted participants felt that their exclusions were a result of mainstream schools not meeting their emotional needs and they were punished for it, but at the AP, "they know that's not you" (Levinson & Thompson, 2016 p.37). Brooke noted how some teachers misinterpreted her moods and others understood her 'ways', this suggests the feeling of emotional security which in turn leads to further development of pupil-teacher relationship. Osler and Vincent (2003) found that girls are more likely to internalise emotions and are therefore at risk of not receiving the support they need.

There were few references to participants using coping mechanisms in previous literature, and just one of them highlighted actions that might be intended to rebalance power. One study (Jalali & Morgan, 2018) saw pupils engaged in acts of 'revenge style behaviour' (e.g., hitting peers) in response to entrenched beliefs for the need of equality and in defiance of the school's authority; in fact, this closely

resembled the " Discipline practices and Decision Making" reported in the findings of this study (see section 4.4.1.2). This study found that a key coping mechanism was resistance and anger to increase their sense of power and control in school, which is also supported by Levinson and Thompson (2016), Pillay et al., (2013) and Gersch and Nolan (1994). The lack of research on coping methods in the literature on more widespread exclusionary practices suggests that this finding is to some degree particularly unique to this study.

5.2.4.2 Links to Theoretical Frameworks.

Originally coined by Bion (1963) under the psychodynamic paradigm, containment is the process by which a person acting as the 'container' helps an individual explore and control their emotions with empathy. This concept originally derived from the way a caregiver interprets and supports an infant to process and breakdown negative emotions into more understandable and manageable forms. The dynamic ‘container-contained’ relationship provides acknowledgement and validation which enables a feeling of safety (Bion, 1984). In the context of schools, school staff who support children who have experienced early childhood adversity or trauma and struggle to regulate their emotions may provide this sense of containment (Seigel, 2012). According to the experiences of the participants, school staff could also be capable of aiding further in containing parents' concerns (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). The development of the child's ability to self-regulate is also supported by containment (Hyman, 2012), as well as growing evidence that inadequate containment, both perceived or actual, has been linked with more problematic behaviour over time (Fite et al., 2020). This is consistent with previous research indicating that a sense of security is necessary for school belonging (Allen, 2020; Craggs & Kelly, 2018; Dimitrellou, 2017).

5.3 Implications for EP practice and school-based professionals.

The findings of this study have a number of practical implications that highlight the importance of school-based professionals in supporting CYP who are going through exclusions and the reintegration process. In order to meet the needs of families and school staff and eventually empower children to flourish within the systems surrounding them, it is crucial to address the issues identified in this study. Four major areas can be used to summarise the implications:

- *The interventive efforts of* EPs and schools should engage collaboratively with parents and teachers using a joint systems approach that includes the individual child. This role for EPs aligns well within a consultation-based service delivery model that emphasises a problem-solving method to change (BPS, 2019; Wagner, 2000). This model is important to support school staff through the problem-solving processes and their decision-making whilst keeping the child as the focus and valuing all participants involved as equal. According to the British Psychological Society (2015), EPs are adept at eliciting young people's views, and this a central component to their work. Using PCP techniques, EPs can work directly with CYP to gather their views and support schools to use the information to problem solve and provide them with relevant support to meet their needs.

- In accordance with the requirements of professional competence for EP practise, EPs should support school staff, caregivers, and other professionals fully understand children's needs through the application of psychological theories (BPS, 2019; HCPC, 2015). Despite only one previous literature reviewed referred to the underpinnings of attachment theory explicitly (Levinson & Thompson, 2016), themes in relation to the theory emerged from the findings in their attempts to make sense of reintegration and exclusions (Atkinson & Rowley, 2019; Gersch & Nolan, 1994; Hart, 2013; Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Pillay et al. 2013; Corrigan, 2014,). EPs can promote preventative measures to support vulnerable children by delivering training programmes and collaborating with school staff to make sure that CYPs attachment needs are fulfilled (Geddes et al., 2017). In addition, the implications for school staff can be regarded as constructing sensitive and attuned relationships, focusing on relationships that resonate with the notion of creating a "safe base" (Bombèr, 2015; 2020). In secondary schools, the importance of attachment and relationships in learning is often overlooked (Joslyn, 2015), and this is particularly true for pupils who are viewed as problematic (Billington, 2000).

- The significance of EPs in facilitating organisational change that promotes institutional shifts that reduce stigma by empowering school staff to identify and respond to the needs of their school community is emphasised (BPS,

2019; HCPC, 2015). Foucault (1998) argued that our perceptions of ourselves and others can be altered by the discourses we engage in. He stated that discourse communicates and generates power; it strengthens it, but also challenges and exposes it, leaves it vulnerable, and makes it susceptible to subversion (Foucault, 1998). Consequently, the discussions that EPs have during the reintegration process are important and valuable. EPs are well-positioned to assist in shifting the attention from 'within' child deficit to a more holistic perspective and changing unhelpful constructs carried by and about this group. With this knowledge, it seems likely that it would also meet one of the primary components of Maslow's (1943) fundamental need of 'safety,' which is also listed as necessary for school belonging in contexts where children feel stigmatised and discriminated against. Implications for schools, include addressing measures of decreasing societal stigma associated with exclusions in their school's reintegration process, and assisting children's self-stigmatisation by empowering them to receive support in ways that are preferred to them (Hart, 2013). In considering the consequences of these findings for practice, this may be viewed for both the broader education system's exclusionary practice and inside schools to ensure that staff members are provided with adequate support in performing their duties.

- Given the understanding and knowledge of the abovementioned underlying psychological processes, EP professionals need to be able to give individual and group consultation as well as supervision to school staff (BPS, 2019; HCPC, 2015). EPs can play a larger role in the education system by developing policies that promote CYP and emotional and mental health if they have a greater understanding of the pressures placed on school staff and the emotional consequences of their position.

- According to the literature on PRUs and wider exclusionary policies, CYP often regard school staff either as extremely supportive or extremely punitive. For instance, the PRU literature emphasises that CYP commonly liked PRU employees for being very helpful and nurturing, whereas their old school staff were described as being rude and unfriendly (Hart, 2013; Jalali & Morgan, 2018; Levinson & Thompson, 2016). Although the study's findings do not

explicitly reflect the literature, it seems plausible to conclude that CYP's propensity to engage in containment and holding during the reintegration process is evident in the research and deserves further exploring.

5.4 Dissemination of Findings

Critical to EP practice is the dissemination of research findings that expand the professional knowledge base (BPS, 2019; HCPC, 2015). Furthermore, it is acknowledged that dissemination of the significance of research findings is essential in determining the validity and credibility of research (Yardley, 2000), in addition to upholding the ethical duties of social responsibility (BPS, 2014). Taking this into account, the researcher emphasised the value of presenting the research findings to the participants. As well as sharing the findings with the participants, the researcher intends to disseminate them in both a local and national context, taking into account the diversity of audiences to whom the findings are applicable. Although the small and purposeful sample size and the researcher's subjective interpretation of the data limit the generalizability of IPA research, it is still essential to ensure that the insights obtained from participant experiences can be used to drive and inform meaningful change in the highlighted areas.

Following the thesis Viva, the researcher intends to offer the three participants in this study a visual representation of a brief description of the overarching themes and implications for practice. All participants gave their consent to be contacted for such a purpose throughout the recruitment process. As a result of this feedback process, it is hoped that participants will believe their voices have been appropriately reflected and therefore their identified needs are being met. In addition, a link will be provided to the British Library EThOS website, in which the thesis can be accessed.

Second, on the presentation day scheduled for July 2022, the researcher plans to share the knowledge they have gained and the implications of their research with other EPs and TEPs, as well as colleagues within the LA EPS where they are completing their training placement. Although the identity of the participants' schools will be kept anonymous, the findings of this research illustrate some of the support and training requirements of various schools in the borough and may therefore influence the service delivery that LA EPS provide to their link schools.

5.5 Strengths of the Research

To the best knowledge of the researcher, there is no study that directly explores the lived experiences of girls during the reintegration process into mainstream secondary schools in the UK. By enabling the voices of a marginalised and underrepresented population using a strengths-based approach, this thesis makes a unique addition to the existing literature and offers implications for both practise and research. Using a Positive Psychology framework (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), the researcher was able to move away from deficit discourses and explore the positive aspects of participants' experiences. It was a privilege to hear the stories of the three participants, and the use of IPA enabled a rich idiographic understanding of the different reintegration processes' experiences.

To increase the methodological rigour of the research, the researcher re-listened to the video clips and compared them to the printed transcripts. The reliability of the research was strengthened by member-checking with two colleagues and her Director of Studies to confirm that the themes reflected participant experience. Moreover, because all pupils were enrolled in school at the time of data collection, unlike the majority of recent research on pupil voice, participant accounts can be viewed as more reliable than retrospective accounts.

5.6 Limitations of the study

In order to confirm the credibility and validity of the present research, it is essential to consider the limitations that have been identified, including the research process and the degree to which the findings may be viewed as expanding the existing body of knowledge. The idiographic nature of IPA research limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the participants, notwithstanding the study's methodological adequacy for addressing the research question and the quality of the data collected. This conflict has been carefully explored for a broader consideration of the transferability of the identified implications by developing the inclusion criteria and incorporating contextual information for participants.

Participants differed in ways that might have affected the findings of the study despite efforts to recruit a group with a great degree of homogeneity with regard to their understanding of the topic of interest. Participants, for instance, described their exclusion from schools in a variety of different ways. In addition, there was variation

among participants in terms of the length of time they had spent at their school after their reintegration meeting. Some participants had completed their 16-week PSP periods, while one participant was only two weeks into hers. Although this may have an effect on their perspectives and experiences, it was not thought to have any bearing on the objectives of this study, which were to identify themes regarding what they perceived as helpful.

As described in Chapter 3, participants were purposefully selected, meaning there may be many sampling-related biases that must be considered. Despite reaching out to all secondary school head teachers in the LA, the researcher had difficulty locating schools willing to participate, resulting in a biased sample selection. Schools that declined to participate may have been less inclusive than those that agreed to participate. Central to the position and authority of the gatekeepers was the fact that parents and pupils from the non-participating schools were not allowed a voice. In addition, it was determined that the sample would only consist of individuals who had a "successful" reintegration back into their mainstream secondary school, meaning they had completed or were on track to complete their trial period. Although it is true that their experiences may differ from those who had "failed" reintegration, it is anticipated that learning from those who had "successful" reintegration will provide insight into what is needed for reintegration to be successful.

Further limitations may be noted as a result of the research being conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic. Firstly, those who consented to participate in this study may have been affected by the additional demands placed on CYP as a result of national lockdowns and school closings (Education Support, 2020a). Maintaining compliance to government regulations on social distance and non-essential traveling, interviews were done remotely through video conference, as detailed in the chapter on methodology. This method of interviewing has a number of disadvantages such as the possible effects on establishing rapport and the disruptions generated by the additional technological concerns (The Division of Clinical Psychology, 2020). These matters were resolved by recommending that participants be seated in a private and comfortable place, in addition to emphasising the protocol for simply asking them to repeat their views when sound quality was compromised. Research has always supported the deployment of remote data collection methods as a practical and efficient practice (Lo Iacono et al., 2016).

Given the wealth of data collected from participants, the researcher does not believe that this method of conducting interviews has a profound impact on the data's quality and value.

5.7 Reflexivity

According to Sword (1999), "no research is free from biases, assumptions and personality of the researcher and we cannot remove the self from those activities in which we are intimately involved" (p.277). Within IPA, the researcher's personal beliefs influence and complicate access to the world of the participants (Smith et al., 1999). This is how IPA, as a component of the interpretative or hermeneutic discipline, integrates reflexivity into each stage of research and is regarded as crucial for fostering research transparency. To indicate the required level of self-reflexivity and to consider the researcher's perspective throughout the process, the presence of the first person pronoun 'I' is used herein.

I was both eager and intimidated to start the research project since I wanted to choose an area which was meaningful for both the profession as a whole and for myself to dedicate my time to. I felt inspired and motivated by the topic after reflecting on my experiences as a TEP and personal circumstances that I now recognise as having affected my choice to pursue a career in this field. Following completing a literature review and discovering a knowledge gap from a UK perspective, I felt even more motivated to carry out this research on the experiences of girls who had been excluded and reintegrated back into mainstream secondary schools. In addition, it was deemed timely in light of recent initiatives to promote an open dialogue about exclusion in politics, society, and education.

Despite my initial enthusiasm for researching reintegration processes, I quickly realised how difficult it would be to recruit a sufficient sample size due to the difficulties I encountered. However, this only made me more committed to keep the focus of the research on girls as I did not want to move away from the gender-specific focus. At times, I thought that my research was proceeding well, such as when I conducted the first pupil interview, but at other times, I felt discouraged, such as when I learned that one of the girls had been transferred to the PRU for two weeks. The interview had to be rescheduled due to the pupil's anticipated return to

school, and I questioned whether this reflected successful reintegration for this group.

