Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Learning at School

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Declaration

I declare that while registered as a research degree student at the University of East London, I have not been a registered or enrolled student for another award of this university or of any other academic or professional institution.

I declare that no material contained in this thesis has been used in any other submission for an academic award.

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

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Anna Griffiths

April 2016

Abstract

The UK has been criticised for its inequitable education system, as student outcomes are strongly linked to parental socio-economic status. Children and young people experiencing poverty are less likely than their better off peers to leave school with good grades, which can perpetuate disadvantage in later life.

The attainment gap between children and young people experiencing poverty and their better off peers in the UK is widening, despite an increasing media and policy focus in this area. Poverty-related educational inequality is a complex area and there is no conclusive evidence in what works to reduce its effects. While there is a plethora of research on the impact of poverty on education, very little of it includes the voice of children and young people and/or the psychological impact of poverty on learning.

The importance of hearing the views of children and young people is central to educational psychology, as is social justice and facilitating access to the curriculum for all students. The barriers presented by the experience of poverty to learning are thus vital for educational psychologists to address.

This study used qualitative methods to explore the learning journey of Key Stage 3 (age 12-13) young people experiencing poverty in an English coastal borough. Questions from the Little Box of Big Questions 2 were used as a tool in semi-structured interviews, in addition to questions devised by the researcher.

Young people discussed aspects of their lives that enabled them to learn at school, and aspects that presented barriers to learning. The research used Positive Psychology, taking a strengths based approach to explore the skills young people thought they brought to education, skills they would like to develop, and how they could be supported in this. The study has highlighted themes that, if addressed, could potentially raise the attainment of children and young people experiencing poverty.

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Abbreviations used in the thesis

AEP	Association of Educational Psychologists
BPS	British Psychological Society
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
CPD	Continuing professional development
CYP	Children and young people
DECP	Division of Educational and Child Psychology
DfE	Department for Education
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
FSM	Free school meals
LA	Local Authority
LBBQ2	Little Box of Big Questions 2
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SNP	Scottish National Party
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UEL	University of East London
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
YP	Young people/person

Chapter 1: Introduction

"The experience of poverty and the impact of poverty invade every aspect of a
young person's life, and cannot be left at the classroom door."
Bill Ramsay (Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS), 2014, p.2)

This thesis is concerned with poverty-related educational inequality in the UK.
The UK has been criticised for its inequitable education system, due to the fact
that student outcomes are strongly linked to parental socio-economic status
(Baars et al. 2014). Children and young people (CYP) experiencing poverty are
less likely than their better off peers to leave school with good grades, which
can perpetuate disadvantage in later life (Hirsch, 2007). The term poverty-
related educational inequality is used in this study to refer to this disadvantage.

There has been a strong media focus on the attainment gap between rich and
poor (a Google news search for "attainment gap" on 12.02.2016 produced
15,500 results). However, this has included little awareness of the psychological
impact of poverty (or austerity measures) on young people's wellbeing (Beckett
& Wrigley, 2014). The voice of CYP experiencing poverty, and how this impacts
on their education, is not well documented in research, as will be evidenced in
the literature review in Chapter 2. This provides a strong argument for more
educational psychology research in this area. This study addressed the gap by
directly asking young people experiencing poverty in an English coastal
borough for their views on school, learning and the future.

The thesis is written from the perspective of educational psychology in the UK.
The role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) is described as distinctive in
listening to, and advocating on behalf of, CYP (Beaver, 2011). EPs employ a
range of approaches and tools to elicit the voice of CYP. One of these tools,
The Little Box of Big Questions 2 (Gersch & Lipscombe, 2015), was utilised in
this study to facilitate young people to express their views.

While this study was primarily concerned with exploring young people's views, a
subsidiary argument is for an increased recognition of the possible EP role in
devising and delivering evidence-based solutions to poverty-related educational

inequality. It could be argued that this is an important area for EPs to address due to the ethical and social injustice issues thrown up by poverty-related educational inequality. EP involvement in this area could include: raising awareness of what EPs are already doing in schools; representing the voice of CYP in thinking about effective strategies; and anticipating how EPs could make additional contributions in this area, in consultation with CYP and other partners.

This chapter will introduce the research study and provide a context for where and when it was carried out. It will define key terminology used throughout the thesis and explore why the research is important for educational psychology. The positioning of the researcher will be outlined. Lastly, the research questions used to direct the study will be specified.

1.1 Terminology and definitions

1.1.1 Poverty

While there are a number of approaches to defining poverty (Seymour, 2009), researchers of poverty in developed nations usually agree on two kinds: absolute and overall (Raphael, 2013). Overall poverty, also known as relative poverty, is where household income is compared to the national median. People are classified as poor if they have less than 50 percent of median income (Raphael, 2013). The United Nations (1995) define overall poverty as having:

> ...various manifestations, including lack of income and productive resources sufficient to ensure sustainable livelihoods, hunger and malnutrition; ill health; limited or lack of access to education and other basic services; increased morbidity and mortality from illness; homelessness and inadequate housing; unsafe environments; and social discrimination and exclusion. It is also characterised by a lack of participation in decision-making and in civil, social, and cultural life. (p.57)

Thus, CYP experiencing poverty (and participating in this study) "miss out on daily essentials, such as healthy food, warm clothes in winter and new shoes when they need them" (Save the Children, 2013, p.9). In addition to overall

poverty, The United Nations (1995) define absolute poverty as "a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education, and information" (p.57).

The next section outlines how poverty was defined in this research.

1.1.2 Definition of Poverty in this Study

This study has purposefully used the word 'poverty' to describe the experience of participants (whilst remaining cognisant of the increasing body of research using 'inequality' as the basis of analysis, discussed below). It is the view of the researcher that both overall and absolute poverty continue to exist in the UK. Terms such as 'disadvantaged', 'deprived' and 'disaffected' are used by some researchers as a synonym for poverty. It is this author's view that some terms have a deficit connotation; they are used in this thesis only when reporting on others' research.

An indication of poverty for the purposes of this research was CYP who are in receipt of free school meals (FSM). This was used because of limited socio-economic information held by schools. The English Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures relative deprivation across small postcode areas in the UK (Department for Communities and Local Government, 2015). Participants' postcodes could have been used to ascertain whether they were resident in more deprived areas identified by the IMD. However, due to time constraints and other hurdles during the research process (detailed in Chapter 3), this measure was not used.

The use of FSM as an indicator of poverty is a crude measure, as CYP within this group come from varied backgrounds, and it gives no indication of intergenerational poverty. Beckett and Wrigley (2014) state that almost half of students below the poverty line are not entitled to FSM, and point out that some CYP entitled to FSM may come from families with well educated parents who have taken career breaks in order to care for children, and thus do not face severe educational disadvantage. The researcher was cognisant of this when discussing the selection of participants with the school.

Thus, despite the best intentions of the researcher to include a range of participants experiencing poverty in the study, the definition used (of entitlement to FSM) is inherently flawed. The next section explores this in more detail.

1.1.3 Hidden Poverty in the UK

Some absolute poverty in the UK seems to be hidden. For example, an estimated 120,000 children are undocumented migrants, making up 0.9% of the under 18 population (Coram, 2013). There are multiple reasons why some children are undocumented. For example, they may be unaccompanied minors (or accompanied by family members) who have been refused asylum but unable to return to their country of origin due to fear of persecution. Other undocumented children may have been trafficked; be in families who have overstayed visa allowance; or children of families who have entered the UK 'illegally'. Although legally able to access education, undocumented children are often living in extreme poverty, may be destitute, undernourished, and unable to access appropriate support due to their immigration status (Coram, 2013).

Undocumented children are not entitled to free school meals (FSM), financial support for uniforms, or transport costs to school (Coram, 2013). UK government austerity measures, coupled with a punitive immigration policy and frequent hostile media coverage (Coram, 2013) put these children at increased risks, as fearfulness of detection may prevent engagement with statutory services (Spencer et al. 2014). In addition, friends, family or the voluntary sector are often no longer able to support them (Coram, 2013). Young people in these categories are excluded from this research, due to the criteria of eligibility for FSM. Thus, some absolute poverty in the UK does not benefit from the scrutiny of research to highlight and address issues.

The next section introduces the analysis of inequality, which has become a frequently discussed issue by contemporary researchers. This term and its' relationship with poverty is discussed.

1.1.4 Inequality

In more recent years, the concept, terminology and definitions of poverty have been debated and challenged. Lancaster (2014) claims that many people in the

UK do not believe that poverty exists in the true sense of the word. He suggests using the term 'inequality' instead of poverty, arguing that it is impossible to refute the rising levels of inequality.

Wilkinson and Pickett (2010) assert that the income differences (or inequality) within a society impact on a range of outcomes including health, education, prison population, and death rates. They argue that poorer people always come off worse; the wider the differences, the worse the outcomes. They term this the 'gradient effect'. The UK has one of the steepest socioeconomic gradients in the developed world (see Figure 1.1). Thus poorer CYP do worse than their more advantaged peers in the UK than poorer CYP in similar more equal countries (Hirsch, 2007; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010).

Figure 1.1: How unequal are different countries?
(from https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/scale-economic-inequality-uk)
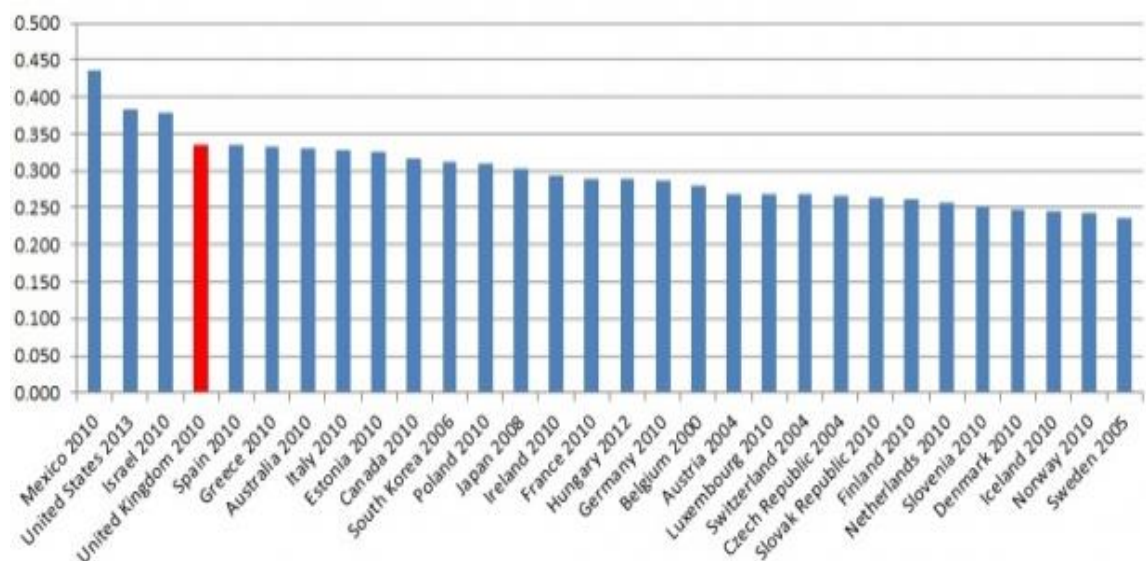
Mental health is more negatively affected in more unequal countries (The Equality Trust, 2015) and the UK has one of the highest rates of mental distress, as Figure 1.2 illustrates. Poor parental mental health can impact on children's cognitive, social and emotional development, as well as their mental health (Stanley & Cox, 2009). This in turn, is likely to have a negative impact on their performance at school.

Figure 1.2   The prevalence of mental illness is higher in more unequal rich countries (from https://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/mental-health)

In addition to the varied terminology around poverty, reviews of the literature (see chapter 2 for full detail) show that poverty is often conflated with working-class status in the UK. The next section clarifies use of the term working-class in this thesis.

1.1.5 Working Class

Research often defines CYP in receipt of FSM as working-class (House of Commons Education Committee (HOCEC), 2014). However HOCEC (2014) state that "entitlement to FSM is not synonymous with working-class, but it is a useful proxy for poverty which itself has an association with educational underachievement" (p.11).

The concept of working-class is ill-defined, and there is debate as to whether it is a useful categorisation. While only 34% of adults in the UK are classified as working-class, 57% perceive themselves to be working-class (HOCEC, 2014), indicating considerable discrepancy. The National Union of Teachers (NUT, 2010) assert that there are many working-class communities that are not experiencing poverty, but

...that division by class in the UK is something which can't be ignored as ...there continues to be a group of people in society whose children are extremely likely to reproduce the social and economic conditions of their parents' lives, if not see a deterioration in life conditions relative to their parents. (p.3)

Thus, it seems useful to maintain an analysis of class when discussing poverty and inequality in the UK. Many researchers have pointed out that the issue of poverty is a political one, pertaining to the distribution of resources by governments (e.g. Pirrie & Hockings, 2012; Raphael, 2013). This will be expanded on in the next section.

1.1.6 The Politics of Poverty and Inequality

Raphael (2013) argues that poverty in developed nations is a political issue: "a nation's poverty rate is determined in large part by how a nation's governing authorities distribute economic and other resources amongst the population, i.e., politics" (p.5). It has been argued that austerity measures and proposed welfare reforms introduced by the current Tory government in the UK increase poverty and the social divides created by inequality (e.g. Beckett & Wrigley, 2014; Biswas-Diener & Patterson, 2011). Despite the aim to eradicate child poverty by 2020 set out in the Child Poverty Act 2010, child poverty is now increasing (CPAG, 2015).

Raphael (2013) argues that the dominant narrative in the UK is that poverty is due to individual failures, which deflects attention away from public policies that do not ensure a fair distribution of resources. Further, he points out that people experiencing poverty do not have a voice and are often not included in community and political life. Thus they do not have the power or influence to change public policy or find solutions to societal inequality. This study aimed to address this disenfranchisement by giving a voice to young people experiencing poverty.

The next section explores more of the local context of educational inequality for participants in the study.

1.2 Context and Background

1.2.1 The Poverty-Related Attainment Gap

The poverty-related attainment gap is held to be evident in children as young as the age of 22 months, when poorer children have been assessed to be behind their richer peers in developmental tasks and communication (Perry & Francis, 2010; Pirrie & Hockings, 2012). These gaps widen significantly throughout schooling and the life course (Pirrie & Hockings, 2012). For example, only 4% of students eligible for FSM at age 15 go on to study at university, in comparison to 33% of their peers (Perry & Francis, 2010).