As mentioned before, I was also cognizant of the possible difficulties that could arise from the conflicting roles that participants perceived me to have at the outset of this research: that of a doctoral researcher and that of a TEP. I was curious about the extent to which the participants' perceptions of me in my capacity might have influenced their decision to participate and the experiences they felt compelled to share, despite the fact that we had no prior relationship. The participants' openness in sharing some of the underlying feelings and challenges they encountered during the interviews really stood out to me. There were times I felt conflicted with how far to probe the participants' responses to deepen the discussions and problem solve, considering my moral responsibility to their wellbeing and how to resist the need to reassure them. I had to remind myself of how privileged I was to be trusted with their experiences, I became aware of the responsibility and role to gather information within a researcher capacity and make sure that each of their unique voices was captured accurately and meaningfully. Respecting the idiographic essence of individual experiences rather than seeking to synthesise the data into overarching themes was especially difficult when writing the findings. A focus on participant experiences motivated me to make sure the study's findings and implications were effectively communicated to the participants and surrounding systems. By doing so, they will be able to assess how the information they have gained can be used to improve the lives of children who are at risk and their families and inform practice.

Due to the double hermeneutics inherent in IPA research and my personal interpretations of the data helped me realise immediately the value of maintaining a reflective research diary as a means of documenting my thought processes and decision making. Due to the personal connection and significance of the research, this was especially helpful in allowing me to bracket off my assumptions and abstain from overidentifying with participants' experiences. Recognizing the emotional nature of the participant accounts, I also became aware of the need to maintain an interest in their experiences as opposed to worrying about the minutiae of their situations. It was crucial not to sensationalise things I believed to be captivating comments from participants and to pay attention to the context in which they were speaking in order

to preserve the significance of their own sense-making processes in my interpretations.

I was certain that IPA was the most appropriate method for addressing the research questions because it resonated with my own principles. As described in Chapter 3.1 of Smith et al.'s (2009) data analysis stages, I immersed myself in the heuristic framework, which provided structural framework to my analysis. Upon retrospect, I see that I did not completely comprehend how complex and time-consuming the analysis process had to be in order to move from descriptive to interpretative. I became instantly absorbed in this procedure. Despite being mentally and emotionally demanding; the process was nevertheless rewarding. With time, I gained confidence in my analysis, felt able to use higher level conceptual thinking and recognise connections and patterns within the data, and my interpretations became more sophisticated. In addition, the iterative process of composing and revising aided me in recognising the significance of analysing data in such a comprehensive manner by imbuing my interpretation with a greater degree of meaning and integrity.

It has been interesting to consider how decisions affected the conclusions I was able to derive from the findings. This research process has provided me with key concepts pertinent to the principles of research. If I were to conduct a comparable research study again, I would be interested in exploring the idea of involving participants in the analytic process, perhaps by providing early feedback on my interpretations and incorporating their input. However, it was outside the scope and duration of this research. I feel that pursuing this research in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic provided unique challenges and intensified the isolating nature of research. All the while, I have appreciated not just the help I received during supervision and the regular meetings with my IPA research colleagues, but also the stimulating discussions that resulted from these places, which kept me interested in and involved in my research.

5.8 Future Directions

The finding of this study and the potential implications for practice support the need for further research. These include:

- In this study, views from adolescents were gathered. The same methodology might be used in a follow-up study to this one to explore whether lower age groups have different hopes and fears and whether they experience different levels of autonomy during the reintegration process than older children do.
- It is important that children are meaningfully included in any future research with this population. Hart (1992) compares the eight degrees of participation to rungs on a ladder. Future research must think about how to truly engage CYP in their research endeavours because tokenistic inclusion is synonymous with "non-participation." According to Coad and Evans (2008), engaging young people as co-researchers is growing in psychological research. It would be unique to move emancipatory participation "up the ladder" by giving CYP the chance to collaborate with researchers through their involvement in the research process itself as they design research, choose how to gather data, analyse, and disseminate the findings. Along with attempting to develop new skills and empower the participants, it would also aim to humanistically rebalance any potential power imbalances that might be present in more traditional researcher-"researched" relationships (Bangnoli & Clark, 2010).
- Evaluation of the impact of staff training on meeting the needs of CYP during the reintegration process and CYP who have endured adverse childhood experiences. This information may be useful for both initial teacher training courses and training for the continued professional development of school staff.
- Finally, participant voice was the central purpose of this research. The participants in this study credited their parents, teachers, and other significant individuals in their perceptions of belongingness, thus future research could also aim to ascertain their perspectives.

5.9 Conclusion

This thesis explores the experiences of girls who have been excluded and reintegrated back into mainstream secondary school education. Despite exclusions being recognised as a likely cause of early difficulty with implications for children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, it is believed that the needs of this population are unmet from both a legislative and a professional aspect.

Participants in this study articulated their experiences and goals in the context of the educational system with passion, clarity, and reflection, adding to the existing body of literature on school exclusions and reintegration. Using IPA methodology, four overarching themes emerged that captured the participants' perspectives of the reintegration process and the emotional impact of exclusion. Participants' experiences of the reintegration process varied in nature, describing both passive and active involvement. All participants valued feeling heard and respected in an environment where school staff showed concern, respect, and appreciation. Following exclusions, participants found it difficult to establish trustworthy relationships with teachers. They praised approachable staff who demonstrated genuine concern and acknowledged the time and effort this required. Participants' feeling of agency was considered to be supported by resources made available by the school, such as the flexibility to use a time-out card and access to a safe space, when necessary, which was further supported by empathetic staff. A mixture of strong emotions was seen to be triggered by the experience of recurring exclusions. When asked to reflect on their experiences, participants described feeling powerless, anxious, and hopeless. Participants highlighted maladaptive coping mechanisms as a result of not having a place to process and contain their feelings and acknowledged the emotional and traumatic nature of their experiences.

An individual’s internal sense of self, which is connected to how they perceive their own physical and psychological characteristics as well as how they differ from others defines the complex concept of identity (APA, n.d.). Intersectionality theory provides a helpful framework that promotes a challenging and often exhausting holding of the "both-and" perspective to emphasise these various intersections of how social identities, such as gender and race, overlap with one another and with systems of power that oppress and advantage people (Bowleg 2012). It is possible for these intersections to be visible or hidden, to be spoken about or not, and as a result, how we see ourselves may differ from how others do. In order to define oneself, identity might also involve roles, social connections, and group memberships. The findings indicate that identity labels can also feel limiting and reductive, particularly when an individual feels that the label is perceived negatively by themselves or others. The development of a sense of belonging and connection with others as well as positive social interactions with others (through school and

beyond) appear to be significant predictors and protective factors. A person's social identity is derived from their acceptance by and sense of belonging to a group. (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

The importance of continuing national efforts to develop whole-school strategies in this area has been highlighted, as has the significance of establishing collaboration between professional networks and promoting a shared understanding of CYP's needs. Given the implications for the educational system, school staff in particular must be supported in knowing how to identify and meet the needs of children. They must also develop community-wide policies and procedures that de-stigmatise discourse concerning exclusions and promote a shared understanding of children's needs. Despite being founded on a small-scale study, this study highlights relevant implications for school staff who continue in their attempts to help CYP through successful reintegration and, more importantly, by preventing exclusions, both locally and nationally. The application of psychological theory to raise awareness and create a knowledge of children's attachment and developmental requirements, in addition to providing consultative and supervisory spaces to contain emotional responses, can be viewed as a critical role for EPs practicing in education systems.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria Systematic Literature Review

Study Feature	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria	Justification
Publication type	The research is a peer reviewed, academic journal.	The research constitutes grey literature such as a dissertation or thesis. The research is not published in a peer reviewed journal.	Research published in peer reviewed articles have been subject to a rigorous review process prior to publishing. As result, the research is granted more credibility.
Publication Language	The full text is available in the English Language.	Only part or none of the text accessed is available in the English language.	It is important that the whole journal article is available in the researcher's first language in order for synthesis and critique. The researcher does not have access to translation services.
Research Date	The research is in the last 20 years.	The research is published before 2000, more than twenty years ago.	The researcher is including the most up to date research on the current topic.
Research type	The research is a primary piece of research. Qualitative and/or mixed methods studies seeking the views of CYP, parents/carers, and/or school staff in relation to reintegration	The research is a secondary piece of research such as a literature review or a summary of another piece of research. Quantitative studies not seeking the views of CYP people, parents/carers, and/or school staff in relation to reintegration	The researcher requires access to the original research papers, as published by the primary researchers in order to review and critique the research. The researcher is interested in the lived experiences of CYP
Research focus	The research explores the process of reintegration in mainstream school. Studies include the views of children and young people.	The research is focused on school reintegration process. Studies not seeking the views of children and young people.	The researcher is interested in the reintegration experiences of girls following a school exclusion, into secondary mainstream education.

	Studies include female participants Includes secondary and/or primary aged pupils	Participant gender is not specified Study does not include secondary aged pupils Studies specifically relating to the reintegration of pupils who have not experienced a form of school exclusion.	
Research accessibility	The full text is available through the University online library or through loan requests from the inter library.	Only part or none of the text is accessible	For researcher to complete comprehensive critique the researcher needs access to the full article

Appendix B: References for Articles Reviewed

1. Atkinson, G., & Rowley, J. (2019). Pupils' views on mainstream reintegration from alternative provision: A Q methodological study. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 24*(4), 339–356

2. Corrigan, E. (2014). Person centred planning 'in action': exploring the use of person centred planning in supporting young people's transition and re-integration to mainstream education. *British Journal of Special Education, 4*1(3), 268-288

3. Gersch, I. S., & Nolan, A. (1994). Exclusions: What the children think. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 10*(1), 35-45.

4. Hart, N. (2013). What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU as identified by children and staff. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 18*(2), 196-212.

5. Jalali, R., & Morgan, G. (2018). 'They won't let me back.' Comparing pupil perceptions across primary and secondary Pupil Referral Units (PRUs). *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 23*(1), 55-68.

6. Levinson, M. (2016). " I Don't Need Pink Hair Here": Should We Be Seeking to" Reintegrate" Youngsters without Challenging Mainstream School Cultures? *International Journal on School Disaffection, 12*(1), 23-43

7. Pillay, J., Dunbar-Krige, H., & Mostert, J. (2013). Learners with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties' experiences of reintegration into mainstream education. *Emotional and behavioural difficulties, 18*(3), 310-326.

Appendix C: Overview and Critical Appraisal of Studies Reviewed

Title and Author	Methodology And Research Design (Participants)	Theoretical and conceptual underpinnings	Key Findings	Limitations
1. Atkinson, G., Rowley, J. (2019). *Pupils' views on mainstream reintegration from alternative provision: a Q methodological study.*	The mixed method study- used ratings analysis, descriptive statistics and factor analysis. Q-methodology with participatory approach within the research process. 9 participants in total: Aged between 10-16 years. - 2 primary school aged - 6 secondary school aged - 2 female - 2 no SEN- SEMH - Period of exclusion range from 3 months – 36 months	Bronfenbrenner's (1979) eco-systemic framework. Positive psychology, using solution focused view of reintegration.	Two overarching factors extracted from the data: • Factor 1 contains 4 central themes; - Individual factors/Pupil characteristics in relation to pupil's desire to succeed - Relationship factors, including Keyworker in school, staff listening and believing in pupils, positive relationships with staff - systemic and Environmental factors, such as gradual reintegration and reintegration meeting. - Parental factors Pupils reported previous labels with a focus on the past problematic challenges, therefore avoiding such labels enabled a fresh start or second chance in reintegration. • Factor 2 expressed by only primary school aged participants; - Primary school aged participants emphasised peer support.	- Unlcear if all participants were recruited through 1 AP or how participants were identified. - Potential biases with interpretation of data not discussed. - Deductive method - predetermined themes and statements questions whether participants were able to express their individual views fully. - Sampling method – potentially reflects the views of specific types of pupils e.g., those with SEMH needs. No direct comparison with the children with no SEN.

			- Pupils valued more support around SEMH rather than academic support. In terms of offering educative and restorative behavior support, Atkinson and Rowley (2019) suggest a person-centered approach to pupils' reintegration into mainstream education and list generally accepted strategies.	
2. Jalali, R., Morgan, G., (2018). 'They won't let me back.' Comparing pupil perceptions across primary and secondary Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)	Aimed to gain and compare views of primary and secondary school aged participants experiences of alternative provision. - Used life grids and semi structured interviews. 5 primary pupils (from 1 PRU) 8 secondary pupils (from 2 PRUs) SE England 85% Male 15% Female Time in PRU ranged from 3months to 1year		Argue that pupils are more likely to reintegrate successfully if their schools are inclusive, practice restorative justice, have person-centred development goals and planning and offer counselling training to teachers. Primary and secondary PRU CYP differ in terms of entrenchment of views. Found that primary school aged participants have more positive outlook (evidenced by greater numbers reintegrating, I.e., 65% compared to 45%) - Author argues for early intervention to get them back into mainstream before views become too entrenched. Primary Themes: - Understanding - Physical - Restraint	- Small study, impacting wider generalisability options. - Research questions lent themselves to more longitudinal forms of research. - In eliciting the views of young people, the establishment of rapport can affect the trustworthiness of responses with participants wanting to 'please' the researcher (Barker, Pistrang, and Elliot 2002). - Ontological position not stated - A selection of the themes was clearly presented and clarified as to how they add to the research base in this area. However, a number of themes were not discussed.

			Secondary Themes: - Helplessness - Recognition - Routine - Teachers - Home Influence - Abnormality - Support Joint Themes: - Attribution - Anger - Equality - Change - Mainstream - Relationships - Self - Challenge Argue that role of cognition e.g., external attribution in SEMH difficulties, has not been significantly recognised or researched. This is further supported by Thomas (2015) who proposes concept of 'reintegration readiness'...emphasising how psychological factors can be one of biggest determinants of reintegration success.	
3. Levinson, M., Thompson, M. (2016). 'I don't need pink hair here' Should we be	Quantitative study-semi-structured interviews.	Attachment Theory	Research highlights the positive factors and barriers to reintegration.	- Potential bias resulting from researcher's position. - Reference to an ethnographic framework applied to data

seeking to 'reintegrate' youngsters without challenging mainstream school cultures?	5 staff members and 10 pupils (aged 11 – 16) 1 PRU in the Southwest of England catering for excluded pupils and those with emotional or physical needs.		Better relationships with staff in the PRU, more trusting relationships between pupils, with a more flexible curriculum and teaching styles. Staff from PRU reported using a calmer and more humorous approach to outbursts to avoid and contain conflict, which might not be anticipated in mainstream environments. One staff member reported that his approach was to engage in reciprocal conversations proposed by Attachment Theory, in which relationships have a direct bearing on the pupil's ability to learn. Positive factors to successful reintegration: • Integrated approach involving mainstream school, PRU and family in reintegration process. • Importance of good relationships between PRU, mainstream, professionals and family. • Gradual reintegration. • 90% of positive reintegration when the CYP is younger. • Shorter periods away from mainstream. • Trusting and supportive TA.	analysis, however no further detail on the process provided. - staff and pupil views are grouped together. - Absent voices of parents/carers.

			• Timing – Windows of opportunity. • Flexibility of mainstream school such as tolerance of teachers and staff. • Emotional support from staff. • Young person's motivation to reintegrate.	
4. Hart, N. (2013). What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU as identified by children and staff.	Qualitative data- semi-structured interviews with both children and staff. Scaling was also used to support the children's participation. Thematic analysis, interviews were coded and analysed. 1 PRU setting 6 pupils between 9-13-years 5 males 1 female 4 members of staff	Research adopted a resilience perspective to explore potential protective factors.	Focuses on what works. Overall, staff and pupils identified many of the same themes and subthemes. Themes: 1. Relationships -Staff-pupil: understanding, trusting and supportive staff who are fun, kind and fair. - Pupil-pupil: Friendships and peer-support - Staff- Parent: regular communication 2. Teaching and Learning - Personalised learning experiences - Performance reinforced through rewards - Strong learning ethos. - Opportunities to succeed through manageable tasks. - Promoting self-esteem and self-efficacy. - Life skills- Making learning relevant 3. Expectations - High expectations	- Took place in one PRU that was classed as outstanding. -Small sample size- Limited number of participants. - Predominately male population and SEMH, resulting in generalisability to mainstream setting questionable. - The presentation of the results the staff voices feel like they dominate. - Scaling approach with pupils, potential desirability effect or leniency error - The data was deductive with codes developed prior to analysis.

			- Consistency in approach - Clear boundaries - Clear behavioural expectations 4. Environment - Nurturing and secure - Small with fewer children	
5. Pillay, Dunbar-Krige & Mostert (2013) – Learners with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties' experiences of reintegration into mainstream education.	Aimed to analyse and describe the reintegration experiences of learners with BESD, followed by a resilience-based reintegration programme to aid policy makers and practitioners with the reintegration of learners with BESD into mainstream education. • 13 pupils (aged 11-14). • 4 pupils interviewed. • Pupil, parent and professionals' views.	Interpretavist-Constructivist Paradigm School belongingness/ connectedness Resilience Bioecological framework	Emerging themes; 1. Emotional Experiences –Positive and risk Factors • Pride and optimism. • Peers recognising progress. • Academic and social competence. • Teachers' positive reinforcement • Positive future vision. • Unconstructive peer relationships contributed to emotions of anger and anxiety • Emotions as risk factor result in low levels of attainment difficulties performing and concentrating in lessons 2. Relationships • Family relationships – caring supportive family; positive relationship between family and school. • Peer relationships – peer support; motivation; positive friendships; buddy system/peer mentoring.	- A number of the factors were also considered to be 'risk factors'. - Age of pupil's unknown. - Sampling method – potentially reflects the views of specific types of pupils e.g., those of higher ability/those able to engage in a lengthy interview process. This unfairly excludes people based on their cognitive abilities. - Views of primary-aged pupils not included in the research. - Low response rate of parental questionnaires. - Ontological position not stated

			• Relationships with adults in the educational setting – emotional support from adults; mentors. • All were promotive, this contributed to a stabilising effect 3. The reintegration process • Sustainable reintegration includes; • Gradual reintegration – 3 days per week. • Good communication between home and school. • Parental support and encouragement. • Positive reintegration meeting. • Taster days.	
6. Corrigan, E. (2014). Person centred planning 'in action': exploring the use of person centred planning in supporting young people's transition and re-integration to mainstream education.	Mixed methods data-Semi-longitudinal study using open ended interviews and a five point 'Likert' scale. 6 children and young people aged 5-15 43 adults including parents, school/ setting staff/ external professionals	Positive and Solution-Focused Psychology	Three key themes related to qualitative reflections at the end of review meetings: 1. Support and understanding - Positive relationships - Tailored and individualised approaches - Identifying and responding to needs 2.Engagement and motivation -Keen to attend and participate - Willingness to try and 'have a go' - Sense of belonging	- Research aimed to explore and engage with young people, however the sample consisted of seven times the number of adults as it did young people. Findings may not be representative of the views of young people. - Data combines all responses therefore difficult to differentiate commonalities and divergent themes between the different groups.

			3. Progress and achievement - Progress across academic and social-emotional development - Developing self-awareness -Improved relationships All stakeholder groups expressed support for the view that PCP enabled the CYP to be fully involved in transition planning, suggests that the process underlying PCPs may result in a reduction of power imbalances, and enhance young people's agentic action. Importance placed on collaboration and the valuing of young people's contribution which was perceived to produce a deeper and more holistic understanding of needs. A potential barrier to the effective development and implementation of PCPs was a lack of focus on the needs of CYP within the home context, with the researchers concluding that a key aspect of the process was the importance of collaboration amongst all stakeholders. Important that parents and family members are aware of the position of 'equal partner' is available to them, as well as	- No justification as to why only four of the six pupil's views were gathered during the second data collection of rating progress over time.

			professionals demonstrating a sensitivity to how parents and family members may construct their role.	
7. Gersch, I.S., Nolan, A. (1994). Exclusions: What the Children Think.	Aims to examine the views of pupils excluded from school to propose practical implications and future developments. 6 pupils – 4 male & 2 females	PCP?	Four themes; 1.Key experiences in primary and secondary schools; - Difficulties with schoolwork starting from primary school becoming significant at secondary - Behaviour difficulties - Frequent change of school -Difficulties with peer & teacher relationships 2.Pupils' feelings about being excluded - Reasons behind exclusions not known - Prior warnings not given -5 pupils had a history of "fixed term exclusions" – After second exclusion, becoming "less concerned and disheartened" - Upset and disappointed - Worried about the future - Worries outside of school around the time of exclusions -Lack of support to prevent further exclusions 3.Pupils' feelings about special provision - Wish to have attend provision earlier	- Small sample size. - Not clear how old participants are and it is so hard to distinguish between primary/ secondary differences. "successful" reintegration of some participants, however some were problematic- unclear which participants and emotions will be biased. May not be a homogeneous group, different lived experiences - limited consideration of external factors e.g., home Data analysis is deductive with predefined themes. Gender specific attributes are not clear.

			- Positive relationship with staff – treated with respect and trust - Preference of group sessions over individual - Unit helped pupils understand their feelings - Desire to remain in unit due to social aspect and support - Key teachers to keep in contact in new school - Uncertain about decision-making process - Positive involvement of families in the process 4.Feelings about reintegration - Excited about new school and “fresh start” - Concerned about how peers will perceive them - Benefit from a key teacher for support and settling in - Regular meetings between the new school and unit to explain their needs helped - Starting part time and only attending preferred subjects increased a sense of achievement Further research suggested; pupil’s perception on how to avoid exclusions, management of reintegration and how parents can be better supported and informed during the exclusion process	

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Atkinson, G., Rowley, J. (2019). *Pupils' views on mainstream reintegration from alternative provision: a Q methodological study.*
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Research aimed to explore the views of children and young people who have experienced school exclusion and placement in alternative education provision regrading which factors supported their reintegration into mainstream schools.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Q methodology to explore human subjectivity, participatory approach to elicit viewpoints.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: Use of factor analysis appropriate to explore what factors participants perceived to support successful reintegration employing positive psychology and an eco-systemic perspective.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Purposeful sampling method to ensure participants who had experienced 'successful' reintegration were recruited. No inclusion/exclusion criteria.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: 37 standardised statements adapted from a pilot study related to possible factors that supported reintegration were used. Followed by short questionnaire for qualitative data and participants asked by researcher to clarify statements.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	No: No reference to how relationships were considered or how potential biases were minimised in interpretation of data.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Can't tell: No reference to ethical approval being sought.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Yes: Detailed account of programmes and procedures used for analysis to determine statistical averages of findings. Unclear if qualitative data was transcribed verbatim and little detail of the process and the quality standards abided by for interpretation and how thematically analysed.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Range of themes identified within 2 factors and presented both descriptively and statistically corresponding factors. Comparisons between participants evidenced and use of direct quotes.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Findings discussed in relation to existing literature and theoretical frameworks. Results presented in a 'reintegration model', drawing on participants views on best practice.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Jalali, R., Morgan, G. (2018). 'They won't let me back.' Comparing pupil perceptions across primary and secondary Pupil Referral Units (PRUs)
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Sought to gain and compare views of primary and secondary school aged participants experiences of alternative provision.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Qualitative methodology and phenomenological investigation to gain perspectives of participants educational experiences.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: use of Semi-structured interviews and life grid (timeline of critical moments) appropriate for detailed and rich accounts of participants' experiences.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Purposive sampling technique detailed. Unclear how or why participating schools were contacted. PRU staff identified participants, parent carers were sent information regarding research. 13/15 participants asked to participate agreed, 2 participants did not wish to explore past experiences.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Examples of questions from the interview schedule address aims of the study. Addressed flexibility with script to maintain relevance to individual experiences.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	Yes: Researcher sought participant consent after 6 weeks of weekly contact to build rapport. Researcher reflected those predominant positive responses from participants related to the level of rapport established. Referred to measures taken to address researcher interpretation bias through a reflective journal during data collection and analysis.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Can't tell: No statement of ethical approval for research study, however, consent explicitly referred to.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Yes: Detailed step-by-step approach to data analysis. Qualitative data analysis software used to highlight significant quotes for initial coding. Inter-coder reliability checking with researcher colleague. final descriptions shared with four participants (two from each education

	level). Data extracts are used to evidence themes.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Total of 8 themes identified however, not all are presented under clear headings and little attempt to relate to research question.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Implications of findings discussed, and recommendations made to support future practice. Discussion of limitations pertaining to the generalisaibility of findings.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Levinson, M., Thompson, Mel. (2016). 'I don't need pink hair here' Should we be seeking to 'reintegrate' youngsters without challenging mainstream school cultures?
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Aimed to explore the views of pupils and staff about reasons for being in alternative educational settings, the difference in culture with mainstream schools, and feelings about reintegration.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Qualitative: Semi- structured interviews appropriate for research aims.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: Pupils were interviewed in pairs and individual staff interviews. Researcher highlights the value of using both methods for exploring breadth and depth of views. Pupil interviews were set-up within an ethnographic framework.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Can't tell: Participants identified following a number of researchers' conversations with pupils about their feelings in relation to mainstream school and AP. It is unclear why other pupils did not wish to participate. Inclusion criteria and participant characteristics not provided.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Semi- interviews – used guide to elicit responses about areas of interest. However, the questions asked were not detailed. Also referred to creating space for more in-depth responses. Data is triangulated, enabling a comparison between staff and pupil views.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	No: No reference to how relationships were considered or how potential biases were minimised. No reference to researcher examining potential areas of bias, particularly in relation to the interpretation of data.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	No: No detail given to ethical considerations including whether ethical approval was given from ethics committee. Reference to school and pupil anonymity given.