The statistics for the English coastal borough in which this study was carried out support this hypothesis. It falls within the 20% highest scoring boroughs in inequality, which measures the highest scoring localities with the lowest (Local Futures, 2010). Almost a quarter of children in the borough experiences poverty, compared with a fifth across England (Public Health England, 2014). The borough has one of the highest attainment gaps in England, ranking 4th out of 326 districts. In 2014 there was a gap of 24% on measures of development between Early Years children eligible for FSM and non-FSM children (Public Health England, 2014). This gap rose to 38.4% at GCSE stage (DfE, 2012); 66.8% of students not eligible for FSM in the borough achieve five or more General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) at grade A-C, in contrast to 28.2% of FSM students (DfE, 2012).

The current government's stated aim is to "ensure that a child's socioeconomic disadvantage does not limit their educational outcomes by age 19, compared to their peers" (HOCEC, 2014, p.5). A raft of legislation and interventions in the last decade has aimed to address the attainment gap, with varying success. Sinclair, McKendrick, and Scott (2010) assert that recent policy is distinct for its increased stress on individual responsibility rather than structural (or systemic) causes of disadvantage and social exclusion. However, more recent policy critiques place more emphasis on the systemic change necessary to close the gap (e.g. Ellis & Sosu, 2015).

The literature about different approaches towards mitigating poverty-related educational inequality will be outlined in the literature review in Chapter 2, to give a sense of the bigger picture and a rationale for this research. The next section situates the researcher within this study, outlining the perspective taken within the research.

1.3 Reflexivity: The Researcher's Perspective

This section outlines how the researcher's perspective has impacted on the completion of this study. Willig (2013) points out that any research project is based on assumptions; researchers draw on their own social constructions throughout the process (Mertens, 2010). Thus, researchers should take a step back, consider their social position, values, assumptions, beliefs, biases and relationship with the system, how these impact on the research, and how the 'data' in the study is constructed and finalised (Fox, Martin & Green, 2007; Mertens, 2010; Moore, 2005).

Willig (2013) advises consideration of the impact of researchers on their participant(s) e.g. the researcher's social class, gender, age, or ethnicity can influence dynamics. She urges recognising the double hermeneutic while interpreting data. This is the way participants and researchers interpret and influence each other throughout the process. Willig (2013) advises including clear and informative information on the researcher's position (see below). Additional monitoring of the researcher's position was done through the use of a reflective diary and supervision with two academic supervisors (Fox et al. 2007; Mertens, 2010).

I (the researcher) am a white, middle class trainee educational psychologist, born in Liverpool. Following a childhood spent in different countries and attending 10 schools, I have spent most of my adult life living in Glasgow, Scotland. I have a long interest in equality issues and became politicised during my undergraduate student days (1986-89), during the Thatcher administration. I began my involvement in the feminist movement and other political campaigning during this period.

My experiences as a young single parent bringing up my daughter (born 1990) in Glasgow have given me first hand insight into the prejudice of others. This was during a time when single parents were media scapegoats for all kinds of societal problems (e.g. Atkinson, Oerton, & Burns, 1998 refer to the early 1990s as when "discourses of vilification" (p.1) of lone parents were dominant).

I worked as a community worker for 3 charities in Glasgow over a period of 12 years, working with children, young people, and families from a variety of backgrounds. Some of my work was with families who were in the asylum system, and with Roma families, who had often been forced to live on the margins of society. This confirmed to me the existence of absolute poverty in the UK (see above discussion on poverty). Many families were in severely overcrowded accommodation, and often denied support through the UK welfare system. Their survival was dependent on friends or family (if they had any), and voluntary and church-based organisations. I was involved in work to support and campaign with people to get their most basic needs of food, shelter and clothing met. I strongly believe that all people in our society (and all societies) should have equal opportunities to thrive, and injustice of any kind should be addressed.

These views have influenced my choice of thesis topic. Children do not choose the circumstances they are born into and I believe that EPs could do more to mitigate the effects of poverty, which often impacts on outcomes in school and later life. My belief is that listening to the views of children and young people experiencing poverty should be part of the solution to poverty-related educational inequality, a belief which I have designed this research study around. I am interested in finding out how young people experience school and learning, and the meanings that they ascribe to education. This is with a view to thinking about how things could be different in the education system, and how it could be more equal and inclusive.

1.4 Hearing the Voice of Children and Young People

Previous research has shown that YP experiencing poverty are disadvantaged within the education system, due to a myriad of complex reasons. This study

took a strengths-based approach advocated by Seligman (e.g. 2002), the founder of Positive Psychology. This approach is in keeping with the EP ethos of promoting positive change by advocating on behalf of CYP (Beaver, 2011). It also aimed to counteract the dominant deficit narrative about CYP experiencing poverty (and their families) in the literature on poverty-related educational inequality (see literature review in Chapter 2). Central to the research is listening to the voice of young people, in order to address the lacunae of research in this area.

Some legislation has recognised and enshrined the rights of CYP to have their views taken into account in decisions affecting them (Harding & Atkinson, 2009). This includes the Children and Families Act (2014) in England, and international declarations such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), of which the UK is a signatory.

The research used a tool devised by Gersch and Lipscombe (2015) – The Little Box of Big Questions 2 (LBBQ2), as well as questions devised by the researcher. These tools will be discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters.

1.5 Research Questions

As discussed, this research was interested in eliciting the views of YP in years 7 and 8 (age 13-14) on school, learning and the future. Strengths-based Positive Psychology was used and themes relating to how educational psychologists can address the issue were extrapolated from the data. The research questions were:

  i.   What do YP experiencing poverty think helps them to learn at school? What do they think are the barriers to learning?

  ii.   What skills and resources do YP experiencing poverty think they bring to education? What additional skills do they think they need?

  iii. How do YP experiencing poverty think they could be supported in planning for the future?

1.6 Overview of the Thesis

Chapter 1: Introduction - justifies poverty-related educational inequality as the area of research and sets it in a national and local context. New knowledge that will be generated by the research is outlined, along with the research questions. Key terminology used in the research is defined, and the researcher's position explained.

Chapter 2: Literature review - provides a narrative review on the topic of poverty-related educational inequality. The literature is critically analysed and linked to the current study.

Chapter 3: Methodology and data collection - sets out the research design (thematic analysis), and clarification of the ontological and epistemological position taken by the researcher. A detailed and clear description of how the data was collected is provided.

Chapter 4: Findings - the findings of the study are set out in detail, themes and subthemes are described in detail. Quotes from participants are used to back up thematic analysis.

Chapter 5: Discussion - discusses the findings in the context of the research questions and previous research. The limitations of the findings are acknowledged and implications for further research and for EP practice are discussed. The researcher's learning from the project is articulated. The chapter finishes with a conclusion of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will give a broad overview of the diverse research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality, to set out a rationale for this study. A narrative review was undertaken, for reasons outlined below. As will be discussed in this chapter, much of the research around poverty-related educational inequality omits the voice of the child. This thesis aimed to address this gap.

The principle focus of this research was on listening to YP experiencing poverty; eliciting their views on school, learning and the future. As outlined in the introduction, the EP role is distinctive in listening to and advocating on behalf of CYP (Beaver, 2011). A subsidiary argument of this thesis, which will be expanded on in the discussion in Chapter 5, is for increased recognition of the EP role in addressing poverty-related educational inequality. This is important because, despite the extensive literature on the topic of poverty and education in various disciplines (e.g. sociology, social policy, school improvement, psychology), no studies from a UK educational psychology perspective were found. It is the researcher's view that more awareness of this issue in EP research and literature is needed in order to address poverty-related educational inequality affecting many CYP in the UK.

Following an introductory section explaining the process undertaken in reviewing the literature, the review comprises of four sections. The first section explores the voice of the child on poverty-related issues in education. The following three sections explore different approaches taken towards explaining and addressing poverty-related educational inequality in the literature: the social and cultural capital of the family; school systems, teaching and leadership (including 'the London effect'); and psychological factors. The conclusion will summarise the argument presented in the chapter and introduce the next chapter.

2.1.1 Narrative Review Strategy

Poverty-related educational inequality is a very comprehensive topic, and has been addressed in a diversity of academic disciplines, including social policy, sociology, and psychology. Due to the difficulty in pinpointing relevant articles using a systematic approach, a narrative review was carried out. A narrative review draws conclusions from different studies and brings them together into a holistic interpretation (Educational Research Review, 2007). Articles viewed by the researcher as relevant and important to the research questions were selected to be included in the review.

Narrative methods can introduce more author bias, due to researcher subjectivity both in deciding which journal articles to include, and around interpretation of the included articles (Green, Johnson & Adams, 2006). Previous research has shown that the conclusions drawn from one narrative review can be radically different from the same review written by a different author, when the same articles are reviewed (Randolph, 2009). However, a narrative review is arguably more useful when reviewing broad, complex areas with numerous issues (Hammersley, 2001).

Journal articles were accessed by the researcher between October 2014 and January 2016. Papers dated from 2000 to August 2015 were included, due to the fast changing nature of the policy context. The search terms included:

> Poverty, education*, UK, inequality, attainment gap, achievement gap, underachievement, working-class, social class, deprivation, disadvantage, educational psychology, Positive Psychology, psych*, young people, intervention, social justice, school, socio-economic, school improvement, pupil voice, student voice

Articles not relating to the UK or USA context were excluded. This was done as the UK has a distinctive policy context which may not be comparable to other countries. Psychological research conducted in the USA was included, due to the dearth of psychological research on this topic in the UK. Reference lists in relevant articles were scanned to locate further relevant journal articles. As the topic of poverty-related educational inequality is never far from the news, a 'Google alert' was set up to monitor news reporting on the topic (this sends an email whenever a news item is reported on the topic). Please see Appendix A

for more information on the narrative review, including the search process and inclusion/exclusion criteria.

2.2 Research: Poverty-related Educational Inequality

Ellis and Sosu (2015), in a briefing commissioned by the Scottish Government to review what education providers can do about poverty-related educational inequality, assert that this is an issue for all schools and local authorities. However, despite the well documented relationship between poverty and attainment, there is little UK research evidence to show what strategies and interventions work to raise attainment in children and YP experiencing poverty (Sharples, Slavin, Chambers & Sharp, 2011). There is more international evidence, which limits application of the findings to a UK context due to cultural differences (Sharples et al. 2011).

Attainment has been found to be attributable to a complex interplay of factors in the systems surrounding CYP (e.g. NUT, 2010; Perry & Francis, 2010); there are no easy answers to the issue of poverty-related educational inequality. Research suggests the success of interventions is dependent on context, and should be tailored to individuals, neighbourhoods and schools (e.g. Sharples et al. 2011; Sosu & Ellis, 2014; Yeager & Walton, 2011). Some of the most prominent factors discussed in the literature are the social and cultural capital of the family (including aspirations and educational level of parent/carer/s); school systems, teaching and leadership; and psychological factors such as resilience and student mind-set. Pirrie and Hockings (2012) point out that recent policy and academic literature concentrates on

> ...*fixing the child, fixing the family, fixing the school* and *fixing the community* rather than on addressing more fundamental issues relating to social justice: namely systemic issues relating to fairness and equality, especially in terms of state distribution of resources, opportunities, and benefits. (p.10)

Thus, while the research around interventions discussed in this section may go some way towards mitigating poverty-related educational inequality, wider

political reform is needed to address the structural causes (Connelly, Sullivan & Jerrim, 2014).

The first section of this review explores previous research which has involved CYP.

2.2.1 The Voice of the Child

Gersch, Lipscomb and Potton (forthcoming) highlight that there are "moral, legal and pragmatic reasons for involving children as fully as possible in assessment and education" (p.8). Arguably the most useful approach to understanding and enabling YP is asking the right question(s) (Ravenette, 1999). This study aimed to ask the right questions in order to understand more about the educational experiences of YP living in poverty (the questions will be discussed further in Chapter 3). This was with a view to finding appropriate ways of supporting these (and other) YP to raise their attainment school. This fills a gap in the research literature as, although EPs have added to the body of research eliciting the views of CYP, no research specifically focusing on the relationship between poverty and attainment was found. A selection of questions focusing on learning and the future, from The Little Box of Big Questions 2 (LBBQ2) (Gersch & Lipscomb, 2015) was used in this study (outlined in full in Chapter 3). The LBBQ (editions 1 and 2) is a tool to elicit CYP's views, with the explicit aim of linking responses to questions to actions for change and development (Gersch, Lipscomb, Stoyles & Caputi, 2014). Professor Gersch, the lead author of the LBBQ2, is an EP practitioner, researcher, and a leading proponent of eliciting the voice of the child. He supported the researcher personally throughout the process of research.

Studies Eliciting the Voice of CYP Experiencing Poverty on Education

Riley and Docking (2004) consulted YP from 'socially disadvantaged areas' about their experiences of school. Relationships were a dominant theme; there was often a lack of trust between teachers and students. Many students felt their learning needs were not understood, their views were unheard, that they were not viewed as individuals in school, and that the conformism expected of them was de-motivating. The authors made recommendations, including curriculum reforms, adequate teacher training around poverty, and establishing

mutual trust between students and teachers. While the study is useful in illuminating YP's views, there are a number of methodological issues. The study is 11 years old, which makes it dated in a fast changing policy context. The terminology used is problematic. For example the authors appeared to equate YP experiencing poverty with 'disaffection', took a deficit view and often failed to recognise strengths. In addition, participant selection process was not explained - no measures were outlined on how participants were defined as 'disadvantaged' or 'disaffected'.

Beckett and Wrigley (2014) carried out research similar to the current study. They interviewed YP experiencing poverty, asking questions about their lives outside of school. The authors were critical of the heavily standardised curriculum in English schools, which was noted to fail to bridge and build on the knowledge and experience CYP have, and can access in their extended families. They reiterate Riley and Docking's (2004) argument for more teacher-training around issues of poverty. They recognise the constraints faced by schools in the struggle to meet targets and Ofsted (Government Office for Standards in Education) requirements. The authors, although not EPs, have a similar ethos – recognising the importance of acknowledging student strengths, and incorporating YP's views into school reform. However, there are methodological limitations – most of the sample was boys, the exact number of participants or their ages was not specified, and the selection process was not defined.

Three similar studies carried out in collaboration with CYP on the impact of poverty on education have been carried out in Scotland (Elsley, 2014), England (Holloway, Mahoney, Royston, & Mueller, 2014) and Wales (Save the Children, 2013), with overlapping findings. YP surveyed thought having a home, an education, their basic needs met and a supportive family were the most important factors to achieve their potential at school (Elsely, 2014; Save the Children, 2013). Low confidence and self worth was identified as a barrier to learning (Save the Children, 2013). Students asserted that a safe place to learn, one-to-one support from other students, someone to talk about home and school, and a special fund to enable CYP to pay for school equipment and trips were vital (Save the Children, 2013). The reports also recommended school

transparency and consultation with YP in the use of pupil premium funding (Holloway et al. 2014); teacher-training to improve understanding of poverty issues; and Ofsted inspections to incorporate evidence of how schools support their poorest students (Holloway et al. 2014). While these reports are an important addition to the literature on poverty-related inequality in education, giving children and YP a voice, they are not done from an EP perspective. The recommendations are mainly practical and do not fully explore psychological aspects of the issues.