8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	No: Method of data analysis not described. Researcher notes that dominant and recurrent themes were identified, but the process of how dominance was determined was not detailed. Direct quotes used to evidence findings. Staff and pupil views are grouped together.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Findings presented descriptively, reference made to previous research, with limited psychological theory referenced.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Findings considered in relation to educational context and suggestions for improving practice with this population.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Hart, N. (2013). What helps children in a pupil referral unit (PRU)? An exploration into the potential protective factors of a PRU as identified by children and staff.
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Research adopted a resilience perspective to explore potential protective factors of one PRU through interviewing children and staff.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Qualitative method appropriate for exploring the views and experiences.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: Semi-structured interview. CYP with children were supplemented with other approaches such as scaling and picture sheets to validate meaning of data.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Purposive sampling. CYP identified through previous schools or by professionals. Inclusion criteria and participant characteristics detailed.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Examples of questions from the interview schedule address aims of the study. Data transcribed verbatim and thematically analysed using software.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	Can't tell: No explicit consideration given to the relationship between the researcher and the participant and influence of researcher bias or power differentials.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Yes: Ethics approval from relevant committee. Reference to ethical dilemmas faced when interviewing such vulnerable and challenging individuals.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Yes: Detailed account of programmes and procedures used for analysis to determine themes. Research situated within a resiliency framework, but little attempts made to map the findings onto this framework.

9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Researcher attempted to fit data into pre-defined themes. and presented under corresponding headings. Comparisons between participants, however limited use of direct quotes and evidence.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Findings considered in relation to existing knowledge and practice. Suggests a resilience perspective should base their approach around principles of positive psychology and systemic ways of thinking. This may help to promote more positive viewpoints on what might be working.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Pillay, Dunbar- Krige & Mostert (2013) – Learners with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties' experiences of reintegration into mainstream education.
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Research aimed to analyse and describe the reintegration experiences of learners with BESD, followed by a resilience-based reintegration programme to aid policy makers and practitioners with the reintegration of learners with BESD into mainstream education.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Qualitative – Interpretivist- Constructivist Paradigm method appropriate for exploring the views and experiences through collecting a variety of data sources.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: CYP Unstructured interviews. Qualitative questionnaires were sent participants' parents to complete, and 7 teachers were asked to respond to questions via email. Interviews with three professionals (the lead teacher of a pupil referral unit and the senior learning mentor and learning support unit manager at a participating school) were also carried out.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Recruitment strategy included an eligibility writing activity. Participants were chosen based on the richness of their written responses; this may have unfairly excluded participants based on their variable cognitive abilities.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Interviews transcribed verbatim and pupil records were analysed.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	No explicit consideration given to the relationship between the researcher and the participant and influence of researcher bias.

7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Can't tell: No reference to ethical approval being sought.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Researchers used Giorgi's steps for data analysis and established a sense of the whole; then identified general themes, recognised relevant explicit themes and finally integrated the constructs into new knowledge and understanding. Trustworthiness was considered through multiple data-gathering techniques over a period of time and triangulation was established through data gathered from pupils, participants parents and teachers and professionals. Participants were given the opportunity to review initial findings to validate the accuracy of their experiences of reintegration. Peer examination, through an independent coder, of not only the initial findings but also inferred categories was conducted to support the credibility of the research.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Clear statement of findings discussed in response to research question and existing data. Results are themed in relation to promotive experiences and risk experiences of reintegration. Effective use of direct quotes to aid the richness of voices of young people.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Research findings discussed in relation to context of participants, identifying potential programme in supporting reintegration in addition to the barriers. Limitations discussed with regards to understanding practice amongst professionals and contexts. Recommendations from the research to improve future policy development, recognition given to further research for greater knowledge and understanding.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Corrigan, E. (2014). Person centred planning 'in action': exploring the use of person centred planning in supporting young people's transition and re-integration to mainstream education.
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Exploring the use of person centred planning (PCP) in supporting CYP who have experienced school exclusion in their reintegration to mainstream settings.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Appropriate use of mixed methods, qualitative and quantitative method appropriate for exploring the views and evaluating PCP.

3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: Longitudinal action research. Researcher highlights the value of using both methods for exploring views and a five-point Likert scale. Open ended questions for thematic analysis.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Sampling was opportunistic, participants identified through professionals who were supporting the young people within their settings and within the education authority and aware of CYP forthcoming transition or reintegration. Therefore sample may not be an accurate representation of the population as a whole.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Methods clear and detailed with appropriate timescales given. Interviews with children were open-ended questions to allow for rich and detailed experiences.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	No: No explicit consideration given to the relationship between researcher and participant and potential researcher bias.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Yes: Research makes reference to ethical clearance and informed parental consent was gained throughout.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Can't tell: Researcher refers to thematic analysis, but method of data analysis not clearly described. Researcher notes that dominant and recurring themes were identified, but the process of how dominance was determined was not detailed.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Findings presented both statistically and descriptively in relation to each scale of the questionnaire. Findings from interviews themed into subheadings and discussed briefly, not in response to research questions and existing data.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Findings considered in relation to barriers and best practice in using PCP and suggestions for improving practice. Future research suggested.

Critical Analysis Questions	**Article:** Gersch, I.S., Nolan, A. (1994). Exclusions: What the Children Think.
1. **Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**	Yes: Aims to examine the views of pupils excluded from school to propose practical implications and future developments.
2. **Is the methodology appropriate?**	Yes: Justification for using a qualitative methodology given as much of the existing research lacks pupil voice.
3. **Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**	Yes: Researcher used open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews framed to address

	aims of research and was an appropriate way to gather pupil views.
4. **Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**	Yes: Recruitment strategy was limited to one small borough special provision. Participation was voluntary but no inclusion/exclusion included.
5. **Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**	Yes: Individual interviews – used guide to elicit responses about areas of interest (attitudes and experiences of primary and secondary school exclusion(s), special provision and reintegration). Also referred to non-judgemental style of interviewing., lasting about 2 hours.
6. **Has the relationship between the researcher and participants been adequately considered?**	No: No reference to how relationships were considered, or critical examination of potential biases.
7. **Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**	Can't tell: no explicit reference to ethical approval. Researcher refers to explaining research to participants and ensuring anonymity.
8. **Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**	Can't tell: Researcher refers to using Miles & Huberman (1984) cluster analysis, but process is not clearly described. Data analysis is deductive with predefined themes. Some use of direct quotes used to capture pupil voice in themes.
9. **Is there a clear statement of findings?**	Yes: Findings appeared to be presented in relation to questions asked rather than themes identified. Key factors under each headings provided clearly.
10. **How valuable is the research?**	Findings considered in relation to educational context. Implications for practice clearly stated based on the findings but no suggestions given for future research.

Appendix D: Semi-Structured Interview Schedule

1. Background information / interests
- [Child's name], first I would like to ask some questions to find out a little more about you. Take details of:
    - Age / birthday
    - Interests (to build rapport / help them to feel comfortable)

2. **Could you begin by telling me about your exclusion/s from school?**

Potential prompts; What do you think led to the exclusion/s? How did you feel about being excluded? What did it feel like to be excluded? What was going on for you around that time? How did your family/peers/teachers feel about the exclusion/s? What was a typical day like around then? What were your relationships like? (e.g. with teachers, peers, family)

3. What was it like to return to school after the exclusion/s?

Potential Prompt: What happened when you returned to school? What was going on at the time? How did you feel about returning? How did your family/ peers/teachers feel about you returning to school? What were your relationships like?

4. What is it like for you now you have returned to school?

Potential prompt: How do you feel now you have returned to school? What is a typical day like for you now? What are your relationships like with family/teacher/peers?

5. **Is there anything that has made it more difficult to return to school?**

Potential prompt: What made it more difficult to return to school? Why was this unhelpful? How did this make the return to school harder? Did family/teachers/peers do anything which made it harder to return to school?

6. Is there anything that has made it easier to return to school?

Potential prompt: What has helped you return to school? Why was this helpful? How did this make the return to school easier? Did family/teachers/peers do anything which made it easier to return to school?

7. Is there anything else you wanted to share about your experience that I haven't asked you about?

Appendix E: Ethical Approval

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants
BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

REVIEWER: John Read

SUPERVISOR: Janet Rowley

STUDENT: Forzana Begum

Course: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED**: Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.
2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below): In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is not required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made before the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.
3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below): In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY
(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

Minor amendments

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

1. Add that participants can take a break, or stop the interview (and withdraw) if distressed
2. Add surname to 'My name is……' in Participant Info.
3. Consider replacing SANE (which has an illness/diagnostic model of mental health) with an alternative, perhaps Samaritans or Childline

Major amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:
I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature): Forzana Begum*
Student number: U1034184

Date: 10/08/2021

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES / NO

Please request resubmission with an adequate risk assessment

If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

☐ HIGH

Please do not approve a high risk application and refer to the Chair of Ethics. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not approved on this basis. If unsure please refer to the Chair of Ethics.

☐ MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

☐ LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).

Reviewer *John Read*

Date: 10.8.21

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

Appendix F Head Teacher Consent Form

Dear [Head Teacher],

My name is Monifah Begum and I am studying for the Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of East London (UEL). I am also working as a Trainee Educational and Child Psychologist for XX Educational Psychology Service. As part of my training I am researching the participants' perceptions and experiences of exclusion from and reintegration into a mainstream secondary school.

Consent to Participate in a Research Study

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission for the school to participate in this study and to provide you with additional information about the purpose and nature of the research.

Research Description

The title of this research is:

An exploration of girls' experiences of exclusion and reintegration into mainstream secondary school education.

The aim of this research is to explore the experiences of exclusion and reintegration from the perspective of the participants themselves. I am particularly interested in exploring the perspectives of girls, with the hope of identifying the protective factors which participants perceive as contributing to positive outcomes.

I would like to recruit pupils for this study who meet the following criteria:
- Participants must identify as female
- They must have been through an exclusion and reintegration process.
- They will be fully on roll at your school.
- The children will be aged 11-16 years at the time of interview.

• They will need to be able to use conversational level of English language in order to take part in semi-structured interviews.

Participants will be asked to take part in a semi-structured interview about their individual perceptions and experiences of the managed move process.

Why is this research being done?

The research aims to explore the lived experiences of excluded girls and their reintegration in mainstream secondary school. The literature and official statistical data highlight girls as a marginalised and underrepresented group, therefore, the desired focus of the current research. This is in order to identify what factors they perceive support their reintegration and are involved in their exclusion. Giving a space for these young people's voices to be heard, could ultimately support an understanding of how to support the reintegration of girls in the future.

Confidentiality of the Data

All participant names and school data will be coded and anonymised, and participants will be given a pseudo-name to ensure anonymity. All data will be destroyed after the research has been completed.

What does the study involve?

If you have any pupils in the school that meet the criteria I will send you an information letter to give to the parents of the selected pupils, which will outline the purpose of the study and what their daughter's involvement in the research would entail. All participants will be offered an opportunity to discuss the research with me and to ask any questions they may have about their involvement. If the parents and pupils consent to their participating in the study, I will arrange a time to meet with the pupil individually. Participants will then take part in an interview where I will ask questions about their experience of exclusion and what it was like to return to school lasting for around 30-60 minutes. The interviews will take place online via Microsoft Teams. They will be recorded using the recording function of the platform. The information communicated during the interview will be kept confidential; the only circumstance in which I would break this confidentiality would be if the participant tells me something that means either themselves or somebody else is in danger.

Location

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, the interviews will take place online via Microsoft Teams. The interview would be on a one-to-one basis in a place they are comfortable with (this can be their home, or the school). The interviews will need to take place in a quiet room.

Disclaimer

The young people who are participating in this research study will be able to withdraw at any time during data collection, up until the point where I have started to analyse the data.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. If you would like to give permission for the school to participate in this research or would like to discuss the nature of the research further, please contact me on the details provided below.