Hirsch (2007), in a review of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's Education and Poverty Programme, emphasises that involving 'disaffected' (his term) YP in discussions about their own futures is one of the most effective approaches to addressing educational inequality. He states that CYP experiencing poverty are more likely to feel a lack of control in their learning, and to feel unconfident about school. He stresses the importance of positive relationships between school staff and disadvantaged CYP and their families. He also emphasises the importance of homework: stating that CYP living in poverty tend to get less regular help from adults to do their homework, and do not always have access to environments conducive to doing homework. While the Joseph Rowntree Foundation has produced a very useful body of knowledge around poverty issues, these have been done more from a social policy perspective than an EP perspective. Thus, there are limits to their use in an EP analysis of the issue of poverty-related educational equality.

Research reviewed in this section shows the paucity of research in the area of educational equality that includes the views of CYP, with none from an EP perspective. Many of the research outcomes link to what it would be possible for EPs to do at a systemic level, both in schools and in a wider policy context. There are also methodological limitations in the research outlined above. Both of these points provide justification for this thesis, which aims to address gaps in EP research and awareness, and in the wider research into the relationship between poverty and attainment. This was done by listening to YP experiencing poverty's views on education and learning.

Most children's initial learning begins and is sustained at home with the family (National Literacy Trust, 2011). Research around the influence of the family on children's attainment is explored in the next section.

2.2.2 The Social and Cultural Capital of the Family

One of the main discourses in the literature on school attainment is around aspirations (e.g. Berzin, 2010; Cabinet Office, 2008; Stahl, 2012). Parent/carer/s, families and communities are asserted to be most influential on YPs' aspirations, and aspirations one of the most important predictors of educational attainment. In much of this research YP experiencing poverty, and their parent/carer/s, are criticised for having low aspirations. However many studies have found that YP and parent/carer/s experiencing poverty have high aspirations, despite having low attainment at school (e.g. Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF), 2014; Sinclair, McKendrick & Scott, 2010; Sosu & Ellis, 2014; St-Clair, Kintrea & Houston, 2011).

St-Clair et al. (2011) suggest that despite having high aspirations, YP do not have knowledge of the strategies or pathways towards achieving their aims; or that aspirations are not realised due to barriers arising from inequality. There is evidence to support this argument. In the Cabinet Office (2008) report on aspiration and attainment amongst YP in deprived communities, many YP surveyed stated that they needed more support to reach their goals in life. Sinclair et al (2010) assert that the education system does not inculcate the skills necessary for successful and sustained employment and/or training. This suggests that YP need better information in fitting together schooling, post-compulsory education and work (St-Clair et al. 2011).

Ellis and Sosu (2015) categorically state that parents in poverty do not have low aspirations for their children. This is backed up by evidence e.g. Riley and Docking (2004) found that parents of 'deprived' CYP were very invested in education for their child. Ellis and Sosu (2015) argue that parents often do not have the knowledge, networks, and resources to enable their child to navigate through challenges at school, and need more support with this. However, interventions aiming to increase parental involvement to support their children's learning at school have had varied success (EEF, 2014). Ellis and Sosu (2015)

stress that, to succeed, schools should encourage and support more meaningful, and less tokenistic, parental involvement in their child's education. This could be done, they suggest, through regular group-based home-school collaboration. This collaboration could enable parents to learn skills to support their children to learn more effectively, assist with homework, or read with and talk to their child. This is clearly an area in which EPs could be involved. For example by supporting schools to devise workshops for parents to explain school systems, and/or outline strategies that could be used to support their children with homework.

Evans (2006) carried out research on a 'deprived' housing estate in Central London, aiming to understand why working-class white children were failing in school. She used the term working-classes, of which working-class white children were a subset, arguing that working-class people are not a homogenous group. She concluded that working-class status, values and ways of being in the world conflict with what is required for success in formal education, which is imbued with a middle-class bias. Evans (2006) argues that schools should recognise what is important to working-class YP, in order to make learning more meaningful for them. This idea is reinforced by other researchers (e.g. Beckett & Wrigley, 2014; Connelly et al. 2014) who point out the challenges of CYP moving between neighbourhood and school cultures, when there may be a wide gulf between them. These researchers assert that schools should try to understand the cultural context of their students, and recognise the skill set that each young person brings to school. This would uncover a potential that is currently not capitalised on, due to the time pressures of delivering a rigid curriculum which does not equally value a range of skills and interests (Connelly et al. 2014).

While the research discussed in this section is useful; the voices of CYP are largely absent. Evans' research provides 'food for thought' and pointers around why working-class children appear to be being failed by the school system. Her work is based on spending extended periods of time interacting with students in school, and interviewing parents; thus, children's views are included. However, the poverty-related attainment gap in London schools has improved dramatically since her research was completed (e.g. Baars et al. 2014). The

next section will explore research on the role of school systems, and how they relate to poverty and attainment.

2.2.3 School systems, teaching and leadership

There is a lack of convergence in the literature around the role that schools play in poverty-related educational inequality, although increased attention is being paid to this area, as will be outlined in this section.

Hirsch (2007) claims that only 14% of variation in attainment is accounted for by school quality. He asserts that other factors, in and out of school, should be explored. However, reforms such as the London Challenge school improvement programme (see below) refute this claim, as significant inroads into closing the poverty-related attainment gap have been made. A subsequent report by Macleod, Sharp, Bernardinelli, Skipp and Higgins (2015) also challenges this view. They conclude that "between one and two-thirds of the variance between schools in disadvantaged pupils' attainment can be explained by a number of school-level characteristics" (p.12). As will be argued in this section, research suggests that school quality can account for variations in student attainment.

The school system has changed considerably since Hirsch's (2007) claims. Changes include budget cuts through government austerity measures (Smith, 2015), along with a greatly expanded academies programme and the introduction of free schools in 2010. This new system has been criticised for creating schools from market forces (marketisation), and producing increased fragmentation and divisions in the education system (Gillard, 2011).

Academies were introduced in 2000 to improve failing schools (usually serving students from disadvantaged backgrounds). Academies are run by a board of governors, receive funding directly from the government, and have more freedom in the way they are run as they are devolved from local authority control. This results in a non-standardised provision. In 2010 there were around 200 academies in England, now there are almost 5,000 (Hutchings, Francis & Kirby, 2015). Recent evaluation suggests significant variation in outcomes for academy students. Some 'disadvantaged' students have improved their outcomes (Hutchings et al. 2015). However, sponsored academies (transferred

to academy status as part of a government intervention strategy) are twice more likely to be below standard than local authority schools (Hutchings et al. 2015).

Connelly et al. (2014) state that increasing parental choice and school autonomy resulting from the recent marketisation of education has not increased the attainment of CYP experiencing poverty. Indeed some researchers argue that marketisation has worked against CYP experiencing poverty, as their families are not as adept at working the system (e.g. Perry & Francis, 2010). Connelly et al. (2014) point out that CYP experiencing poverty attending schools with more students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds perform better than those at schools with more students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. They suggest that systems such as banding (where proportionate school places are provided to students from each ability group) and school lotteries (where student places are allocated randomly) may address this disparity. However Macleod et al. (2015) refute this, asserting that "schools with a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils were associated with higher performance among disadvantaged pupils" (p.11), and vice versa. This disparity shows that it is hard to generalise about what works to improve learning for students experiencing poverty as the 'evidence' can be conflicting.

Riley and Docking (2004) found wide differences between schools, which they attributed to school ethos, suggesting that school policies, head-teachers and teachers make a difference to school experience for students. Parents in their study viewed the punitive practices of schools as the biggest barrier to their child's learning. The authors suggest a move away from behaviour management, towards more creative and inclusive teaching methods that embrace difference, stating that the current curriculum is not suitable for all students. They assert the importance of mutual respect, arguing that the stress experienced by many teachers can be detrimental to relationships, resulting in "some teachers...humiliating students" (p.177). They argue that there is a lack of opportunity for interaction in class, forcing students into a passive learning role. However, there are methodological issues with their study, as outlined in section 2.2.1.

School funding appears to be linked to attainment when used optimally (Connelly et al. 2014; Ellis & Sosu, 2015). Pupil Premium funding has been allocated to English schools since 2011, based on the number of students registered for FSM (and students who have been in local authority care for more than 6 months), in order to facilitate schools to support 'disadvantaged' students tackle barriers to learning. Carpenter et al. (2013) carried out an evaluation of Pupil Premium funding. Although the authors stress that it is too early to assess the impact of funding on attainment, the evaluation documented the implementation of a range of support, including buying additional EP time spent in school (in areas where EPSs are able to respond to increases in demand). However, concurrent budget cuts due to the UK government austerity agenda was reported to have simultaneously reduced schools' access to EPs, which constrained their ability to address disadvantage (Carpenter et al. 2013). Schools were reported to have used Pupil Premium funding to maintain EP provision previously funded through other sources. This provides useful evidence to show that EPs are utilised as part of the solution when addressing poverty-related educational inequality. Sadly, this is not acknowledged in the extensive literature on the topic. This suggests that EPs should do more to raise their profile and be explicit about what they can do to address poverty issues in schools.

Connelly et al. (2014) argue that CYP experiencing the stress of poverty are more likely to have social, emotional and mental health needs, which detract from learning at school. They assert that to address this, teaching quality is vital. Beckett and Wrigley (2014) stress the importance of relationships and propose that more specialist staff are needed in schools (e.g. community educators, family counsellors, mentors). These staff can build relationships and provide support to students in need, giving teachers more time to focus on academic needs. Well implemented nurture groups are recognised interventions that focus on relationships to address poverty-related social and emotional needs (Sosu & Ellis, 2014).

As with most of the research described in this chapter, research on school improvement has rarely included the views of CYP experiencing poverty. Despite this, perhaps some of the most persuasive evidence for the potential

role of schools in reducing poverty-related attainment is to be found in the school reforms carried out in London. This is described in the next section.

The London Effect

Judged by relative performance in examinations and in Ofsted inspections, London schools now outperform schools in the rest of England and achieve the highest proportion of students obtaining five good GCSEs, the highest percentage of schools rated 'outstanding' by Ofsted, and the highest GCSE attainment for pupils from poorer backgrounds (Baars et al. 2014, p.8).

Analysis of figures for London from 2000-2014 has shown that the attainment gap between students eligible for FSM and non-FSM students is now smaller than in the rest of England. Prior to 2000, the attainment gap in London was wider than the rest of England. Closure of the attainment gap is more marked in inner London. Students experiencing poverty in London are now 50% more likely than poor students elsewhere to get 5 GCSEs A* to C and to continue into Key Stage 5 (post-16) education (Greaves, Macmillan & Sibieta, 2014). Similar, but smaller, improvements have also been observed in Birmingham and Manchester, although disadvantaged students in these areas are less likely to continue to Key Stage 5.

This improvement is clearly of huge importance to research and practice around reducing poverty-related educational inequality. It refutes many theories discussed in this chapter on the perpetuation of inequality in the education system, shifting the focus from families to schools. However, there is disagreement among researchers in explaining the reason for the London effect, due to a lack of built-in evaluation. London school reforms were retrospectively evaluated, which introduces significant limitations in explaining cause and effect.

Baars et al (2014) argue that there was no one formula, but rather a paradigm shift, with different London boroughs using a range of different approaches according to need. Funding per pupil is consistently higher in London compared to other areas, which some researchers have attributed to the closing of the attainment gap (Baars et al. 2014). However, the authors argue that funding has

been higher even in the past, when London schools' outcomes were significantly below other national areas.

Baars et al. (2014) claim that four major interventions improved teaching and leadership: the London Challenge (Ofsted, 2010); Teach First (2016); the academies programme; and increased support from local authorities. Embedded in these interventions was the effective use of personalised tracking data in schools, which the authors cite as crucial. This enabled schools to spot underperformance early, and plan targeted interventions based on individual information to stabilise or raise attainment.

London Challenge was a cross-party series of policies in school improvement from 2002-2011. The scheme encompassed a combination of approaches focusing on establishing a strong professional culture in secondary schools (launched in primary schools in 2008). Independent advisors identified support needs for individual schools (e.g. training, leadership, inter-school collaboration) and helped to establish a coherent 'theory of change' (Baars et al. 2014). An ethos of optimism and high expectations was key, with a 'no excuses' culture towards serving more disadvantaged students (Baars et al. 2014).

Teach First was introduced in secondary schools in London in 2003 (and primary schools in 2011), before being rolled out to the rest of England. The scheme aimed to bring high achieving graduates into 'deprived' schools, addressing the teacher and head-teacher recruitment crisis. Currently, 6% of the London teaching population are derived from the scheme (Baars et al. 2014). Evaluations have shown a moderately positive impact on attainment (Allen & Allnutt, 2013).

Baars et al. (2014) assert that the academies programme enabled failing schools in London to successfully change their governance processes. While this may be true for some academies, evidence cited earlier in this chapter refutes this claim as there are huge variations in outcomes for YP attending academies. In addition, Machin and Silva (2013) argue that school academy conversions between 2002 and 2007 benefitted students in the upper 20%

ability bracket, with little evidence of benefit for students in the lower 20% ability range.

The importance of local authority support was stressed as key to success in the London interventions. The Borough of Tower Hamlets saw particularly marked transformation in closing the poverty-related attainment gap, which is attributed to the support and 'buy in' of the local authority (Woods et al. 2013).

Greaves et al. (2014) argue that London schools were already beginning to close the attainment gap before the London Challenge. They assert that higher attainment was attributable to changes in primary schools during 1999-2003, not secondary schools from 2002. They hypothesise that National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which were piloted in many London boroughs during that time, could explain the London Effect. The authors conclude that early intervention in primary school to ensure basic skills, followed by secondary school support to ensure that students stay on track are key in decreasing the attainment gap. However, Beckett and Wrigley (2014) propose that literacy and numeracy skills are only part of the picture and that a wider ranging curriculum and more focus on 'soft skills' e.g. self confidence, are key to closing the attainment gap.

Burgess (2014) argues that the increased ethnic diversity of students in London makes for greater aspiration and engagement for all ethnicities, resulting in increased attainment. He maintains that an integrated and multi-racial school system facilitates 'spill-over' of raised attainment from minority ethnic students to white British disadvantaged students through peer interaction. However Baars et al. (2014) refute this claim, arguing that both previous underperformance and improved outcomes are shared across ethnic groups in London, including white students.

The different approaches by researchers on school systems are not incompatible, and it could be argued that they are looking at different parts of a complicated whole. The aggregated research seems to suggest that school systems affect student outcomes more than previously thought, and that this is applicable throughout all formal schooling, from nursery to higher education.