I look forward to hearing from you.
Yours Sincerely,
Monifah Begum
Trainee Educational Psychologist

……

Please show your interest in participating in the project by either completing the slip below and returning to the address stated or by emailing me at monifah.begum@XX.gov.uk

Name: Position:

Name of School:

Contact number or email:

I am interested in my school taking part in the research on pupil experiences of managed moves being carried out by Monifah Begum, and would like my school to be considered for the research.

Signed:

Date:

(Please detach and return to Monifah Begum, XX Educational Psychology Service)

Appendix G Participant Information Sheet & Assent Form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

Research study: **An exploration of girls' experiences of exclusion and reintegration into mainstream secondary school education**

I have the read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

…….

Participant's Signature

……..

Please return to MONIFAH BEGUM

CHILD/YOUNG PERSON PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

Hello!

My name is Monifah.

I am a pupil at the University of East London, studying for my Professional Doctorate in Educational & Child Psychology. I want to tell you about my research because I would like to know if you would like to take part.

What is the research?

I am interested in learning about your experience of school exclusion and reintegration into a mainstream secondary school. It will involve with you up to three times for up to an hour each time. The interviews will take place online via Microsoft Teams.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate in my research as someone who fits the kind of young person I am looking for to help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve girls from a range of schools in the borough who have experienced exclusions and reintegration into mainstream secondary school.

I emphasise that you will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect.

What will happen to the information I collect from you?

The interviews will be recorded and typed up so I can analyse them later. All the information you tell me, or we work on to together will be 'anonymous'. That means that I will note down what you say, but not who said it when I write it up. Your information will also be 'confidential' to me, you, and people involved in helping me with the study. That means that I won't share what you say with other adults (such as teachers or parents), unless it sounds like you or someone else is not safe or at risk of not being safe.

How do you get involved?

We need your permission and your parent's/guardian's permission for you to take part. Parents have already been written to and, if you have been given this information form, they will have given their consent for you to take part. If you are also in agreement to taking part, please complete the slip below and return to your school who will pass it onto me. I will then I will then contact you to arrange to meet with you.

What if you want to change your mind about taking part?

That's fine—you can tell me you don't want to take part anymore up until August 2021, which is when I will then be writing up the study and will no longer know whose info is whose.

Please feel free to ask me any questions. If you are happy to continue you will be asked to sign a consent form before we start.

Any questions or concerns please email me.

Monifah Begum – u1034184@uel.ac.uk

School of Psychology
Stratford Campus
Water Lane
London E15 4LZ

Appendix H: Parent/Carer Information Sheet and Consent Form

Parent Information Letter

Dear Parent or carer,

Re: Invitation for your child to take part in a study

Who am I?

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist working in XX and studying at the University of East London. I would like to carry out a study about girls' experiences of exclusion and reintegration into mainstream secondary school education and I would like to invite your daughter to take part.

What is the research?

I am conducting the research into the girls' views and their experiences of exclusion and reintegration into mainstream secondary school education. I am particularly interested in exploring the perspectives of girls, with the hope of identifying the protective factors which participants perceive as contributing to positive outcomes.

The research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that my research follows the standard of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

What will your child's participation involve?

If you consent to your daughter taking part, I will include them in an initial conversation in June 2021 to explain the research and ask if they want to take part. I will then set up another day for them to take part in an online semi-structured interview via Microsoft Teams. During this interview your child will be asked questions about their exclusion and reintegration experiences into mainstream secondary education.

What will happen to the information I collect from your child?

All the information your child tells me will be anonymous. No identifying features will be recorded during the interview. This means that I will note down what is said, but not who said it when I write up this research. The information will also be 'confidential' to me, them and my supervisor for this research. The information will not be shared with other adults (such as teachers or parents) unless there are concerns about their safety. All their information will be stored securely and retained for the duration of the study and up to 5 years after the study.

What if my child or I change our minds about taking part?

Participating in this research is voluntary. Your daughter may stop the interview whenever she likes without giving a reason and can change her mind after the interview has taken place. Her information would then be taken out of my research. Your daughters interview can be removed from the research up until the point when it has been typed up.

To consent to your child taking part, you will need to complete the reply slip on the next page and return it to your child's school who will pass it on to me.

Yours Sincerely,

Monifah Begum
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Contact Details

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

Monifah Begum

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

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Professor Ian Tucker School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to my child participating in a research study

Research study: **An Exploration of girls' experiences of exclusion and reintegration in mainstream secondary school education.**

I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which my child will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my child's involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researchers and their supervisors involved in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen to the information collected once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent for my child to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that my child has the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my child's anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Child's details:

Name of child:

Parent/carer's details:

Signature

…….

Parent or carer's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

……..

Relationship to the child:

……..

Contact Telephone Number:

……..

Date: ……..……

Please return to:
Monifah Begum
(Monifah.Begum@XX.gov.uk)

Appendix J: Master Table of Overarching Themes, Subordinate Themes, Emergent Themes and Verbatim Quotes

Overarching Theme	Subordinate Theme	Brooke Verbatim Quotes	Alana Verbatim Quotes	Leigh Verbatim Quotes
Fairness, Respect and Accountability	Feeling heard and Understood	I feel like they understood me after my exclusion 'cause my last exclusion was the fight. So, after that exclusion I felt like they understood me and was … like … my ways basically (161-164) I think they listened and understood and were basically patient with me. (322-323) I go and find a teacher that understands and knows that I'm not doing it like I'm not trying to argue with you , I just need time out basically. (455-457) The teachers understanding me has helped me get back into school, knowing that they're not against me has made me come back into school and just know that they're there to help me has let me come back into school. (567-571)	I love my teachers; my teachers are so like respectful and everything towards me now. (405-406) But with my teachers here like, they'll understand everything and anything like. It's just so calm like, especially Mr 'V' like. He'll understand that's why I always talk to him. (383-385) He's on the level of Mr 'V' as well, I like, it's just like crazy. He would always like sit and listen to me for ages, just talking, just talking and he would always like help me. (581-583) I've literally just said everything. But no one's actually heard the full story of like everything, everything, now I've just like said it all like, everything. If anyone want to hear what actually happened I will just play this. (639-642)	Certain teachers that don't teach me that I'll go to my problems with and they will explain things easier for me. (157-158) They're just easy to talk to. (162) I think some of the teachers can understand where I've had so much time off so I'm dealing with the other issues at home. (196-197) Some teachers that don't teach me at all that I can go to and talk about and then, like I have a time-out card. I can go to that teacher, talk to them and then go back to my lesson and I'll be fine. (185-187) He'll see other kids and he'll see me, but really he's just there to like, be support towards my family problems and school issues. So, if there's anything that's happened in the week since he's seen me he's then there, after all that's happened, to talk to and explain the situation to. And he gives really good advice; and I think he is a big like part. (238-242)

	Discipline practices and Decision Making	I feel like they're trying to help me as well and they're not against me. 'Cause when I got excluded I feel like they was against me. But now I've finally realised they're not actually against me, they're trying to help me. (243-246) Ehm, well I like being in school so being excluded obviously isn't like the best 'cause then you can't see anyone. But I don't think it was fair why I got excluded the first two times. And the third time actually. (56-59) Because when the third time, that it was obviously like a fight, but I believe a fight is both ways. So, like if you're having a fight, it's both of you that are fighting. But when I got excluded it was only me that got excluded for the fight. It was nobody else. (61-64)	my first time being excluded, but it just felt as if like, I knew what I'd done was wrong, but I knew what I'd done was wrong like, it was completely wrong, I shouldn't have even been the first one to speak to her, but at the same time, when it comes to my family I'm literally the most defensive person you can ever come across. (74-79) At that time I felt really like closed like of everything, like, why was I excluded, like, they came up to me, they hit me first, they said all this and I didn't do anything and I started getting really angry with them because I didn't do anything, b ut then after like, when we had my meeting after that, when they started explaining it and how it really really was, that's when I started understanding. (615-621)	My exclusions could have been over the most minor things. I think my first exclusion. (25-26) It was quite annoying because ehm I knew when I came back from my exclusion I'd have to sit down with the teacher that had previously excluded me and it feels like I'm just … it's a waste of time for me because we're gonna talk about something you did and that's it. (75-78) I feel a little bit relaxed because it's over, but I know I'm very hot headed and in the meetings I have to bite my tongue a lot, so I won't just snap. (98-99) They could have sat down with me and spoken about the situation before the exclusion, because I could have … if they would have left me 5 minutes, come back, had a meeting with me, I would have seen where I'd gone wrong, I would have apologised and we could have moved on and I wouldn't have had the exclusion. But it's the fact that they're so … if you've done that wrong we're gonna exclude you! (265-270)

				I just … I feel like a lot of exclusions are pointless because you're just putting that kid in a position where you're annoying them even more to the point where they don't want to be here. (347-349) The first one was because of an argument with the teacher, but that was … that had been settled by another teacher, that he was in the wrong. So that … they took away my detention and said, "Just don't worry about that one". And then another one was my fault because I was in a very very bad mood and I had had an argument with my teacher so I had left and gone to relocation. (383-387)

Participation and Inclusion	Building trust and Relationships	I feel a lot more settled in school. Like … I like being here now, like before, I never used to really like coming to school, I used to take days off all the time, like I was never really in school and then the days I was in school, I was just getting told off, relocation or excluded. But now I feel like a lot more settled, like the school's … I'm actually getting along with the all the teachers in the school. (238-243) No, I don't think anything's been unhelpful, but I believe there's certain teachers that like seeing me get told off, if that makes sense. Is that the right words? Yeah, like seeing me get told off or like seeing me in relocation or excluded. (252-255) 'Cause when I got excluded I feel like they was against me. But now I've finally realised they're not actually against me, they're trying to help me. (244-246)	he's so supportive and like … all of my form is like … I just love my form like sometimes when it does come to this situation I always think about them because I actually love them so much and also my friends that are in the other forms as well. (496-500) My head of year has left, it's kind of like an odd feeling, but I'm getting like used to the new one, like she's proper nice as well like, I like her as well. She knows my situation as well and she tries to help out. But she always tells me how proud she is of me 'cos like I haven't been mentioning one thing, as like she's been here for a year now so that's a good thing and then, yeah Miss 'D' as well. Like she …. like she doesn't take sides you know, like she's a bit fair. So, that's what I like about her. (386-393) Like, of course like, it makes me feel happy when I get like compliments from	Obviously I was quite nervous because it was like we was practically at the end of our year. We were starting a new year. Everyone already knew everyone, everyone was already in their forms; and it was just like, I'm gonna be like … a random really. It just felt a bit like … I just felt nervous. (132-135) I feel like there are some that are like, well that's your punishment, you've got to take it. But I know there are some that are like, but she's been trying and like she was doing well and then she went and got into trouble and got excluded. And I feel like it's just like, I let some of them down because of how hard I've been trying for them. (69-73) It's a waste of time because they're like, certain teachers will always hold grudge. Like they'll always remember you for that certain thing. Like Miss 'D', sometimes I feel like she'll always remember me as like the person she excluded. Like there's no valid reason for a meeting. And then I feel like if I say something wrong, I'm gonna get in even more trouble. (81-85) Ehm, some teachers I get along with, but it just … I think some of them do

		Because there's some teachers that I don't get along with and then I feel like they do certain things or write certain things in my report for my teachers and that to say well, you haven't had a good report or, you haven't had a good lesson. (258-261) I feel like little digs like that, he puts in to … for my report and on the system to make me get told off or make me get excluded. Because they know the … all … all the teachers know that I'm on PSP and it was basically like my last warning before I got permed. (263-267) So, I was on that for 16 weeks and then there's certain teachers know how to push me for me to get a bad report. If they say they like me getting a bad report 'cause they know that the at the end of this, if the teachers look through my report over the week 'cause I had a Governors' meeting yesterday and they basically	teachers like … 'Cos you're a teacher like, it, it, like it just makes me feel good 'cos you're a teacher and be like … when you good compliments like that I'm reminded and stuff like, it makes me feel good. (530-534) Miss 'D', like teamwork and all of that stuff like, it was just really like, like, we'd always have something to do, which I love because I love being active like. I'd do literally any job that you asked me like, I'd do anything to keep me like going like, I just don't like sitting there just doing nothing. But with her like she would always have something for us. And she even said like, to Mr 'V' that I was really good like, she complimented me a lot. That's what I like, it just makes me feel like, so good, so like it just makes me never want to misbehave again. (555-563)	hope for the best for me, they just try and put it in a more strict way so I'll understand better, but it's just like … it goes in one ear and comes out the other (laughs). (144-146) They're just easy to talk to and … with certain teachers, where I've had a bad experience with them, I feel like I can't go to them to talk to them because I feel like I'm gonna be judged in what I've done and my decision. So, if I know if there's someone there that I can talk to I'm gonna go to them. (162-165) It depends on the teacher really. If it's a lesson that I like and a teacher that I get along with I'm never really in there unless something's happened in the classroom. But apart from that, on average I'm in there are least like four times a week. (38-41)

		look over my PSPs and then Miss 'D' the Head Teacher said that if I have a failed PSP that I'll have to do it all over again and then, yeah basically that's what PSP is (282-289) They, they encourage me to do the good things … to do … so I can blow up on a teacher and then they, they can hear and they'd be like 'A' calm, calm down like … it's no need … they remind me of what will happen because when I blow up and when I'm in a bad mood I just forget everything and loose it. They calm me down and, and be like 'A' remember this, look this will happen and then I'm like, "oh yeah". Like my teachers do that as well, they're like aah remember what will happen and then I come back and they'd be like oh yeah this is gonna happen, like they actually calm me down a lot. (514-522)		