Embedded in school culture are the attitudes of staff towards students, and a 'no excuses' culture may go some way towards mitigating prejudice held by some staff towards more disadvantaged students, promoting inclusion and a more productive learning environment. As argued previously, this is an area where EPs have the potential to make a contribution, as part of the focus of the role is on systemic work.

School Effectiveness Research

The effective schools movement grew out of the USA in the 1970s and has now been adopted worldwide (Hopkins, Stringfield, Harris, Stoll & Mackay, 2014). It originated as a way of challenging poverty-related educational inequality and is based on social justice principles (Lezotte, 2001). The premise of the approach is that students of all backgrounds have the ability to learn and should be given opportunities to succeed at school on a par with their peers, regardless of socio-economic status or family background (Lezotte, 2001). The movement shifted the focus of responsibility from individuals and minority groups, who had previously been blamed for the fact that many of them weren't achieving in education, to schools. It is based on the concept of organisational health and the social psychological theories of Lewin (1947), who focused on how organisations influence the behaviour of their members (Hopkins et al. 2014). This could easily link with the systemic work done by EPs.

School effectiveness researchers have tried to determine which school characteristics result in successful learning for CYP experiencing poverty and other minority groups, who are often failed by the education system. The movement became popular in the UK; Sammons, Hillman and Mortimore (1995), in a review of the research, constructed eleven factors for effective schools, documented in the table below:

Table 2.1   Eleven Factors for Effective Schools
From Sammons et al. 1995 p.71

ELEVEN FACTORS FOR EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS	
Professional leadership	Firm and purposeful A participative approach The leading professional
Shared vision and goals	Unity of purpose Consistency of practice Collegiality and collaboration
A learning environment	An orderly atmosphere An attractive working environment
Concentration on teaching and learning	Maximisation of learning time Academic emphasis Focus on achievement
Purposeful teaching	Efficient organisation Clarity of purpose Structured lessons Adaptive practice
High expectations	High expectations all round Communicating expectations Providing intellectual challenge
Positive reinforcement	Clear and fair discipline Feedback
Monitoring progress	Monitoring pupil performance Evaluating school performance
Pupil rights and responsibilities	Raising pupil self esteem Positions of responsibility Control of work
Home-school partnership	Parental involvement in their children's learning
A learning organisation	School-based staff development

Interestingly, many of the factors in the table were used in school improvement measures producing the London effect, described above. Although school effectiveness was not mentioned in any reports on the London effect, it was clearly an influence. Perhaps this could be more explicitly taken up by anti-poverty campaigners in education.

Student voice is notably absent in the analysis of the London effect, alluded to fleetingly only once in the Baars et al. (2014) report. Similarly, student voice takes a very low profile in the 11 factors of effective schools (above), it could perhaps be included under the 'Pupil rights and responsibilities' factor.

The contribution of EPs is also absent from the both analyses, again showing the diminished profile of the work of EPs in poverty-related educational inequality. There is clearly a psychological aspect of the research outlined thus far, although it has not been carried out by psychologists nor made explicit. Psychology will be explored more in the next section, which outlines research that has been carried out from a psychological perspective aiming to support and enable students experiencing poverty to learn (and hence achieve) more at school.

2.2.4 Psychological Factors

This section will outline some of the psychological interventions that have been used to address poverty-related educational inequality. A range of interventions used will be described, and then critiqued.

Cambridge Dictionaries Online (2016) defines psychological as "relating to the human mind and feelings". The psychological approach to poverty-related educational inequality usually (but not exclusively) takes the stance that CYP experiencing poverty may need support to change how they think about themselves, school, and/or learning (e.g. Winerman, 2011). For example, they may feel that they don't belong in school, or they may feel the effects of teachers who display prejudice towards students experiencing poverty.

The psychological approach to minimising poverty-related educational inequality is based on the idea that students should be supported to experience positive wellbeing. As set out in the introduction, the existence of poverty and inequality can mitigate against this, which in turn impacts on learning.

The Association of Educational Psychologists in the UK set out a manifesto for children and young people prior to the general election in May 2015 (AEP, 2015). This included a call for future governments to support the psychological wellbeing of all CYP through the provision of support, and taking measures to address the societal inequality that creates poverty and impacts on wellbeing. Sadly, since the Tories won the general election, societal inequality appears to be increasing (Harrop, 2015). The Fabian Society project that by 2030, as a result of policies announced by the government in May 2015, 1.9 million more

children will be in poverty, if decisions made in 2015 go unchanged (Harrop, 2015).

Anecdotal evidence suggests that EP practice routinely addresses poverty-related issues using a variety of approaches to promote wellbeing (e.g. nurture groups, mindset interventions, attachment training). However, this is hard to justify as only one UK research paper (around mindsets) was found to back-up this claim (Rienzo, Rolfe & Wilkinson (2015) - discussed below). For this reason, research from the USA has been included in this section.

It is claimed that a psychological approach taken in schools can do much to mitigate the effects of poverty on students; outcomes from interventions in the USA are claimed to have reduced attainment gaps months (and years) later (e.g. Yeager & Walton, 2011). Timing is held to be key (interventions are best carried out at the beginning of the academic year or during important transitions), and recursive interventions more effective (Yeager & Walton, 2011). Using different interventions to target different barriers to achievement are argued to accrue cumulative effects (Yeager & Walton, 2011). Some interventions, mostly conducted in the USA, will be outlined below.

Stress, Emotional Regulation and Resilience

Suggestions of interventions to reduce stress and help regulate feelings have included mindfulness, students writing about their stress, and nurture groups (Carpenter et al. 2013; Sosu & Ellis, 2014; Spitzer & Aronson, 2015). However, although this is an area of expertise for educational psychologists, this is not backed up by any research specifically addressing poverty-related educational inequality.

Mindsets: growth and belonging

A growth mindset is the "belief that intelligence can be developed over time" (Rattan, Savani, Chugh & Dweck, 2015, p.721), while a belonging mindset is the "belief that people like you belong in your school" (Rattan et al. 2015, p.721). Interventions are based on the idea that students with a fixed mindset, who believe that intelligence is fixed and unchangeable, are likely to give up easier than students with a growth mindset, who believe that intelligence can

grow with effort and work (e.g. Spitzer & Aronson, 2015; Yeager & Walton, 2011). Studies fostering a growth mindset in low-income YP (involving coaching on how the brain can grow and develop) have been carried out in the USA (e.g. Blackwell et al. 2007). Participants were held to have significantly higher grades in maths and reading at the end of the year, relative to control groups. More recently, a scaled-up online growth mindset intervention was rolled out to 1,594 students in 13 US high schools – students identified as at risk of dropping out raised their grades by an average of 6.4 percentage points (Paunesku et al. 2015). Psychologists in the USA are currently pushing for mindset interventions to become a national education priority (e.g. Rattan et al. 2015).

A study by Rienzo et al. (2015) evaluated the effectiveness of two interventions carried out in Portsmouth, England. Students participating in 10 growth mindset workshops made an average of 2 additional months' progress in English and maths, relative to controls. However, this was not statistically significant. Teachers participating in a professional development programme (2 half days) around how they could use mindset ideas in class did not produce any significant effects. Although the interventions were not statistically significant they seem promising and may encourage further research in this area. The authors proposed further research and interventions over a longer period of time.

Character Traits

Character education has also stemmed from the USA and (anecdotally) seems to be gathering popularity in the UK. Tough (2012), a USA based academic, draws on a range of research (including attachment theory and neuroscience) to determine what factors enable CYP experiencing poverty to succeed. He concludes that positive character traits, which can be learnt (e.g. persistence, curiosity, self-control, conscientiousness, self-confidence and grit), are often more important than cognitive skills for CYP's success. However, there seems to be little research evidence for the effectiveness of the character education approach, particularly in the UK.

‘Possible Selves’

This idea was coined by Markus and Nurius (1986) and pertains to the ideas individuals have about the kind of person they would like to become. These ‘possible selves’ are thought to motivate people to strive towards imagined goals. Interventions based on this approach encourage students to write about how they could be academically successful in the future, including reflecting on overcoming setbacks. Students in a USA study participated in 10 ‘possible selves’ writing sessions. Two years later, participants had higher scores, less absences, were less behaviourally challenging in school, had fewer symptoms of low mood, and were 60% less likely to be elected to repeat 8th grade than a control group (Oyserman et al. 2006). As for other psychological interventions discussed in this section, there was no research found that used this approach in the UK.

Stereotyping and Prejudice

Schools often systematically treat different groups in different ways, and school staff may negatively stereotype CYP from specific neighbourhoods and/or experiencing poverty (e.g. HOCEC, 2014; Beckett & Wrigley, 2014). Horgan (2007) found that CYP were very aware of their social position and the limitations this brings them from an early age. Research has shown that the expectancy that one will be negatively stereotyped at school affects performance (Yeager & Walton, 2011).

Research based on the stereotype threat model argues that if students are encouraged to affirm values that are important to them, it can provide protection from the negative effects of others’ prejudice, reducing achievement gaps. Encouraging students to write about values that are important to them was shown to increase grade points for students in an intervention carried out with YP in the USA (Cohen et al. 2006, 2009). Other American studies have shown that having access to a range of role models can counteract stereotype threat, particularly role models who explain the challenges they faced in reaching their goals (Spitzer & Aronson, 2015). However, for both approaches, although participants were ‘low-income’ the studies took more of a race approach, comparing black with white students. Thus the transferability of results to students experiencing poverty is limited. The studies were also in the different

cultural context of the USA, further limiting the transferability of findings to the UK.

Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology (Seligman 2000, 2002) focuses on strengths, and how these can enhance well-being and enable people to reach their potential. Much of the research reviewed in this chapter takes a deficit approach to CYP experiencing poverty, omitting resilience and strengths. Biswas-Diener and Patterson (2011) point out that "a complete understanding of the lives of those living in poverty must also include well-being, successes and other aspects of positive functioning" (p.126). Their study used a positive perspective in addressing poverty-related issues for YP at school, in order to emphasise strengths and resilience often overlooked. This study adopted the perspective of Positive Psychology and aimed to highlight the strengths that different YP bring to their education.

Critique of Psychological Interventions

There are a range of limitations in the methodology used in the USA studies described above. Although there was evidence of beneficial effects from interventions, they do not seem to be specifically showing effectiveness in poverty-related educational inequality. There was a clear focus on racial differences in US studies. Terms such as 'low income' were not explained in any of the studies, and there was frequent conflation between ethnic status and socio-economic status.

It was usually not clear how participants were selected. All of the research found was carried out with adolescents and college students, which limits transferability to younger students. The studies found were only quantitative; there was no qualitative evidence found documenting YP's views on interventions. The analysis predominantly takes an individual, within-child approach; concentrating on working with CYP to support them to adapt to their environment, rather than adapting the environment to accommodate student needs and diversity. There are also limitations in applying evidence from other cultures to the UK context.

Despite these limitations, there are some possible applications of US research to the UK context. More UK research is desperately needed in this area, including the views of YP on their experiences of interventions.

2.3 Summary

This chapter has outlined some of the current research on poverty-related educational inequality. Research reviewed has been conducted in three main areas: children and YP; families and communities; and schools. As argued, educational psychology has much to offer in all of these areas, to mitigate the effects of poverty and inequality.

Research seems to suggest that, for interventions to work, they should be based on a thorough understanding of individual students, their school, and the neighbourhood context. Each intervention must be tailored carefully. This makes the transference of research interventions from one context to another problematic. Thus, research can only serve as a pointer. Spitzer & Aronson (2015) highlight the need for more guidance on choosing interventions for different contexts. It appears that the best way of finding out what helps YP to learn is by asking them, as was done in this study.

It is important to bear in mind that the research and interventions outlined in this chapter are focused on mitigating the effects of poverty on CYP at school, rather than tackling the root causes. Much of the research does not address wider structural issues causing poverty-related educational inequality:

> Educational reform alone will never be sufficient to address educational inequalities. Poor and overcrowded housing, frequent moves, parental stress, depression and poor health have all been shown to have a detrimental effect on children's learning, thus social policies on the economy, work, housing and health can all affect educational outcomes (Connelly et al. 2014, p.130).

Addressing the structural causes of poverty is arguably beyond the professional remit of EPs. However, this chapter has highlighted that EPs can and do make a difference. It has also found a dearth of psychological research in the area of

poverty-related educational inequality, and set out an argument for increasing the profile and role of EPs. This would include research with a focus on the views of CYP experiencing poverty; along with accentuating the strengths that CYP experiencing poverty bring to school, in order to counteract the dominant deficit narrative. The current government austerity agenda is placing more children into poverty each year (CPAG, 2015). Thus, it is imperative that EPs are well equipped to address this issue. Beckett and Wrigley (2014) propose the need for "practitioner research which moves beyond the statistics and towards a critical and empathetic understanding of students' lifeworlds, learning needs and schooling experiences" (p.222).

This thesis intends to address this gap in the research. The next chapter will describe how this was done.

Chapter 3: Methodology and Data Collection

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide detail into how this study was carried out. Chapter 2 set out research suggesting that young people experiencing poverty are disadvantaged within the education system, due to a myriad of complex reasons. This study was designed to explore the views of YP experiencing poverty about school, their learning and the future. Qualitative methods were used to elicit young people's views. The words spoken by eight young people in semi-structured interviews were used as data. These words were re-presented through transcription (Bird, 2005), coded, and arranged into themes using thematic analysis methods set out by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013). This was done in order to look for meaning and patterns in the data.

It was hoped that this research would add to the body of information around poverty-related educational inequality, and facilitate thinking around ways to improve outcomes in education for children and young people experiencing poverty. The research took a strengths-based approach in order to counteract the deficit narrative which has occupied much of the literature around the attainment gap. The research is particularly important in the EP field as there was no UK research found in the area of poverty and EP practice.

3.2 Design of the Study

A qualitative research design was selected as the aim was to explore the views and experiences of the participants. This would have been impossible to elicit using quantitative methods. As outlined in the literature review, most of the research articles found in the area of poverty-related educational inequality are from disciplines other than psychology (e.g. social policy, sociology) and have precluded the voice of the child/young person; no papers from a British Educational Psychology perspective were found. Most of the psychological research papers found were based in the USA, which poses difficulties in transferring findings to the UK context. The psychological research found also used predominantly quantitative methods (e.g. measuring the effect size of interventions). While quantitative research can be very useful, qualitative

research has the potential to uncover richer, more specific and nuanced information about experiences and contexts that may be valuable in addressing poverty-related educational inequality. For example providing information to guide the selection of interventions in schools, or ideas around how schools can maximise the use of pupil premium payments (discussed in Chapter 2).

As set out in Chapter 2, previous research argues that interventions should be carefully tailored to the specific school and context; this study aims to produce information about specific students at a specific school.

3.3 Research Ontology and Epistemology

Processing qualitative research data involves interpretation, as information gathered cannot be analysed numerically in the way that quantitative data can (Mertens, 2010). Thus, a qualitative approach necessitates that researchers try to understand the meaning that participants' responses encapsulate. The researcher's ontological positioning, defined as the beliefs around the nature of reality held by the researcher (Mertens, 2010), affects the understandings and interpretations made from the data.

This thesis takes a social constructionist ontological position. A social construction is defined as "a concept or practice that may appear to be natural, objective and valid to those who accept it, but which, in reality is an invention or artefact of a particular culture or society" (Kelly, 2008, p20-21).

Hence, there is not one 'true' and fixed objective reality, but a social reality constructed by people to make sense of the world they live in (Fox, Martin & Green, 2007). This process of constructing reality is closely related to the context in which it occurs, mediated by relationships and language, and situated within a specific time and culture (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Moore, 2005; Willig, 2013).

The social constructionist paradigm posits that while many constructions of reality are shared (and hence social), there are also individually constructed realities. More than one version of reality can exist, even for the same person

(Braun & Clarke, 2013). For example, the same event may be interpreted differently by different individuals (Fox et al. 2007); similarly an individual may change their interpretation of an event over time. Social constructionism asserts that there is not one objective truth, as in the positivist tradition; rather there are a number of subjective truths, all of which are valid (Willig, 2001).

Researchers need to have an idea of what it is possible for them to find out and do this by adopting an epistemological position (Willig, 2001). The epistemological position refers to the nature of knowledge, "how and what can we know?" (Willig, 2001, p.2). Social constructionism informed the epistemology of this study. The research took the view that education is constructed, experienced, and viewed differently by different people. More information and knowledge was sought around the research questions by consulting with students who have direct experience, to find out their interpretations.

The social constructionist approach was chosen as it acknowledges the multiple world views held by people in a diverse society (Moore, 2005). The aim of the study was to explore the social constructions of school and education by young people who were experiencing poverty. It was expected that while many aspects of the research questions would be shared, each participant would also bring individual or unique experiences and interpretations; the qualitative design aimed to explore these.

3.4 Research Aims, Objectives and Purpose

As outlined, this research aimed to elicit and explore the views around education of YP experiencing poverty in an English coastal borough. The analysis aimed to describe and give voice to the views of YP experiencing poverty. Chapter 2 argued that most research papers found in this area have excluded the voice of CYP, and have been predominantly positivist and quantitative. This study aimed to address the bias in previous research by using a qualitative methodology with a social constructionist underpinning. Positive Psychology was used to counteract the deficit approach taken towards CYP and families experiencing poverty in much of the literature on the topic.

In semi-structured interviews, YP were asked questions about learning, interests, strengths, and support. The aim was to highlight themes that, if addressed, could potentially raise the attainment of young people experiencing poverty. The research questions were:

i. What do young people experiencing poverty think helps them to learn at school? What do they think are the barriers to learning?

ii. What skills and resources do young people experiencing poverty think they bring to education? What additional skills do they think they need?

iii. How do young people experiencing poverty think they could be supported in planning for the future?

3.5 Participant Recruitment

Initially, participants were invited from a non-selective secondary school in an English coastal borough, an area with large educational attainment gaps between richer and poorer students. The school was identified due to its relatively high ratio of students claiming FSM. The school had 28% of students eligible for FSM, and 50.3% of students having been eligible for FSM in the last 6 years (DfE, 2015). However the school pulled out of the study after an Ofsted inspection rated the school as inadequate, and a new head teacher was recruited. Another school was approached and agreed to take part in the research, this school had 6.9% of students eligible for FSM, and 21.5% of students having been eligible for FSM in the last 6 years (DfE, 2015).

Initially the researcher made contact with the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) in the school, to seek interest and gain 'buy-in' for the research. The SENCo was keen to go ahead with the research and contacted the head teacher to secure agreement. A letter was provided for the school, accompanied by an A4 information sheet outlining the main aims of the research (see Appendix B). The head teacher agreed to the study, on the proviso that it was done at the end of the day in the participant's own time.

The school SENCo and assistant SENCo selected 8 possible participants (4 male and 4 female) from Key Stage 3 (years 7 and 8), who they judged would be suitable to participate in the research. The researcher had no input into this

selection process, aside from describing the aims and purpose of the research and stipulating that participants should be in receipt of FSM. While all 8 students selected took part in the research, one interview was stopped early due to the participant having an anxiety attack.

The number of eight participants was chosen as the researcher felt that this would give a sufficient range of views. Braun & Clarke (2013) estimate that 6-10 interviews provides sufficient data for a small thematic analysis project. This was also a manageable number for carrying out the research and data analysis within the allotted time frame. This number of participants can be justified as the purpose of the research was to explore the views of young people experiencing poverty within a specific locality and school. Whilst the findings show that there were individual differences between participants in this project, many of the themes constructed from the data overlapped and were iterated by all eight participants. This indicates that data collection was reaching saturation point, where little new information may have been gleaned with the inclusion of more participants.

The assistant SENCo organised a session where the researcher met with the 8 possible participants, to explain the purpose of the research and invite them to participate. The researcher ensured that all participants were fully aware of what the research entailed by giving an outline to the whole group, reading the consent form out to the whole group, and reading the consent form to each student individually (if they agreed to take part). All of the students agreed to participate and signed an individual consent form in which they acknowledged that they had read the information about the study, agreed to take part, and agreed that the interview could be audio-recorded. Each participant took an information letter about the study home, for parental consent. The parental letter was followed up with a phone call to each of the parents to gain verbal consent; this was done by the school Assistant SENCo to comply with data protection laws. Please see Appendix B for the information sheet, letters, and consent forms used. The section on ethics later in this chapter will outline the considerable thought and discussion that took place regarding how to inform participants and parents about the research without stigmatising them for experiencing poverty.

3.6 Data Gathering method: Semi Structured Interviews

Data was gathered through semi-structured individual interviews, where participants responded to questions using their own words. Open-ended questions were used in order to facilitate a "professional conversation" (Braun & Carke, 2013, p.77). It was hoped that the questions would not impose too much structure on participants' expression. Thus, questions were selected and constructed that would be flexible enough to enable participants to talk about things that were important to them, and to elicit new and unexpected information around experience and meaning in the area of poverty-related inequality (Willig, 2013). Please see Appendix C for details of the interview questions used in the study.

Each interview began with the researcher reminding participants of what the research was about, why it was being conducted, and giving the opportunity to ask questions. Some unplanned questions were included in interviews, which followed the lead of participants' responses to questions. These were used to elicit information that was relevant to the research, as well as to try and demonstrate the researcher's interest in the participant and put them at ease. Silence was used by the researcher, when it seemed appropriate to the progression of the interview; for example if the researcher sensed that the participant could say more about a topic, or if they needed time to think about a response. The researcher was aware of her body language and non-verbal responses to participants, and tried to convey active listening and empathy throughout.

Braun & Clarke (2013) emphasise the active role of the interviewer, acknowledging that meanings are co-constructed by participant and interviewer. The researcher checked meaning with participants throughout the interview, both by reiterating what participants had said, or paraphrasing responses. This paraphrasing could be seen as interpretation on the part of the researcher, contributing to the co-construction process.

Interviews lasted for around an hour (the shortest was 10 minutes due to the participant having an anxiety attack, the longest was 79 minutes). Interviews

were carried out in a designated meeting room in the school at the end of the school day; no more than one interview was held per day, and the interview days were scheduled over a period of 4 weeks. Refreshments (water, biscuits, and sweets) were available for each participant, in order to make them feel comfortable and welcome. Chairs were set up facing at an angle, to ensure the most amenable positioning for the researcher and participant. Each interview was audio-recorded; the recording was stored on a password protected computer and deleted once transcribed, to comply with data protection law.

Two selected cards from the Little Box of Big Questions 2 (LBBQ2) (Gersch & Lipscomb, 2015) were used in the interviews, with added prompt questions, and followed by a supplementary question devised for this research. The LBBQ2 was created in order to explore YP's views on their learning, behaviour and future. The questions on the 2 cards selected were well suited to the research questions for this study. A lot of prior thought and discussion took place during the construction of the supplementary question, to ensure that the response would capture information sought by the researcher. The LBBQ2 cards had a main question on the front, with sub-questions on the back. Each participant was given the card to hold, so that they could refer to the questions when needed. The researcher had the same questions on an A4 laminated sheet, with additional prompt questions selected from other cards in the Little Box of Big Questions 2. The questions are outlined in table 3.1 below.

**Table 3.1: Questions asked in semi structured interview
(also in Appendix C)**
*Thanks to Small World Publishing and Professor Gersch for permission to
reproduce the questions here (Gersch & Lipscombe, 2015)*

Card 1: How do people learn things?

- How do you learn best? Who with? Where? With what?

Prompt question (not on card): what helps you to do well at school? Is there anything that stops you from learning at school?

- Who has been your very best teacher? Why?

- What do you think is the most important thing for you to learn about now?

Prompt question (not on card): why? Where can you learn about these things?

- What would you like to learn about in the future?

Prompt question (not on card): why?

Card 2: What are your dreams for the future?

- What sort of person would you like to be when you are an adult?

Prompt question (not on card): what are your key strengths? What do you love doing? What are your passions?

- What are your hopes and dreams for the future? How could you achieve your dreams?

Prompt question (not on card): if you definitely could not fail, what would you choose to do?

- What would you like to achieve in 5 years time? 10 years time? By the time you are a much older person? Who can help you?

- What plans or goals could you make for this year?

Question 3:

If you were advising the mayor of [*name of borough*] what would you tell him/her to do to ensure that every child/young person succeeded at school?

Pilot interviews were carried out initially with 4 participants. Despite the researcher's efforts to put participants at ease, some were hesitant and seemed to not want to talk, or perhaps unable to articulate their thoughts. For this reason, after some reflection and discussion with the research supervisor, it was decided that watching a short video together at the beginning of the

interview may facilitate more discussion. For the remaining 4 interviews one of two videos were used at the beginning of the session (please find links/copies of these videos in the accompanying disc in this thesis). The videos were chosen as their content was relevant to the educational issues being explored in the research, and it was thought that the YP would relate to them. Use of the videos appeared to put participants at ease and encourage them to talk more; each participant was asked about their impressions of the video immediately after viewing and before presenting them with the LBBQ2 cards. However, it may have affected their responses to questions; this will be discussed further in Chapter 5.

Table 3.2:   Ice-breaker videos used at beginning of research interviews (also on accompanying disc)

Student Voice Curtis: a 7 minute video of a young man talking about his experiences of growing up in a 'deprived' community. Curtis shares that one teacher, Mr Boss, changed his school experience in a positive way.
Spoken Word - Why I Hate School but Love Education: a 6 minute spoken word performance about education.

3.7 Transcription

Transcription is used as a tool to convert speech in interviews to text, in order to access the knowledge and beliefs of the participants (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). In this study, the transcription process was completed by the researcher using an orthographic style (Braun & Clarke, 2013), which focused on transcribing spoken words (what was said, and not how it was said). Orthographic transcription was used as the researcher was interested in the subject matter of participant's responses, rather than how it was said.

The transcription process involved constructing the text through repeated listening to the recorded interviews using transcription software Express Scribe (NCH, 2015). All words and most non-semantic sounds uttered (e.g. "mm hmm" to indicate agreement) during the interviews were recorded in the transcriptions. Punctuation was used to aid readability, using intonation and language as an indication of where sentences started and stopped. Any identifying data was

anonymised. Some parts of interviews were inaudible; this is noted in the transcription text. Each transcription was checked in full once completed. Please see Appendix D for a copy of one research interview transcript (Freddie). All of the transcripts are on the accompanying disc.

3.7.1 Critique of Transcription

Close attention by the researcher to recorded interviews is thought to facilitate interpretation of the data (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). However, it should be acknowledged that the transcription process has unavoidably incorporated the biases of the researcher: "when representing an oral voice in written form, the transcriber becomes the channel for that voice. Because the transcriber is *not* that voice, any act of transcription becomes an interpretive act" (Bird, 2005, p. 228).

Various researchers have highlighted the methodological and theoretical issues related to the process of transcription (e.g. Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). They argue that transcriptions are not objective accounts and cannot be neutral. Thus transcriptions are subject to interpretation according to the knowledge, beliefs and interpretations of the researcher. Encapsulated in this argument is the fact that an interview does not only encompass verbal information, but a number of other influences such as setting, social background of researcher and participant, and nuances of social interaction including body language, tone of voice, volume and timing of speech. All of this information could not possibly be included in a transcription due to time constraints, meaning that it is necessarily selective (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). In addition to this, there are a myriad of transcription techniques, with no one standardised approach (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999).

These limitations evidently apply to this study and to the interpretations made from the data. However, they are perhaps less applicable to the method of thematic analysis used to identify patterns in the data, used in this study. As described below, thematic analysis is more interested in the subject matter of participant's responses, rather than the way things are said.

3.8 Data Analysis: Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was chosen for the study because it is a flexible and recognised method in psychological research for organising and constructing trends and meaning in qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Willig, 2013). The researcher considered other methods of analysis before deciding on thematic analysis. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was ruled out as the research questions were more interested in exploring and analysing YP's direct experiences, rather than how YP made sense of their experiences. Discourse and Narrative analysis were excluded for similar reasons – the research was more interested in what participants said, rather than how it was constructed and/or said.

Thematic analysis allows the researcher to combine the overall patterns of data (which makes some meanings more obvious within the research) with meanings that may be more hidden (Joffe, 2012). It aims to make sense of what participants have said and why, rather than simply summarising and organising (Willig, 2013). It can also throw light on the process of social construction (Joffe, 2012), which makes it particularly useful for this study.

A theme is a "specific pattern of meaning found in the data" (Joffe, 2012, p.209). Themes can be directly observable or implicit, depending on how the researcher interprets the data. This is related to what Willig (2013) terms "empathic" (p.145) or "suspicious" (p.143) data analysis (also labelled manifest and latent content by Joffe (2012). Empathic analysis tries to understand the participant's experience from within; suspicious interpretation, on the other hand, aims to reveal a hidden truth to explain why something is the way it is (Willig, 2013). This study used mostly empathic data analysis, although suspicious interpretation was used aspects of the data that were thought to relate more specifically to poverty. The use of analyses will be explained and justified more fully in the findings and discussion chapters.

A further distinction made when constructing themes is whether the data used is deductive or inductive (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Joffe, 2012). Deductive data is structured around the theoretical underpinning brought to the research, while

inductive data is derived from the raw data itself (Boyatzis, 1998; Joffe, 2012). This study used mainly an inductive approach; the researcher was open to new ways of thinking about poverty-related educational inequality, while also using previous research as a framework for organising thinking and analysis.