	Feeling rejected	like the times I got exclusion I was like in school I didn't really care about school at the time because when I first … at first … when I first come to school, like when I first started the school so, because I moved so many times that I didn't think the school was the one for me, so I thought the school was against me so. I didn't really feel settled in the school; and then I was taking my anger out on the wrong people and then they … it led to exclusion. (106-112) I just … because I've moved to so many different schools, because I have been to so many different schools, I finally felt settled in this school, like they weren't this … I feel like this is the only school that they're not actually against me. So, I feel like I feel comfortable in the school and after they brought me back in from my exclusions I actually do feel comfortable; and going to a whole new different school after being permed, I don't	She's like, kind of like friends with them or whatever, I don't know, … but it doesn't matter, I don't really care, but I'm not gonna stop you from being friends with whoever you want, that's your business. (311-313) But it's the fact that I've never done anything to these girls and my sister really hasn't done anything to them girls either. There's always one friend saying they'll back up a friend and then other friends saying they're gonna do the same thing and then it just all gets bigger and bigger and bigger and it just gets like messy and ehm, yeah. (445-450) So then just after was like, because my mum picked us up like everywhere. She don't let us walk on our own, nothing, like, just feel trapped. (323-325)	my head of year I never got along with her. I didn't really get along with a lot of the pupils, because obviously where it's an all-girls schools it's just like … there's always fights and arguments and … it was just too much for me. (315-318) I was quite annoyed because I think it was like quite early on in the year where I had just started and I was like … I was really quite fed up with my old school and being excluded and stuff like that so I was just like 'well, what's the point' I feel like I haven't made a difference. (119-122) I hadn't been accepted to either of them … so it was a bit of, again, of tug of war with because it's like, I'm leaving, but I still need to be here, but I don't want to be here. (310-312) Ehm, no, it was an optional move but ehm … there was a lot of miscommunication between the two schools and then I think by the end of my time at County they just said to me like, "you need to leave" like "you're not a pupil here anymore". (128-130) Yeah, so it was just a bit like 'why am I here again, like I don't want to be

		think I would actually be able to do it. (397-403) it's gonna be hard going back into school after an exclusion 'cause you feel like the teachers are against you when you go back into school 'cause you're like … aah do I feel like I'm wanted here? You keep moving you keep like… (547-549) Yeah, because when you're excluded you obviously feel like you're not wanted in a school, like you feel like they're just against you and then coming back in it's gonna be like, a bit awkward like, a bit ooh this school don't want me like, they've excluded me but like … this school is made me feel wanted like, they showed me that there's actually a lot … they put a lot of support in, they put a lot of support in to get me back into school. (557-562)		here, I have no reason to be here!' (342-343)

Self-determination and Personal Agency	Aspirations and Outcomes	I feel like … I feel like that PSP helped me an awful lot because it basic … it's like a scare in' it? That you're gonna be permed. So, I feel like that report helped me an awful lot and from the beginning of the report to now the end of it, I feel like I've done so well, so well. Because it is basically like a scare. (292-296) I feel like the school are now supporting me and helping me to do better, like I know they want me to do better and want me to go somewhere. (434-435) So, when after my fight exclusion I returned I felt like the school wanted me to come back into the school and have a fresh start. (143-145) so, they're basically not holding grudges; they would move on from it. That's how I was brought back into the school. (427-429)	my report was good like, it was really really good like, it was improving every day and every week I was getting better and better until the last day of my report came, I'd got into a fight. (173-175) I think when I came back on my report like, I think just looking at that report I thought to myself, you know what, I cannot risk it anymore, like, I'm on my last chance now like. (456-458) I used to look at my report as if it's my best friend like. I would look at it like, do I really want to do this again, do I really want to go back on it again like, it would just be so long. (519-522) I mean you know, they in year 11, they have their mocks or whatever and their fighting, like … you know, they're ruin their own education. But for me, I still have time and I still need to learn because … like … I have	But if it's, if it's … putting something towards my future and what I want to do and stuff like that, I'm gonna want to do it, because I know that's where I need to get … to do what I want to do. (151-153) if the work is just put up I'm not gonna know what to do. I'm gonna freeze up and I'm not gonna want to do it, but with … if I'm in a lesson with other people around me and it's face to face learning I'm gonna want to do it. Because then I know that I feel comfortable doing that work. (179-183) but now it's like … I want to try and I want to be able to have options for my GCSE's and I don't want to get sent to a (?????) and I don't want to do all of this. I just want to be able to do my schoolwork, get on with my GCSE's and then leave and go to college. (247-250) It was, it was quite agitating because I know it's like on my report and stuff like that and like future schools are going to see it, but it's like … it's their rules, there's not really much I can do about it. (43-45)

			to be the best I can be but … yeah (364-367) I'm always like excited, like always excited to come back to school, 'cos now like my learning's like bad and I get to learn and I get to do this and that, but then at the same time I kinda don't want to come back because like, all the attention. (433-436)	Obviously I feel a bit annoyed because I know that's gonna be there for like, on my report so for future colleges and Uni and stuff like that. But obviously it's like, there's not really much I can do about that. And it does annoy me and aggravate me a bit, but … like I said, there's nothing I can do really. (138-141)

	Stereotyping and Managing others' Perceptions	I feel like they understand me. Like the schools before, my previous schools they were … I know they were just like; they didn't really care; they'd just see me as the naughty kid. So, they didn't really try and help me. But this school, I feel like they do everything in their power to help me, if that makes sense. (408-411) it's gonna be hard going back into school after an exclusion 'cause you feel like the teachers are against you when you go back into school 'cause you're like … aah do I feel like I'm wanted here? (547-549) They just … they know, they know when I'm in like a good mood and a bad mood like … they can tell by the way I like act basically, because they all understand that I'm loud, but I don't mean to be loud if that makes sense. But it's just me and then they come over to me and be like oh 'A' you need to calm down now, like you're a bit loud like, stop …	it just felt so weird like, after like everyone's looking at you like "oh – ah – she's the one who got into the fight", "oh she disrespect…" like, it's the attention, I don't like that attention like, I hate people looking at me like, they're not coming back. Err … if you were in the same situation I wouldn't do that to you, I'd wouldn't gossip, yeah, but I wouldn't have done that, like I would genuinely feel bad for you like, not all of that; and then after they're … they're always everywhere I go like, they always in town and they don't even live there, like … it's just pointless to be honest. (287-295) The attention, like from people and stuff like … oh people like … they don't … I don't really care how people view me, like, it's not really like my problem. You can see me however you want to see me but … it's always like … it's just that attention I don't like. (436-439)	With certain teachers, where I've had a bad experience with them, I feel like I can't go to them to talk to them because I feel like I'm gonna be judged in what I've done and my decision. So, if I know if there's someone there that I can talk to I'm gonna go to them. (162-165) It's a waste of time because they're like, certain teachers will always hold grudge. Like they'll always remember you for that certain thing. Like Miss 'D', sometimes I feel like she'll always remember me as like the person she excluded. Like there's no valid reason for a meeting. And then I feel like if I say something wrong, I'm gonna get in even more trouble. (81-85)

		and then I realise that I need to like stop and calm down. He doesn't, he takes it like 'A' you're being loud, you're being disruptive like … that's how he takes it. (493-499)	Like, there was tension like, you could … like every time you would see them there would always be a dirty look or one from their friends, like the tension was just there, like, like it's kinda like I could feel something was gonna happen again, but I didn't say anything out loud because I don't really like. (94-98) But sometimes I always feel like, when they don't get as much as in trouble as I get in I always feel like, oh, I really should have gone inside, but after I really …. like see what's happened, like what I've actually done and then like deeper and like, oh I've done this like. I understand why, but the thing is sometimes that I get so angry after everything they've done, like it just leaves me so aggravated just to start a fight for no reason, where I think that, I know what the consequences are but if we have the whole situation again and for my family. (394-402)	

Frustrations, Fear and Fighting	Uncontained Emotions	So, I feel like certain teachers would push me so I fall basically. (269) I feel like I can breathe a little bit more in the school. I feel like I'm not that … 'cause I'm one step back now from a perm. But I'm still at the top of the like … still at the top of getting permed; I can get permed anytime. But I feel like I can breathe more and I can do a lot more now I'm off of PSP, if that makes sense. (375-379) my PSP was always scaring me that I'm gonna get permed; I'm gonna get permed no matter what I do, I'm gonna get permed. Like, if I even have an argument with a teacher I feel like I'm gonna get permed, 'cause my PSP was there scaring me because I know the teachers would have to fill it out. But now I'm off of it I feel like I can do like a lot more. Like the teachers don't have anything to hold against me basically. (385-390)	When I went back to school like, things were still like … tension was still there because the girls were still there so … it was just like really like heated, like you can feel the heat of that from everywhere (excitement in her voice); so it was just like a bit … I dunno … I just felt a bit like … I don't, I don't want anything to happen again like. (65-70) Like me, all the time, all the time like, everywhere I go I'll always walk … like I'll always watch what I'm doing like. I'll be more careful where I'm going. What I'm saying to everyone who I'm talking, so, everything … just in case like one word gets mixed up and then I'll have the beating and the whole thing again. It's just long, like ... I don't really want to long things out with them I just want it to be deaded off like. (353-359) Yeah, from my second exclusion I've … I was so	Ehm, my mum is … we're back and forth between CAMHS at the moment and I think she's trying to get me a counsellor to like talk about my emotions and stuff like that, because I'm not really a person who'll just say like I feel … if I'm annoyed and people are constantly asking me questions I'm just gonna be completely honest with you, like I … I'd … at that point I'm already annoyed so I don't care how I will make you feel. And it is quite bad, but on certain occasions you've just gotta like let me be. (281-287) Ehm, yeah … because I'm … I'm quite a blank person and if I come in the room I'll just … sometimes I'll just call my teacher to the side and say "miss I'm not in a good mood, just like, if you see me (?????????) just let it be" (289-291) Obviously it's quite annoying because if you put an angry pupil in there the only places they can go is through behind that door, so meeting rooms and teachers offices. It's like there is no escape. (364-366) It feels like quite caged in. It feels like … it just … it's very stressful and sometimes it does make you feel a

		Before it I felt trapped when I didn't have a time out card. I feel like … that I had no other way to get out, because when I was arguing with a teacher or me and the teacher was like … I'd feel like that was it, that I was gonna get excluded no matter what I said because I would have been sent to relocation; and then I would've try and spoke about it to a teacher and then they'd be like, "you've done this, you've done that, you've refused to go relocation so now you're getting excluded". That's what so, when I didn't have that I felt trapped 'cause no matter if me and the teacher are arguing in the lesson I can't go out of the lesson, you can't go out of the lesson if you don't have a time out card. So, I felt like no matter what I say to this teacher, they're still gonna exclude me anyway. So, now when I have this time out pass I feel more … a little bit more though, I can leave without having a go at the teacher so, if the teacher starts or I'm like not	angry like, I was … like … I just wanted like to get my revenge, like, I just wanted to just grab one of them and start again right there. (607-609)	little claustrophobic because it's like I can't leave. Like, I feel like I'm in here with everyone else and I'm not allowed to go nowhere. (368-370)

		very happy, I know that I can leave and not take it out on the teacher, so there's a different way of me taking it out. So, I go and find a teacher that understands and knows that I'm not doing it like I'm not trying to argue with you , I just need time out basically. (441-457)		