This study followed the steps outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006) in their seminal paper on thematic analysis in psychology, outlined in Table 3.2 below. As detailed above, the process of transcription enabled the researcher to become familiar with and immersed in the data. During this stage the researcher began to notice patterns and items of interest in the data, in relation to the research questions. These initial observations were documented in a research diary, so they could be referred back to and used in data analysis. This was only one aspect of analysis; Braun & Clarke (2013) caution against relying on researcher observations, as they are not a result of systematic analysis and may reflect the researcher's biases. Joffe (2012) outlines that a good thematic analysis must describe the majority of the data, not just the data that backs up the researcher's arguments, and that this should be done systematically in order to claim that the findings are reliable and valid.

Table 3.3 Phases of thematic analysis
(taken from Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

Phase	Description of the process
Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.
Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

Once transcriptions were complete, they were printed out so that hard copies could be used for manual analysis (recording codes directly onto transcripts). Subsequently, the researcher found it easier to code electronically. Please see Appendix D for an electronically coded transcript (all coded transcripts are on the accompanying disc). Transcriptions were re-read by the researcher several times, following advice from Braun and Clarke (2013) to think about what the data means, reading the text "actively, analytically and critically" (p.205) while holding the research questions in mind.

Initial codes were generated by analysing the longest interview transcript to begin with, which appeared to contain the richest data. This was done in order to generate a range of codes that could (in theory) be applied to subsequent transcriptions. Initially, the majority of data extracts were systematically recorded for coding (by cutting and pasting into another word document), even if they seemed irrelevant to the research questions. This was done in order not to miss aspects of the data, and because the research questions were fairly broad. Braun & Clarke (2013) refer to this as inclusivity in complete coding.

Data extracts (all instances of text selected in the previous step) were cut out into individual strips and collated on a large sheet of paper, these were formed into clusters according to similarity (see Appendix E for photo documentation of this process). The clusters were named according to their perceived meaning, which produced an introductory list of codes (see table in Appendix F). This initial list of codes included data relating to the context; as analysis progressed the codes became shorter.

Assignment of codes was done by using guide questions including "'what is being described (event, action, interaction)?', 'how is it understood (processes) - what does it mean?', and 'why?'" (Tuckett, 2005, p.82). Thus, each code aimed to capture the meaning of a section of text. This process informed the researcher of the prevalence codes within the data (Joffe, 2012). Initial coding was done inductively; thus the data was taken at face value and no interpretations were made (Willig, 2013).

Once the initial codes were completed, the researcher re-read the transcript several times to ensure that all relevant text was coded sufficiently, and to allocate additional codes where needed. During this review process, the researcher thought more about the relationships in the data – within and between codes – going from specific to more general ideas or groupings, producing themes. Themes were constructed from combinations of codes that were similar or overlapping, and relevant to answering the research questions. Themes are broader than codes, as they contain many facets and represent patterns of meaning in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Questions posted by Braun and Clarke (2006) were used as a guide during the construction of themes from the data. These included:

> 'What does this theme mean?', 'What are the assumptions underpinning it?', 'What are the implications of this theme?', 'What conditions are likely to have given rise to it?', 'Why do people talk about this thing in this particular way (as opposed to other ways)?', and 'What is the overall story the different themes reveal about the topic?' (p.94)

After review with the research supervisors, and peer review with cohort members, four provisional themes were produced for the initial transcript, each

with sub-themes (see Appendix F). These provisional themes assisted in organising information for the analysis of the remaining transcripts. These were systematically analysed using the same method, electronically recording codes onto the transcripts. Coding was an iterative process (Tuckett, 2005), each transcript was re-read several times during coding. Some data extracts were coded more than once and new codes were generated, in addition to those from the initial transcript.

During this iterative process, information from individual transcripts was brought together into a holistic overview. As the data was rich and wide ranging, the initial 4 themes were expanded into 11 themes (see Appendix G). After review with research peers and supervisors, these themes were again reduced to 4 overall themes, each with a number of subthemes; codes were also shortened (see Appendix H). The final codes were further scrutinised for aspects that were interpreted as specifically relating to poverty; these were highlighted in yellow for later analysis.

Themes were mapped visually using Simplemind (2016), an application for iPad. This visual overview facilitated the review and exploration of themes and sub-themes, including their prevalence and the connections between them (Joffe, 2012), in order for the researcher to make sense of the data and to construct a cohesive narrative (Tuckett, 2005). This is referred to by Braun & Clarke (2013) as pattern based analysis. This is based on the assumption that commonly recurring codes and themes across the data set are important. However, more unusual and idiosyncratic codes and themes were also included as meaningful, as they could throw light on information that other participants may have taken for granted, found difficult to discuss, or had been unable to articulate (Joffe, 2012). The end result of the analysis at this stage was a set of 'distinctive, coherent themes, and a sense of how they fit together and the overall story they tell about the data' (Braun & Clarke, 2013 p.236).

Braun and Clarke (2013) emphasise the fact that themes are actively constructed by the researcher, and do not 'emerge' from the data. It is perhaps important to note that the themes related closely to the organisation of the literature review in Chapter 2, which could show researcher bias in the way that

interview information was organised. Some codes did not fit with any of the themes and were collated into a miscellaneous category, to ensure that they continued to be considered throughout the analysis.

Braun & Clarke's (2013) "analytic sensibility" (p.201) was held in mind by the researcher throughout the process of thematic analysis. They propose that this is a skill progressively developed by researchers. It includes:

> ...the skill of reading and interpreting data through the particular theoretical lens of your chosen method. It also refers to being able to produce insights into the meaning of the data that go beyond the obvious or surface-level content of the data, to notice patterns or meanings that link to broader psychological, social or theoretical concerns. (p.201-204)

They assure that the more a researcher engages with the data, the more is revealed and advise that researchers try to empathise with their participants. This is particularly relevant to the next stage of the research process: outlining and explaining the findings in order to make sense of the patterns identified in the data. This is described and discussed in full in the findings and discussion sections in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.8.1 Critique of Thematic Analysis

Braun & Clarke (2013) point out some limitations of thematic analysis. Firstly, it can be limited as it tends to describe participants' views, rather than interpret. However the use of an existing theoretical framework within which to position the data can address this limitation. The literature review in this study set out previous research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality, divided into sections according to approach. This provided a backdrop to which the data was interpreted, and helped to address this limitation. Secondly, thematic analysis does not provide a process for higher level, more interpretive analysis and the individual voices can get lost when comparing data between participants. This study used a relatively small pool of participants, and the findings section provides a platform for individual voices to be heard. Lastly, thematic analysis also does not include the examination of the use of language, which is captured in methods such as discourse analysis. This study was more

interested in what participants said about their experiences, rather than analysing the language used to describe them.

3.8.2 Quality Criteria

There is ongoing debate in qualitative research on the criteria that should be used to judge its quality (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Yardley, 2000). Researchers have questioned whether the quantitative criteria of reliability, validity and generalisability are applicable (Yardley, 2000). This section will discuss quantitative criteria in relation to qualitative research. It will also set out some of the criteria developed and thought to be more applicable to qualitative research, which was used in the current study.

<u>Dependability</u>

The quantitative criterion of reliability means that the same results are generated when the same measures are administered by different researchers to different participants. This is problematic for qualitative research, which recognises the inevitability of the researcher influencing the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Golafshani (2003) posits that reliability is situated in a positivist perspective of a single knowable reality; whereas qualitative research acknowledges potential multiple realities constructed by participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013). People's views are so subjective it is unlikely that the same answer would be obtained on different occasions (Willig, 2013). Thus, reliability in qualitative research has been conceptualised more broadly as "about the 'trustworthiness' or 'dependability' of our methods of data collection and analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.279).

Dependability is evidenced through the tracking of change in the process of research by detailing the study step by step (Mertens, 2010). This chapter has documented the steps taken at each juncture of the research. Any interpretations made with the findings are explained in subsequent chapters. This clear documentation of the process of the research study has aimed to ensure complete transparency.

<u>Credibility</u>

Credibility is the qualitative parallel for the quantitative idea of validity (Mertens, 2010). Validity refers to the accuracy with which the research portrays 'reality' and "whether the effects identified are in fact being caused by the variable(s) under study" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.280). Willig (2013) asserts that qualitative research allows for credibility issues to be addressed during the research itself; Mertens (2010) outlines a number of factors that contribute to credibility of research. These approaches will be detailed in this section.

Firstly, sufficient involvement in the field by researchers should be ensured (Mertens, 2010). This was done by completing the research in the everyday 'real life' setting of a school. This was a school that the researcher was already professionally involved with, in the capacity of a trainee educational psychologist on a 2 year placement. The school was one of a 'patch' of schools covered by the researcher, thus there had been prior contact between the researcher and school staff.

The researcher ensured that interviews were sufficiently long to elicit relevant and meaningful information, gathering as much thick description as possible. Participants were informed that they were free to question and correct the researcher's assumptions about meanings addressed in the research (outlined in the interview method above). The researcher did this by 'checking' information throughout the interviews, seeking verification from participants. It should be acknowledged that there may have been some influence on participants from watching a short video at the beginning of the interview.

Credibility for this study was also sought by discussing the process of coding and the construction of themes with 4 university members of staff, including in depth analysis with the researcher's university research supervisor. Professor Gersch, co-author of the Little Box of Big Questions 2 (2015), was consulted at regular intervals throughout the research process. The researcher brought transcription, coding, and thematic analysis data constructed from the study to seminars with research peers on the doctoral cohort, to discuss issues and seek peer credibility checks.

The researcher's ontological and epistemological positioning has clarified how the data will be used and interpreted. In addition, reflexivity meant that the research process was closely scrutinised throughout. Reflexivity in this project was facilitated by the use of a research diary, university seminars, peer supervision, and regular supervision with university tutors. Through this process, the researcher acknowledged biases that she brought to the study, and how these affected the interpretation of data. For example, the researcher has been clear about seeking to address issues of social justice in education, which will clearly affect the way that data from the study is interpreted.

The research diary was used throughout the research process, from the planning stage to the final analysis and discussion. After each interview notes were made on contextual factors and reflections on what had gone well during interviews, as well as more challenging aspects (as perceived by the researcher). During transcription, notes were recorded on initial ideas arising from the text. At the coding and construction of themes stage, notes were kept on ideas around theory and method. These notes were referred to when writing up the findings and discussion sections of the thesis.

The proposal for this thesis was presented to the Educational Psychology team in the borough in which it was carried out, for discussion and feedback. Suggestions from placement colleagues were taken on board by the researcher. The findings and salient discussion points will be brought to the team for discussion, particularly around what the EPS may be able to action from points raised in the study.

Transferability

Transferability is used in qualitative research as a parallel of the quantitative concept of generalisability (Mertens,2010). This addresses whether the findings from research can be applied to wider or different populations. Fox et al. (2007) argue that the research of social constructions illuminates particular individual situations, and generalisation is not usually possible. However a counter-argument to this is that if experiences are socially constructed, they are potentially generalisable (Willig, 2013).

Mertens (2010) suggests a number of steps that can be taken by the researcher to enable the transferability of the research findings, which have been adhered to in this study. These include the provision of adequate information on the study, including extensive description of the time, place context, and culture (known as thick description). She proposes that the use of multiple cases strengthens transferability; the researcher endeavoured that 8 participants would be an adequate number to ensure some transferability of data. The fact that many aspects of themes (and subthemes) were iterated by each participant reinforces this view.

As discussed in Chapter 2, previous research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality has highlighted that interventions should be tailored to individuals, schools, and communities. It was not expected that the findings from this study would be entirely generalisable, although some of the information may be useful to schools in other areas as the themes could be generalisable or universal (e.g. conflict with teachers).

3.9 Ethics

Ethics is a crucial consideration for applied psychologists working with vulnerable groups such as YP, who could be seen as needing more protection than adult participants. Ethics prioritises the process of psychological research, including the researcher's relationships with participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The researcher in the current study maintained an ethical stance throughout the process of conducting the research – from planning through to completion and write-up. To ensure ethical considerations were adequately met, ethical standards outlined by the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2009) and Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) (Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics, 2012) were used as a reference throughout.

The researcher employed a particular emphasis on the BPS maxim of maximising benefit and minimising harm. While it was not envisaged that any distress would be caused by participation, a directory of sources of school and community support for psychological well-being was compiled. Extensive

discussion with research supervisors took place before the study began around the ethics of researching YP experiencing poverty, and how this could be done without stigmatising participants. The researcher was cognisant of not reinforcing existing inequalities during the research process; for this reason it was decided not to include any questions around socio-economic circumstances. An early research project idea was to ask young people their views on the attainment gap. This would have involved sharing data around social class, attainment, and socio-economic status which could result in participants perceiving themselves negatively, thus damaging self esteem and/or dignity.

Willig (2013) outlines five main ethical considerations in qualitative research practice, which were adhered to in this study. These are: informed consent (from young people, school, and parent/guardian), no deception, the right to withdraw, debriefing, and confidentiality/anonymity.

As outlined previously, informed consent was gained in this study through verbally explaining the research to the school and to potential participants, and through an information sheet and 3 different letters: to the school, participants, and parents/carers. The letter was worded sensitively to avoid stigmatising families experiencing poverty. Participants were advised on how recordings of interviews would be used. Written consent was acquired from the school and participants, and verbal consent from parents/carers; participants were assured that they could withdraw from the research at any time.

Participants were informed that their discussion would remain confidential, unless they disclosed something that would put them (or others) in immediate danger. Anonymity in the use of interview data was explained and each participant chose a name they would like to be known by in the research thesis.

The language used when conducting the research with young people avoided stigmatising, and (as outlined above) poverty was not mentioned during interviews. Students were not directly asked about their personal socioeconomic circumstances, although they were free to share information if they wished. This approach could be argued to be deceptive, as an important

focus of the research was not raised with participants. However, it was decided after extensive discussion, that this deception was justified as it protected the dignity of participants.

Creswell (2012) points out the importance of a caring attitude, researcher/participant equality, rapport building, respect, transparency, democracy, and commitment to social change between participants and researchers. The researcher endeavoured to maintain these attributes during research interviews, displaying a respectful and caring approach to each participant. The researcher briefly re-summarised the aim of the study for each participant at the beginning and end of each interview. Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions throughout the interview process.

Willig (2013) asserts that qualitative research is 'inherently interpretative in that qualitative data never speaks for itself' (p.39), highlighting that researchers have the responsibility of ethically interpreting data. These maxims were adhered to throughout the research process, facilitated through researcher reflexivity (detailed earlier in this chapter).

Permission from the borough's Educational Psychology Service was given for this research. The research was also approved by UEL School of Psychology Ethics Committee (see Appendix I for the letter of approval).

3.10 Summary

This chapter has detailed the steps taken in gathering data for the current research study. As has been discussed, researcher positioning, ontology and epistemology informed the process of research. During the data collection phase 428 minutes of interview data was created. The next section will describe what was found after systematically analysing this data.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a description of the findings of the study. As detailed in previous chapters, the study was interested in what a group of YP experiencing poverty thought helped and hindered them to learn at school, what their skill-sets were (and skills they would like to develop), and their thoughts about the future. Please see Appendix J for a pen portrait of participants. This study wanted to find out more about YP's views as these have been excluded by most previous research. Chapter 3 detailed how these findings were analysed using thematic analysis. In this chapter, four themes (with subthemes) constructed from the data will be presented in depth, with supporting quotes. The chapter will conclude with a synopsis of the findings.

Two options were considered when writing this chapter: to present findings in sections defined by the research questions, or to present the themes constructed from an overall thematic analysis. The researcher chose the latter option, presenting the findings as an integrated whole. It was envisaged that description of the overall themes would simultaneously answer the research questions. The research questions will be explored more explicitly in the discussion in Chapter 5.

Each of the four main themes identified in the thematic analysis had up to 7 subthemes. There was some overlap between themes, which is discussed in the narrative below. Extracts (or quotes) were selected from across the data to describe and illustrate aspects of each theme. Hesitation and repetition were removed from some quotes; any missing text is indicated by '...', following guidelines from Braun & Clarke (2013).

Quotes help to show the breadth of the data across themes and are accompanied by an illustrative analysis. This is described by Braun & Clarke (2013) as an approach where the "analytic narrative provides a rich and detailed description and interpretation of the theme, and data quotations inserted

throughout are used as examples of the analytic points you are claiming" (p.252).

As detailed in Chapter 3, the researcher initially generated 4 themes from analysis of the first research interview. These were expanded into 11 themes as coding and analysis of additional interviews proceeded. These 11 themes were then condensed into 4 main themes, with subthemes. Reduction in the number of themes was done in order to make the findings easier to conceptualise and explain. Please see Appendices F-H for documentation of this process. Please see Figure 4.1(below) for a visual map of the four themes constructed from the data.

Figure 4.1: Map of themes constructed to understand the views of young people experiencing poverty on their learning, skills, and the future

Thematic map

1. Aspects of school influencing learning
- Teacher attributes
- Relationships with teachers
- Peer relationships
- Exclusion leads to disengagement
- Challenges of school systems
- Pastoral support
- School environment

2. Students are individuals (personalised learning)
- Preferred approaches to learning
- Feelings
- Strengths and interests
- Motivation

3. Thinking about the future
- Aspirations for learning
- Aspirations for jobs
- Aspirations for personal life

4. Families, communities and role models
- Learning/homework
- Family, adult relationships and role models
- Peer group

4.2 Theme 1: Aspects of school influencing learning

Figure 4.2: Theme 1: Aspects of school influencing learning
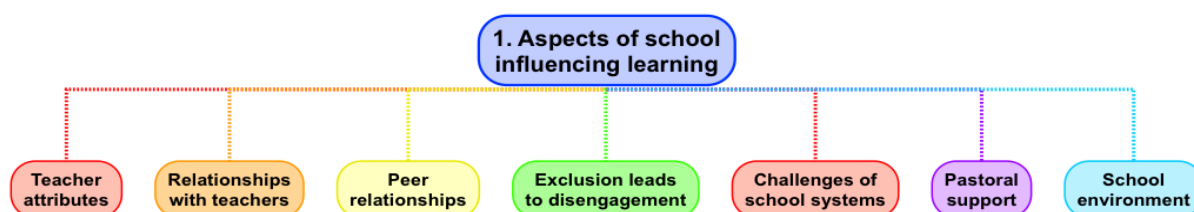
This theme had the greatest allocation of codes and subthemes in comparison to other themes. It encompasses both supporting factors and barriers to learning within participants' experience of school. School was the focus and main context for learning, as discussed by the YP. Aside from the obvious observation that school is intended as a place of learning, this may have been due to the interviews being carried out in school.

The seven subthemes are indicative of aspects of school that YP thought influenced their learning. These were constructed by clustering codes according to similarity under the main theme. Each subtheme will be discussed in turn in this section. Where appropriate, some subthemes will be divided into supports and barriers.

Subtheme 1.1 Teacher attributes: supports

Teachers were analysed to be central to participants' experience of learning at school; both teacher 'personality' and teaching style. Participants' liking or enthusiasm for a subject was often determined by their teacher. Floyd said that "a teacher can make a lesson interesting...you could go 'today we're going to' [*bored voice*]...'ok, so today we're going to learn!' [*animated voice*]...be more energetic" (Floyd, lines 688-698).

Teacher skill in explaining concepts affected how well participants learnt: "I think some teachers I can understand but some I can't" (Aliyah, line 185). Teachers who intuitively provided extra support to students, particularly one-to-one support, were viewed as supportive. Dennis said he learnt best in a class where "when you're stuck the teacher helps you" (Dennis, line 48). Holly pointed out

that "he just like helps me more than like the other science teachers...explains it more...and one to one yeah" (Holly, lines 63-73). This was clearly important for learning, Holly described another teacher: "she does it in like one to one...[and] explained it to the whole class" (Holly, lines 113-128). Leah said:

> Leah: my Spanish teacher and I've had her for 2 years, she's sort of been helping me with every single question...
>
> Researcher: when she helps you individually is that?
>
> Leah: yeah, or if she just helps me automatically
>
> (Leah, lines 249-257)

The teacher's personality traits seemed to affect the way that participants viewed their lessons as they often commented on them; "She was really calm...nice hearted lady, if you were in trouble or something, she can help... doesn't mind saying it again and again" (Aliyah, lines 297-298). Students also valued teachers they perceived as fair, approachable, energetic, and motivating.

The element of fun introduced by the teacher was found to be a major factor in effective learning. "He would always laugh and joke with the class...he wouldn't take stuff super seriously" (Bertie, lines 121-125). Leah attributed this factor to her improved levels at school: "I had all the fun teachers...and we like played like all sorts of games and everything, which was OK... now, I'm nearly all 5s in every lesson" (Leah, lines 104-109). Leah described one of her teacher's sense of fun in more detail:

> I don't know, he calls us gurdatorial flash...to remember our name he calls us smiler, or he calls us pickie upper...he goes t'internet for the internet and everything, he goes g-gool for goop, he goes dougal for goggles...and it's just something which sort of amuses me a bit. (Leah, lines 309-321)

Floyd said "they made sense...they made the lesson fun...even though you were still learning stuff...they were sporty and they...taught well they...wanted you to do good, knowing stuff" (Floyd, lines 186-193). Freddie reinforced this point:

...wood tech...is more practical and we don't really do writing...we [are] just...told what to do and then we do it...straight away. Cos it's fun, we get to make things...everyone, no trouble, we all just get on with it (Freddie, lines 642-650)

Leah described a regular maths lesson: "you get play, we get to do...fun stuff when we have double maths, and every Friday we...do a relay thing" (Leah, lines 128-130). Floyd suggested ways in which lessons could be more fun and conducive to learning:

...there'd be a fun activity on the board first and then...you'd have a chilled back lesson, to just gently work on the stuff that you've been taught...if you don't get it, I [*teacher*] will work with a group of you...and make sure you get it, if you still don't get it I'll make sure you get it (Floyd, lines 891-899).

Perceived strictness of the teacher was a factor in how YP learned. Aliyah explained that she liked the teacher being strict: "not that strict like, as, in a bad way, strict as in a good way to make us learn" (Aliyah, lines 204-205). Teachers that gave students an element of autonomy were also important. Aliyah said "she trusts us...she knows that we are going to be okay...and she gives us work so that we can do it" (Aliyah, lines 209-212). Similarly, Bertie stated that "he would let us do what we want...he would let us like write stories in English" (Bertie, lines 135-136). Some students liked teachers that gave them the opportunity to learn with their friends: "most teachers would keep you all together...tell you what to do, but he would let you like go off in a group" (Bertie, lines 139-143).

Participants were equally articulate about teacher attributes that presented barriers to learning. These will be detailed in the next section.

Subtheme 1.1: Teacher attributes: barriers

There were some teacher attributes that participants viewed as a barrier to learning. Aliyah highlighted situations where the teacher struggled to manage challenging behaviour: "most of my classes...the boys mostly or sometimes the girls, they talk...and that makes the teacher like forget about the lesson and tell them off" (Aliyah, lines 194-197).

Some students said that a teacher had put them off a subject. When asked if he liked maths Dennis said: "no, because of my maths teacher...he sent me out of the class because I was running into the room" (Dennis, lines 135-138). Similarly Leah said "I don't make progress in the lessons I hate...don't like the teachers and don't like the lesson" (Leah, lines 989-991). Aliyah described how she had stopped doing piano due to feeling intimidated by her teacher:

> I don't know something happened...I think I wasn't that confident, my teacher was really strict, I think he got really like mad and...I got too scared and like, no I just don't want to do it anymore, so I stopped for a year, not doing piano or not thinking of going back (Aliyah, lines 1345-1349).

Some teachers were perceived to not care if a student wasn't 'getting it' in class: "I don't get help much" (Dennis, line 554); "sometimes when you're stuck the teacher doesn't even bother" (Dennis, lines 48-49); "most of the teachers aren't even bothered though" (Floyd, lines 50-51). Teachers were described as being both reluctant and unable to explain the work: "if I don't get it a teacher won't explain it to me...or I ask them to explain it a different way and they don't know how to explain it in a different way so then I'm stuck" (Floyd, lines 902-906).

Research participants were vocal about the kind of teachers they would like. They wanted teachers that were fair, respectful, and understanding: "if the teachers can understand" (Freddie, line 557); "have really nice understanding like teachers that can understand the child" (Aliyah, lines 1134-1135). They also wanted teachers that were committed and invested in students: "the teachers that want students to learn" (Floyd, line 879).

In addition to teacher attributes and skills in the classroom, participants frequently talked about relationships with staff in school. This aspect of school was analysed as being crucial to successful learning. The next section will detail some of the participant contributions on this subtheme.

Subtheme 1.2: Relationships with teachers: supports

Relationship with the teacher was analysed as a key factor in how participants learnt best. YP appreciated teachers that they could talk to, cared about them and were invested in them. Floyd said teachers with whom he had a positive relationship "wanted you to do well" (Floyd, line 197). Freddie talked about one of the best teachers he had had:

> I was in nurture...there was only like 7 of us...she taught us every single day, every lesson...She knew how to calm us down and everything... She knew how to handle, say if we got really badly told off and everything, and we would come into her class really annoyed she would know, she would leave us alone and let us calm down and then we would get on with our work or she would take me out of the class and talk to me (Freddie, lines 96-119).

Students benefitted from relationships with teachers who they could discuss difficulties with. Freddie described how a member of staff supported him to self-regulate: "Miss F, she helps a lot...she don't teach me she just helps me with things...like say if get annoyed I tell her and she would help me" (Freddie, lines 140-149). Floyd talked about his PE teacher: "he explains stuff and I understand it, but I came from a lesson right, which I didn't understand, Mr S explained it and I understood it" (Floyd, lines 235-237). Leah, when discussing Curtis (in the video shown in the interview) said that "the teacher helps him grow up it's probably what happened to me" (Leah, lines 80-81).

A good relationship with the teacher helped students to learn: "I would have to like them...for me to listen to them" (Floyd, lines 138-140). Aliyah captured the vital aspect of positive emotional relationships and how they relate to learning when talking about wanting to increase her confidence e.g. around speaking out in class. She said that

> ...they [school] don't know the background of it and instead it would take ages to explain it and help...but my mum...knows me like from my heart and outside and all...I think she can help me get over my confidence (Aliyah, lines 1001-1006).

Aliyah's comments convey the time needed to build trust and personal knowledge; the basis of positive relationships. This can be challenging to do in secondary school, with frequent changes of teachers.

Analysis also showed that negative relationships with teachers presented barriers to learning in school. This is described in the next section.

Subtheme 1.2: Relationships with teachers: barriers

The data revealed that less positive relationships with teachers were a major barrier to learning in school. Some students said that a teacher had put them off a subject: "hate art... I've never liked the teacher" (Floyd, lines 1257-1263). Floyd had a particular problem with his maths teacher: "I absolutely hate hate hate hate...hate hate I can go on forever...my maths teacher... when I moved into his class...I moved down loads of levels...don't understand him, he doesn't explain" (Floyd, lines 1307-1319). Freddie described the impasse he had come to with his maths teacher:

> ...I want a different teacher in maths...I don't want to be in that class at all, next maths lesson I'm literally just gonna sit there doing nothing, cos I know he's just gonna have a go at me...last time...I asked if I can have help...he said yeah hold on I'll be over in a minute, he walks outside, talks to some other kid, and then come back in, I asked him again, he told me to shut up......I just sat there doing nothing (Freddie, lines 776-793).

Power differentials between students and teachers, and a lack of respect from teachers were found to be a dominant theme. Some students described how they felt they could never win: "sir literally came flying out the classroom, he just, in my face, proper that close... it's really annoying, but then he'll get away with it" (Freddie, lines 698-701).

> ...she said to me shut my mouth or I'll shut it for you...my science teacher...I said to her you basically can't say it to a student, and then she went well I can do what I like, I'm the teacher you're the student, and I went what's happened the other way round...and then I just literally walked out the classroom even like 2 minutes before the bell went (Leah, lines 876-885).

Power differentials were evident when the teacher's version of events was privileged over the student's:

> ...I just think cos he's an adult they listen to him more than they do me...N tapped this other kid and then Sir said how dare you touch another kid...N went I tapped him...And then he [the teacher] reported him...and he got done for assault, when there was a camera right there pointing in our classroom and outside the classroom, and they didn't even look at the security cameras (Freddie, lines 683-691).

> ...because we have a TA...in the class. So they'll say one thing and then get the other teacher who...didn't even hear it or see it, get involved and then they'll say oh yeah...and then obviously cos there's more people saying this...the head teacher or whoever dealing with it would say oh yeah to them and not to me. With the 2 of them against me (Freddie, lines 1317-1324).

The data showed that some students felt they were scapegoats for teachers;

> ...even if we are just, like, sitting down on our chair doing nothing he'll shout at us and send us outside. He don't do it to anyone else...if we're talking he sends us out but when everyone else is talking he don't sent anyone else out (Freddie, lines 33-37).

Students described feelings of humiliation in class, if they felt that they were being singled out by the teacher:

> ...teachers...make you feel small...embarrass you...shout at me in front of the class...class went silent...I ain't gonna let him make a fool out of me. So I end up saying something back...when the teacher makes you feel...all horrible, I don't like it...I'll try making them feel small...I've done that before and the teacher didn't like it and I got excluded for it. Shouldn't have been doing it to me, trying to embarrass me in front of the whole class (Freddie, lines 833-859).