	Developing Coping strategies	I think when I get excluded … when I got excluded, I think I was taking my anger out on the wrong people. So, I weren't very happy at the time so I'd come in school and like argue with the teachers that led to relocation, then if I didn't go relocation it would be an exclusion. (99-103) Yeah 'cause I weren't … like the times I got exclusion I was like in school I didn't really care about school at the time because when I first … at first … when I first come to school, like when I first started the school so, because I moved so many times that I didn't think the school was the one for me, so I thought the school was against me so. I didn't really feel settled in the school; and then I was taking my anger out on the wrong people and then they … it led to exclusion (106-113) Oh yeah, it's a time out card is where it's a card and you're allowed to time out of the	I'm, I'm not well with meeting new people like, it just don't work with me, because I don't like really like opening up or like telling them about my situation, because I always feel like it will get around to someone else and then someone else and someone else and I just won't say anything, but here in the school like now, I can say anything like, ehm … especially to Mr 'V' like, he's actually my favourite like. He always like reassures me like, it's OK, like, just don't do this and do this and don't do that and you'll be OK, like. Just do the right things like try your best and whenever they've like … they like … you know when you can like feel what's gonna happen he always says "you can go and speak to one of us and we will help you like sort it out" or whatever, yeah. (466-478) Every time I'd see them I would always feel like this type of anger and I would	It's like certain teachers can say certain things and in my head I'll take it … I can either take it in the wrong way or in the right way and if I take it in the wrong way it's just … instantly I'm on defence mode and it's like "well what's that meant to mean?" (103-105) Yeah, it was helpful because I had ehm … I had someone to talk to there, 'B', and he used to see me a little bit when I started coming here and then, I'm not sure what happened. But he was there when we spoke about dad and stuff like that, because at the time … dad, I don't think dad knew I was going to the PRU and then by the end of it he had found out. So, it was very, again, again a tug of war with dad because he was like "you're coming to live with me" and obviously I didn't want to. So, it was quite difficult, and I had to, I needed to have someone to speak to like about. (328-335) Definitely my anger towards things. Like, in County I used to just be extremely hot headed and … you could say anything and it was just like, "I'm over it, just send me home, like I don't care if I'll be excluded" like. (245-247)

		lesson so, you're allowed to come out whenever you feel like you need to come out or something wrong's goin' on in the lesson. So, if you'll get like frustrated or the you and the teacher ain't getting along, or you just need time to step outside. My time out card is for Mr. 'M' so, I go to my head of year and then I tell him and then he kinda like he helps me, so he sits down, he talks to me, he calms me down, we go for a walk round the school and then he'd put me back into lesson and take me and be like. "Sir, I've spoken to her, like she's calmed down now" and then the lesson will go fine. But if Mr. 'M', my head of year is not available, there's any SLT that I'm allowed to speak to. Or if none of them are available I come upstairs to relocation and speak to her and then she puts an email in saying that I've been up there. (325-338)	just come and I would be like, I just wanted to say something and do something and everything. Like, I don't really like, like bothering the teachers that much and like going to them with most of my problems and stuff, like, at that time I felt really like closed like of everything, like, why was I excluded, like, they came up to me, they hit me first, they said all this and I didn't do anything and I started getting really angry with them because I didn't do anything, but then after like, when we had my meeting after that, when they started explaining it and how it really really was, that's when I started understanding, 'cos when I do make a mistake I will understand that, I'm not like them who will just say "Oh I don't care, whatever", this is not … I will understand and after I will be like OK like, I understand now like. (610-624)	I think it's definitely talking to someone, because it's someone that I can explain to them how I feel about the situation and they can give me advice on how to deal with it. But I mainly do think it's myself from like … being able to talk to them people and having the courage to tell people what's going on. (253-256)

		Ehm, I felt ok because of … it's happened so many times I feel like, I feel ok about it now. Like, now I feel like school's gonna go well for me because I've had all them exclusions, I've had PSP, like I've had all of that, I feel like the school are now supporting me and helping me to do better, like I know they want me to do better and want me to go somewhere. (431-436)		

Appendix K: Example of Exploratory Comments and Emergent Themes

Initial Exploratory Comments (**Descriptive**, ***Linguistic***, **Conceptual**)	Line Number		Transcript (I: Interviewer, A:)	Emergent Themes
	43 44 45	**I:**	**Ok, so ehm if you could, ehm begin by telling me about your exclusions from school. What do you think happened to lead you to get excluded?**	
Prompt- exclusions **Quickly becomes talkative and engaged, describes exclusions –** ***Idea that exclusions were 'same' but also 'worse' – contradictory language.*** **Using adult language to describe exclusions- does not answer the question with own reflections- removed from the exclusions.** **I wonder if there is an internal opposition on fairness of exclusion decision. Power imbalances.**	46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54	A:	Ehm … so. my First exclusion was err … I think it was defiance, rudeness and wouldn't follow instructions to go to relocation. So, they excluded me for that for a day. And then I had another exclusion that it was kind of the same, but it was more, it was worse than the first one. So, they done that for two days. And then my third exclusion was a I had a fight with a girl. That was for five days I got excluded and then *(pauses to think)* they're on… the only three I can remember; 'cause that's the only three that was brought up in the meeting yesterday.	**Passive involvement in decision making (46-54)** **Sense of unfairness (49-50)**

Use of 'they' – who? Teachers? – Implies a sense of othering. Does this trigger an intrinsic emotional reaction towards teachers? **Are there other exclusions?**				
	55	**I:**	**Ok and how did you feel about being excluded?**	
'I don't think it was fair' – Attitude towards decisions of exclusions quickly emerges. Why does fair mean to A? perhaps this is her overwhelming feeling- vague description previously. ***'Can't see anyone'* – Values social aspect.** **'Actually' – Emphasises element of certainty of statement.**	56 57 58 59	A:	Ehm, well I like being in school so being excluded obviously isn't like the best 'cause then you can't see anyone. But I don't think it was fair why I got excluded the first two times. And the third time actually.	**Overwhelming feeling of unfairness (57-59)** **Social inclusion important (56-57)**
	60	**I:**	**Can you tell me a little bit more about that please?**	

Describes reasons why exclusions were unfair. Believes everyone involved in the fight should have been excluded – Curious if the fight was every resolved **Processing unfairness of the consequence of fight.** **No description justifying reasons behind fight or claiming innocence- is there a sense of underlying responsibility for the fight?** ***Repeated confusion-*** **Perhaps represents feelings of opposition, choosing to forget because she does not agree**	61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71	A:	Because when the third time, that it was obviously like a fight, but I believe a fight is both ways. So, like if you're having a fight, it's both of you that are fighting. But when I got excluded it was only me that got excluded for the fight. It was nobody else, like me and this other girl, but my friend, but when it was two girls like it was me fighting and then my friend and then two other girls . But only me and my friend got excluded. So, I don't think that was very fair; and ehm… the first time it's because I refused to go relocation because they sent me to relocation for something I didn't do. And then the second time … I can't really remember the second time.	**Inequality of punishment (62-67)** **Appropriating causal attributions (68-71)**
	72	**I:**	**And what is relocation?**	
	73	A:	It's like isolation.	
	74	**I:**	**Right OK, … in school?**	
	75	A:	Yeah, where you sit in that room with a teacher and just.	

	76	**I:**	**Aah.**	
	77	A:	What's it called? … Isolation in other schools.	
	78 79	**I:**	**OK, OK. And what did it feel like being excluded? What did you do? What did the day look like at home?**	
Describes exclusions as- ***'boring', 'quiet' and 'no one was around'-*** ***Suggests having people around is important, is she a sociable person?***	80 81 82	A:	It was very boring … quiet … It was like … don't know 'cause I think it was just quiet, 'cause there was like no one around. Boring because no one was around like, there was nothing to do.	**Boring (80, 82)** **Social relationships important (81-82)**
	83	**I:**	**Did you get work set from school?**	
	84	A:	No.	
	85 86 87	**I:**	**Ok. And how was it for your family and your friends when you were excluded? How do you think they … how did they feel about your exclusion?**	
Prompt- family and friends ***'Upset', 'can do better', disappointed'*** **– I wonder if this is how she really feels?** **Friends- social aspect**	88 89 90 91	A:	Mum was very upset with my exclusion because she believed that I can do better in school. My friends they were just … I think they were disappointed because they obviously like me being in school.	**Empathy towards parent emotional impact (88-89)** **Social relationships important (90-91)**
	92 93	**I:**	**And the teachers, what do you think the teachers … how do you think the teachers feel about your exclusions?**	

Repeated being 'liked' in school – is it important for A to feel liked by others or is she struggling to find suitable words?	94 95 96	A:	I … I don't think they like excluding me, I don't think they like doing that because a lot of teachers tell me they like me being in school. So, I think they was a bit … I don't know …	**Feeling of self-worth through approval of others (94-96)**
	97 98	**I:**	**So, what around that time what was happening for you when you got excluded?**	
Describes emotions impacting her experiences in school. Suggests external factors outside of school impacting learning. – Should I have asked for more detail? ***'not very happy', 'wrong people'*- Who was she angry with? Starts to acknowledge arguing led to relocation and consequences of her behaviour. I wonder if she is beginning to accept fairness of decision to exclude.**	99 100 101 102 103	A:	Ehm … I think when I get excluded … when I got excluded, I think I was taking my anger out on the wrong people. So, I weren't very happy at the time so I'd come in school and like argue with the teachers that led to relocation, then if I didn't go relocation it would be an exclusion.	**Reflecting on underlying causes that led to exclusions (99-102)** **Coping mechanism- Displaced aggression (100-101)**
	104 105	**I:**	**Ok and can you just expand a little bit on that … err … you said that you didn't feel very happy?**	

***Hesitation*- suggests reluctance to speak openly. Is this an emotion provoking topic?** **Identifies emotional impact of moving around to different schools.** ***Repeats at first*- Is she questioning her own preconceptions of a new school. – 'against me' assumes opposition and anticipation for a problem. *'wrong people'* Was there an element of defense mechanism, was she projecting unwanted feelings?**	106 107 108 109 110 111 112 113	A:	Yeah 'cause I weren't … like the times I got exclusion I was like in school I didn't really care about school at the time because when I first … at first … when I first come to school, like when I first started the school so, because I moved so many times that I didn't think the school was the one for me, so I thought the school was against me so. I didn't really feel settled in the school; and then I was taking my anger out on the wrong people and then they … it led to exclusion.	**Emotion-focused defense mechanisms (107-112)** **Impact of school displacement (109-112)** **Anticipating challenge or difficulties (110-113)**
	114 115	**I:**	**Ok and when was your first exclusion? How old were you? Can you remember?**	
	116 117	A:	I was 13 'cause I started school on 16th March last year and I think it was like round the end of March.	
	118 119 120	**I:**	**OK, 13 years old … OK … and what were your relationships like around that time with your teachers and your friends and your family?**	
Describes negative relations with teachers and friends – 'Led me' –	121 122 123	A:	*(shaking head)* I didn't get along with any teachers . No teachers … I got along with at the time. I had a few friends, but I think the friends I was with at that time also led my behaviour to being bad.	**Negative teacher relationships (121-122)**

suggests lack of accountability for actions				**External locus of control (122-123)**
	124	**I:**	**Can you tell me a little bit more about that?**	
'I believe'-Important and strong opinion. 'causes'- **direct link on behaviour being suggested.** ***Obviously-*** **Is she expecting me to agree with this opinion and share this view?** ***'Pushed'-*** **idea of being forced, lack of intrinsic control. Did she want to please others?**	125 126 127 128 129 130	A:	Because I believe certain people you're around causes certain behaviour. So, If you're around someone that's naughty, you're obviously gonna be naughty and at that time I was around friends that weren't as good and weren't pushing me to stay in school. They were just pushing me to basically being out of school and getting excluded and not having best behaviour.	**Appropriating causal attributions (125-126)** **Negative peer influences (126-130)**
	131 132	**I:**	**Why do you think that they were pushing you to be, to misbehave, what did they get from …?**	
Encouraging me- **I wonder if she feels she encouraged others?**	133 134 135	A:	Because they would be misbehaving I think, they would like encouraging me to misbehave so they had someone there to like being naughty together basically.	**Negative peer influences (133-135)**
	136 137	**I:**	**OK. Is there anything else you want to add about your exclusions?**	
	138	A:	Ehm … no.	
	139 140	**I:**	**OK. So, what was it like to return to school after the exclusions? Or if you want to go back to one specific.**	

	141	A:	Ehm … it was.	
	142	**I:**	**What happened when you returned?**	
Describes returning to relocation after fight exclusion. ***'Fresh start'- expression indicates an opportunity to start over without prejudice.*** ***Unfair- Expression of injustice*** **Identifies and accepts value in the decision.** ***Feeling 'welcomed', 'want me', 'help me'* – A new sense of certainty and belonging emerging- was she fighting her own beliefs and preconceptions about belonging**	143 145 146 147 148 149 150 151 152 153 154 155 156 157 158 159	A:	So, when after my fight exclusion I returned I felt like the school wanted me to come back into the school and have a fresh start. But they put me in relocation the day I come back so there was like … so I had like basically two consequences. 'cause I had an exclusion and then I had a four day in relocation and then I had an hour after school. So, when I come back I thought that was a bit unfair so I was … I argued with the teacher about that and then they said because I was still on PSP when I had my fight exclusion it will lead to another exclusion. So, at that time when I come back I didn't feel like it was very fair when I come back into the school. So, after that, after my four day of relocation and that, I felt like, I felt welcomed into the school after … like … I felt like the teachers were actually trying to help me after because they had a meeting with Mum; I was there in the meeting and they was like … ehm … they were just basically saying that they want me to stay in school and they don't want me to keep getting exclusions. So, I actually felt welcomed after my exclusion.	**Desire for a fresh start (143-145)** **Overwhelming feeling of unfairness (146-150, 152-153)** **Acknowledging and valuing schools' decisions (154-158)** **Feeling of belonging in school (155, 159)**
	160	**I:**	**And how did they help you? What did you find helpful?**	
***Repeats understood-* Emphasising the importance and value of**	161 162 163 164	A:	Ehm … well they actually understood, I feel like they understood me after my exclusion 'cause my last exclusion was the fight. So, after that	**Importance of feeling understood (161-164)**

feeling understood. What did the school do to show her?			exclusion I felt like they understood me and was … like … my ways basically.	
	165 166	**I:**	**Ok. And when you returned to school, what was going on for you at the time?**	
	167	A:	Ehm … *(pauses)*	
	168	**I:**	**How did you feel?**	
Likes being in school- previously said she didn't want to come in – what happened in between that period?	169 170 171 172	A:	I dunno … what did I feel coming back into school? I … like I obviously liked coming back into school because school is a place where I actually like being. I dunno, what did I feel when I come back into school? Can't remember.	**Sense of belonging in school (170-171)**
	173	**I:**	**Take your time.**	
Happy to come to school.- some confusion or did she need more space to answer?	174 175 176	A:	*(fiddling with bracelet)* Obviously felt happy coming into school. But I was … I think … I dunno … I don't actually know … how did I feel coming back into school?	**Feeling happy (174)**

Appendix L: List of Themes and Participant Accounts Contributing to Themes

Individual Participant Superordinate Themes	Individual Participant Subordinate Themes	Participants linking to theme			Two or more participants?
		Brooke	Alana	Leigh	
School Factors	Teacher Traits (5)	•	•	•	•
	Classroom environment and engagement with learning (3)	•	•	•	•
	Supportive factors (6)	•	•	•	•
Interpersonal Relationships	Positive Relationships (11)	•	•	•	•
	Negative Relationships (8)	•	•	•	•
Self- efficacy and personal agency	Exercising control and accountability (28)	•	•	•	•
	Self-identity and managing others' perceptions (13)	•	•	•	•
Belonging and Inclusion	Feeling welcomed and connected to school (11)	•	•	•	•
	Changing schools and feeling rejected (11)	•		•	•
Peer Relations	Negotiating Friendship Dynamics (5)	•	•		•
	Factors affecting friendships (10)	•	•	•	•

School Inclusive Practices as belonging	Teachers are supportive and understanding (12)	•	•	•	•
	Academic Participation and Integration (10)	•	•	•	•
Impact of exclusions on emotional and mental wellbeing	Impact of support post-exclusions (13)	•	•	•	•
	Negative emotions post-exclusion (16}	•	•	•	•
Principles, Values & Loyalty	Developing Values and Morals (18)		•		
	Loyalty and responsibility towards family (9)		•		
	Judging fairness and accountability (12)	•	•	•	•
Relationships	Peer Relations (6)	•	•	•	•
	Teacher Relations (11)	•	•	•	•
	Family Relations (5)	•	•	•	•
Making choices, Self-determination and Motivation	Self-awareness and Agency (6)	•	•	•	•
	Determination and Motivations (7)	•	•	•	•
	Coping mechanisms and Emotional wellbeing (14)	•	•	•	•
Fairness and Exclusions	Discipline and Fairness (6)	•	•	•	•
	Belonging and Educational Absence (7)	•	•	•	•

	Stereotyping and Second Chances (3)	•	•	•	•

Appendix M: Brooke's Table of Subordinate Themes and Contributing Emergent Themes

Superordinate theme	Subordinate theme	Emergent Themes
School factors	**Teacher traits**	**Supportive teacher attributes (308-310, 319-323)** **Negative labels influencing teacher interactions (410-411)** **Negative teacher attributes (463, 469)**
	Classroom environment and engagement with learning	**Boring classwork (322)** **Classroom environment challenging (311-313)** **Distractions (321)**
	Supportive factors	**Joint supportive systems (222-223)** **Practical supportive tools (271-275, 325-328, 347-348, 567)** **Communication within school (533-536)**
Interpersonal Relationships	**Positive relationships**	**Social relationships important (81-82, 90-91)** **Empathy towards parent (88-89, 214-220, 362-366)** **Positive relationships with teacher (229, 243-245, 330-234, 520-523, 568-571)** **Positive peer relationships (516-520)**
	Negative relationships	**Negative teacher relationships (121-122, 227-228, 253-255, 461-465)** **Negative peer influences (126-130, 133-135, 231-233, 303-305)**

Self-efficacy and personal agency	**Exercising control and accountability**	**Acknowledging and valuing schools' decisions (154-158, 245-247)** **Exercising self-agency by avoiding trouble (233-235, 300-302)** **Practical tools supporting self-advocacy (452-458)** **Anticipating challenge or difficulties (110-113)** **Needing space (343-344, 441-444, 449-451, 458)** **Passive involvement in decision making (46-54, 419-427)** **Appropriating blame (68-71, 125-126)** **External locus of control (122-123, 269)** **Navigating power differentials (259-261, 283-290, 313-316, 349-250, 390-391)** **Reflecting on underlying causes that led to exclusions (99-102)** **Overwhelming feeling of unfairness (49-50, 57-59, 146-150, 152-153, 265-266)** **Inequality of punishment (62-67)**
	Self-identity and managing others' perceptions	**Importance of feeling understood (161-164, 322-323, 408, 456-458, 567-568)** **Feeling of self-worth through approval of others (94-96, 507-510)** **Building resilience towards exclusions (431-433)** **Increased self-esteem (434-436)**

		Feeling a sense of achievement and pride (294-296) **Coping mechanism- Displaced aggression (100-101)** **Emotion-focused defense mechanisms (107-112, 327-328)**
Belonging and inclusion	**Feeling welcomed and connected to school**	**Social inclusion important (56-57)** **Feeling of belonging in school (155, 159, 170-171, 238-239, 341-344, 399-402, 561-563)** **Desire for a fresh start (143-145, 427-429)** **Feeling happy (174)**
	Changing schools and feeling rejected	**Impact of school displacement (109-112, 397-398, 403-404)** **Feeling rejected by school (547-550, 557-561)** **Boring (80, 82)** **Feeling helplessness (240-241)** **Fear of failure (269)** **Living with a fear of permanent exclusion (375-378, 385-389)**

Appendix N: Alana's Table of Subordinate Themes and Contributing Emergent Themes

Superordinate Theme	Subordinate Theme	Emergent Themes
Peer Relations	Negotiating Friendship Dynamics	Negotiating friendship dynamics (36-40, 311-314, 361-363, 447-450) Identifying with peers (117-121)
	Factors affecting friendships	Peers unsupportive (262-263, 489-492) Feeling safe in year group (486-488, 497-501) Anticipating confrontation with peers (286) Unresolved tensions with peers - Wanting to move forward (358-359) Unresolved tensions with peers (249-251, 268-271, 441, 607-613)
School Inclusive Practices as belonging	Teachers are supportive and understanding	Positive teacher relationships (282, 370-372, 384-386, 471, 578-581) Loss of teacher (634-635) Receiving praise and positivity from teachers (378, 458-460, 530-534, 561-563) Feeling understood and respected (405-409) Active self-reflecting (542-545)
	Academic Participation and Integration	Enjoys active participation in learning (15, 555-557) Values education (365-366) Practical supportive tools (252-256, 456-457, 512, 520)

		Overwhelming sense of belonging in school (462-470, 482-483) **Smaller groups help (546-549)**
Impact of exclusions on emotional and mental wellbeing	**Impact of support post-exclusions**	**Motivated towards a good future (366-367, 584)** **Feeling understood (375-378, 383-384)** **Looking forward to moving forward (415-416)** **Excited to return to mainstream education (433-434)** **Feeling heard (582-583, 640-641)** **Trying to avoid trouble (108-110, 187-189, 295-298, 411-413, 503-507)**
	Negative emotions post-exclusion	**Overwhelming heightened emotions (60, 66-67)** **Feeling let down by teachers (151-153)** **Feeling unsafe at school (244-246, 349-351, 354-357))** **Processing feeling trapped (324-325)** **Feeling social exclusion (344-347)** **Unresolved tensions provoking anxiety (94-99)** **Difficulties asking for help (97-99, 614)** **Unresolved anger resulting in heightened emotional and violent reaction (225-229)** **Emotional and mental impact (280-282, 328-330)**

		Unresolved tensions and emotions (398-400) **Underlying emotional needs (472-478)**
Principles, Values & Loyalty	**Developing Values and Morals**	**Respecting personal boundaries (35-36, 48-49, 264-265, 289-292, 422-426, 436-439)** **Faced with conflicting values and principles- respecting self and others (183-184, 229-233)** **Overwhelming desire to be good (63-64, 173-174, 526-528)** **Processing competing values (77-80, 195- 202, 570-573)** **Self identifies as a protective figure (84-85, 301-302, 322)** **High expectations of self and others (136-140)**
	Loyalty and responsibility towards family	**Obligation and commitment to family members (36-40, 79-84, 401)** **Empathy towards family members (60, 242-244, 332-335)** **Values respecting and protecting family- obligation towards them (216-219, 535-537, 624-627)**
	Judging fairness and accountability	**Attributing blame on peers (41)** **Accepting accountability for actions (75-77)** **Questioning equal distribution of punishment (89-90, 124, 615-619, 619-623)** **Reasoning with self-agency and provocation (163-168, 275-280, 564-568)**

		Processing impact of actions (169-170, 394-397) **Demands and pressures on teachers (591-596)**

Appendix O: Leigh's Table of Subordinate Themes and Contributing Emergent Themes

Superordinate	Subordinate	Emergent Theme
Relationships	Peer Relations	Social interactions (20-22) Extrinsic motivation- peers (65-66) Establishing new friendships (133-135) Supportive peers (216-220) Negative peer relationships (316-318) Difficulties navigating friendships with girls (322-324)
	Teacher Relations	Extrinsic motivation- teachers (70-73) Supportive teachers (144-145) Supportive adults in school (237-240) Attuned teacher practices (148-150, 158-159) Negative teacher relationships (162-164, 314-315) Understanding teachers (196, 205-207) Navigating power differentials (293-294) Restoring teacher relationships (406-407)
	Family Relations	Underlying issues at home (47-50, 203-204) Navigating family dynamics (225-227) Extrinsic motivation- family happy (229-230) Difficult parent relationship (333-335)
Making choices, Self-determination and Motivation	Self-awareness and Agency	External locus of control - Causal power? (60-61) self-awareness- locus of control (98-99) Sense of control and self-agency (190-193, 255-256) Increased self-confidence (242-243) Self-agency – making choices and consequences (389-391)
	Determination and Motivations	Practical tasks (17)

		External locus of control (38) **Self-doubt and low confidence (120-122)** **Lack of intrinsic motivation (146)** **Intrinsic motivation- future goals (151-153)** **Interacting engages learning (181-183)** **Intrinsic motivation- educational achievement (247-250)**
	Coping mechanisms and Emotional wellbeing	**Defence mechanism (103-105)** **Reregulating coping strategy (185-187, 198-199)** **Practical coping tools (209-210)** **Defence mechanisms – Displacement-Underlying emotions (281-287)** **Difficulties talking about underlying emotions (289-291)** **Continued support from PRU to mainstream setting (328-330)** **Reflective space to reregulate (400-403)** **Containing emotions (239-240, 253-254, 368-370)** **Reflecting on underlying emotions (245-247)** **Reflective space to reregulate (265-268, 349-352)**
Fairness and Exclusions	**Discipline and Fairness**	**Fairness (25, 30-33)** **unfair punitive forms of discipline (269-270, 383-387)** **Revolving door effect (347-349)** **Alternative forms of behaviour to prevent exclusions (350-354)** **Power imbalances- lack of control (358-361)**

	Belonging and Educational Absence	**Belongingness (26-27, 311-312, 342-343)** **Rejected by school (128-130)** **Negative impact of long periods of time off (173-174)** **Gaps in mainstream learning (176-177)** **Passive involvement in decision making (77)**
	Stereotyping and Second Chances	**Tarnished reputation (43-44, 81-85, 138-140)**