Floyd said of one teacher: "he'll give you a call out and then he'll start laughing at you and going 'well you've got a call out I see'...even though he knows that he's given you a call out" (Floyd, lines 590-595).

Participants thought their relationships with some teachers would benefit from change. Students said they needed "A lot more respect from the teachers...because...I treat people how I like to be treated. If they treat me in different ways then I treat them horrible" (Freddie, lines 1200-1203). Leah said that those in charge should "Make sure that they fired all the horrible teachers and bring back the more nice teachers who liked the kids" (Leah, lines 746-748). Floyd, when asked what changes he'd make if he could said "I'd make sure that the teachers are not boring and they're fair...that there's no cocky teachers" (Floyd, lines 586-589).

This subtheme illustrates how student relationships with staff were a fundamental part of both positive and negative learning experiences at school. Perhaps unsurprisingly, peer relationships were also found to play a significant role in learning at school, detailed in the next section.

Subtheme 1.3: Peer relationships: supports

The data revealed positivity from students about their friendships in school. Friendships were found to help with learning and appeared to provide a protective factor, particularly for those who had difficult relationships with some teachers: "I get annoyed sometimes when they [teachers] take the mick out of my friends and that" (Freddie, lines 171-172). Some students used their friends to back up their learning: "if the teacher can't explain I just ask one of my friends" (Bertie, line 107). Students also appeared to be more comfortable in sharing some information with their friends, rather than the teacher/s. Bertie said that he planned to discuss his subject choices with his friends, rather than school staff.

Subtheme 1.3: Peer relationships: barriers

Analysis of the data also showed that some peer relationships presented barriers to learning. Some students appeared to not have the support of their peer group. Both Dennis and Floyd said they preferred doing things on their own. It is noteworthy that Floyd had a diagnosis of autism, indicating that his social communication was different from typical students; Dennis had a diagnosis of ADHD and was reported to have social communication difficulties

(see Appendix J for a pen portrait of participants). Other students felt that they were sometimes being used as scapegoats by their peers:

> Freddie: ...other people...they're sitting near me and they'll go oh it's his fault or something like that
>
> Researcher: and then the teacher would act on that?
>
> Freddie: yeah
>
> (Freddie, lines 664-668)

Students talked about the anxiety they felt when comparing grades with their peers. Aliyah talked about rejection from peers in Egypt, where she was at school for a period: "all my friends...it mattered what sets you were in...if you weren't level that good, they wouldn't really want you with them, the group of clever people...So I was really trying my best and...it was hard for me as well" (Aliyah, lines 839-847). She described a recent test in the UK: "I cried...I was too scared to tell my parents...it was like really hard to say...to even say to my friends, ah I didn't get a good level...and I didn't even tell them" (Aliyah, lines 1292-1301).

The data showed that peers could prevent learning in class by being disruptive: "some people...they're just being really annoying so I can't concentrate" (Leah, lines 849-857).

> Researcher: ...is there anything that that stops you from learning at school?...
>
> Holly: people talk...like messing about...
>
> Researcher: ...does that happen much?
>
> Holly: sometimes yeah, in maths...depends who's in the class
>
> (Holly, lines 76-87)

Difficulties in school resulted in some students being excluded, both internally and externally. The next subtheme outlines the effects of exclusion, as expressed by participants.

Subtheme 1.4: Exclusion leads to disengagement

Analysis of the data revealed the barriers that exclusion (both internal and external) presented to student progress and learning. "I don't really learn

much...I always get kicked out of the classes" (Freddie, lines 500-501). Being educated in isolation was seen as a waste of time: "I'm not learning anything in isolation cos it's not the same as being in the actual class...I'm stuck in isolation doing writing and work and then I get back into class and they're doing a whole lot of different things" (Freddie, lines 57-60). Missing work in isolation had a knock on impact on how students were banded in school: "I'm good at maths but then he kicks me out of the lesson so obviously my grades are going down...cos I'm not there...and now I'm gonna be in set 5, the lowest set" (Freddie, lines 704-712).

Students were excluded for a variety of reasons e.g. "arguing with teachers, shouting things out in class, swearing, all different things" (Freddie, lines 578-579). Some students perceived that "the teachers kick you out for no reason" (Floyd, line 42); "today I got kicked out for nothing...I was sitting on my chair and apparently I looked too relaxed...I got a call out" (Floyd, lines 54-59).

Exclusions did not seem to be working, in terms of improving or modifying behaviour. Quite the opposite, exclusions appeared to generate a cycle of more exclusion: "yeah, in maths every lesson, I can guarantee every lesson for this whole year, I've been sent out, sent out and call outs, every single lesson" (Freddie, lines 652-654). "I ain't learnt nothing this year" (Freddie, line 761). Some students said some classes were easier to settle in than others; Freddie was never excluded from wood tech "because that is more practical and we don't really do writing" (Freddie, lines 642-643), which implies that perhaps learning needs were not addressed in literacy-based classes.

Students said school shouldn't be too strict, Floyd suggested "there's no point giving kids detention, if they don't wanna learn they don't wanna learn, hey ho, don't punish them for it, they're choosing not to learn" (Floyd, lines 671-674). This suggests Floyd thinks punishments such as exclusion are ineffective for facilitating learning.

In addition to exclusion, participants identified other school systems that presented barriers to effective learning. These are detailed in the next subtheme.

Subtheme 1.5: Challenges of school systems

The data showed home-school relationships and communication as an issue, with home feeling disregarded by school in the view of the YP. For example, on the day of his research interview Freddie was placed in isolation for an incident that had occurred the previous week (which clearly has ethical implications, both for the fact that the 'punishment' was delayed, and for not informing parents). He discussed the lack of home-school communication: "they haven't rung my parents or told my parents or anything...so, I've been isolated and my parents don't even know about it" (Freddie, lines 9-13). One student implied that she and her family felt demonised by the school:

> Researcher: ...what did your mum and dad say when they got the report?
>
> Leah: my mum and dad just didn't care
>
> Researcher: really?
>
> Leah: yeah they don't matter. It prob, it's the school picking on [family name] day.
>
> (Leah, lines 893-901)

This split between home and school is likely to have an impact on the students' sense of belonging at school, and subsequently their investment in school.

Some aspects of curriculum delivery were confusing for students. Freddie talked about English in school:

> ...Depends what teacher I've got. I've got 3 different teachers and they all teach 3 different things...which is really confusing...cos you have 1 teacher doing 1 thing, the other teacher doing another, and then 1 teacher doing the same thing as what we did like 2 months ago...so it's really confusing (Freddie, lines 720-730).

Thus, some of the methods of teaching in the school were not clear to students. It seems logical that if the student is confused about the structure of the subject, it is likely to impact negatively on learning.

Students emphasised the need to be supported 1:1 or in small groups; and for smaller class sizes. Floyd wanted schools to "make sure that every school has enough people that they need...staff" (Floyd, lines 705-708).

Suggestions for the introduction of more (and different) subjects to the curriculum were raised frequently in the data. Students wanted to study more contemporary and practical subjects that they liked and were interested in. "Add more subjects...like ask students what subjects they would want to be added...like, game design subject where...people that want to do that can" (Bertie, lines 394-399); "if they wanted...they could pick those subjects and go to them...instead of doing some things that they might not even use when they're older" (Bertie, lines 404-407). "Need to do more practical things...more fun things that people like, and learning things that are going on now" (Freddie 1193-1196).

Thus, the data showed that students had many ideas for how school systems could be changed in order to facilitate learning. Part of school systems that were appreciated by students were services offered by pastoral support. This will be detailed in the next section.

Subtheme 1.6 Pastoral support

The data showed that participants valued structured emotional support offered in school, particularly the pastoral system. Leah talked about her experience of being supported through the CAF[1](Common Assessment Framework): "I used to get shouted at all the time...in year 7...they used to stand me outside for...half the lesson...it used to get so annoying" (Leah, lines 85-89). Being provided with pastoral support at school appeared to enable Leah to break the cycle of being excluded from class. She clearly valued the support: "I wish I was still on my report...of... progress...it's something...I've always wanted, to...stay on a report" (Leah, lines 909-916). It seemed important for Leah to be held in mind in this way. She described how she was supported, through 'the report', to progress with her learning "they have...3 targets for you to do...you have to be positive with learning...I've had interact with peers appropriately, arrive to school and lessons on time...as I bunked off 3-4 lessons...the other one was to follow instructions" (Leah, lines 926-943).

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[1] The CAF was introduced through *Every Child Matters* legislation (DfES, 2004). The legislation sets out a 4 step process to support CYP that there may be concerns about: identify needs early; assess those needs; deliver integrated services; and review progress. This is done by establishing a 'team around the child' made up of different professionals, selected as appropriate to each child.

The withdrawal of structured support was daunting for participants. Now that Leah was no longer supported through the CAF, she found it difficult to continue to achieve at school: "no, I don't like making progress, it's hard, progress is the hardest thing I've ever done" (Leah, lines 955-957). Freddie outlined how nurture provision had supported him to access the curriculum, through his good relationship with the teacher. Since the closure of the nurture base, it seemed Freddie was struggling to self-regulate. Leah outlined how counselling provision had supported her to deal with stress:

Leah: ...I have counselling to help...my stress...like it's so bad

Researcher: ...is it helpful?

Leah: sometimes....

Researcher: ...what do you get stressed about?

Leah: friends, school, and work

(Leah, lines 961-975)

This data shows the immense importance of emotional support for students experiencing poverty, and how key this is in being ready to learn. The next section details aspects of the school environment that can put up barriers to learning.

Subtheme 1.7: School environment

When participants were asked what they would change about school, the environment was considered to be important: "if the school environment is not that good and people...don't feel safe in it, well yeah you can change it" (Aliyah, lines 1125-1126). "If it's a skanky school I would do up the school...cos then you get the kids that want to learn in the school" (Floyd, lines 981-985).

Difficulties in negotiating the large school environment hindered participant learning: "I didn't know where half the classrooms were, so it was really hard to...find out what teacher I had, whereabouts the classrooms were" (Leah, lines 269-272). Floyd found classes overcrowded and cramped, saying "you just don't learn anything" (Floyd, line 720). He thought there should be a maximum of 20 students in a class. Floyd went on to say that he learnt best if he had his own space:

Researcher:	what environment do you think would be best for you to learn?
Floyd:	erm, on my own...
Researcher:	so what would that involve...being at a separate desk on your own?
Floyd:	I am for some lessons...
Researcher:	yeah, does that work?
Floyd:	yeah

(Floyd, lines 952-963)

The school environment was also described as distracting: "If someone told me something at home...I'd probably understand it more than at school...cos probably less distractions, I'm on my own" (Floyd, lines 95-99).

Thus, this subtheme showed that students were very cognisant of their environment, and how it could facilitate or prevent learning.

Theme 1: conclusion

A range of factors within school that impact on learning have been discussed within this theme. The data suggests that students who feel supported and included in school, have positive and respectful relationships with peers and teachers, who know their way around the school, and have skilled teachers who use effective pedagogies are most primed to learn.

As well as aspects of school that influence learning, there were individual differences found between participants' preferred methods and styles of learning. This is described in the second theme in the next section and shows the importance of taking individual factors into account when trying to maximise learning.

4.3 Theme 2: Students are individuals (personalised learning)

Figure 4.3: Theme 2: Students are individuals (personalised learning)
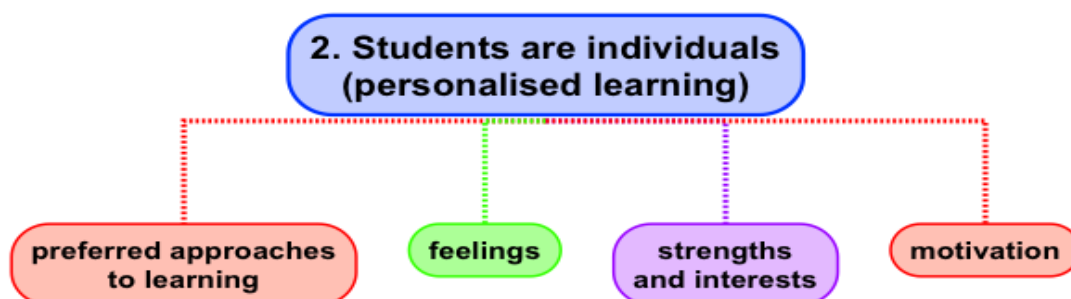
This theme represents participants' views on their preferred methods of learning, or learning styles. The data indicates that individual students are seeking individual approaches, that is, what works for one will not necessarily work for another. The codes for this theme covered a range of learning styles and approaches and were clustered (according to similarity) into 4 subthemes. Each subtheme is described in detail below. The data acknowledges that everyone learns in different ways, and that students should be seen as individuals. This was eloquently put by Aliyah: "Not every child is the same, they might look the same, they might be all in the class... the same levels, but not the same background" (Aliyah, lines 1144-1146); she suggested that each student may need a "change...[in] technique...of the way they teach them" (Aliyah, lines 1127-1130).

Subtheme 2.1: Preferred approaches to learning

The data showed that participants were particular about what worked best for them when learning. Some students learnt best at school, others learnt best at home. Relationships were mentioned e.g. Freddie usually learnt best when he was with his Dad. Some students preferred to work things out on their own, others were more group oriented: "in groups...when there's more than one person, so say if you got something wrong they could probably help you" (Bertie, lines 76-79). Dennis, who liked to work alone, stressed that students should have the option to "work by themselves" (Dennis, line 641). Support given in class could be experienced as stressful by some students:

Researcher: What happens when other people help?

Dennis: I get stressed....

Researcher: ... Is that when everyone helps you, or just certain people?

Dennis: certain people

(Dennis, lines 565-572)

Analysis of the data showed that some students preferred practical aspects of learning, particularly demonstration: "it being shown to me, how to do it" (Freddie, line 439). Many students liked moving around when learning, e.g. Bertie enjoyed drama because "you don't need to just sit in one spot...you can just move around...with your friends mostly, in one big group, and you just come up with the weirdest stuff" (Bertie, lines 434-438). Some students liked their learning to be broken up and graduated; Freddie described his ideal lesson in school: "doing the lesson bit by bit...so we'd have...one part of the lesson...do a little bit of the lesson, and then we'd...go on to play a game or something like that, and then we'll do the rest of the lesson" (Freddie: lines 504-509).

Students expressed a desire for more autonomy, and wanted to be treated in a more adult way, Bertie said he liked drama as: "We can really do what we want and then the teacher will just tell us if we need to improve it or not" (Bertie, lines 22-25). Aliyah thought that teachers should let students "do what they want, don't make...strict rules...make it seem fun...don't make it...cheesy or...babyish websites and stuff" (Aliyah, lines 1044-1050). Bertie suggested that teachers "Make school...more relaxed instead of...the teachers...forcing everything onto you...they [students] could take their time if they're doing it" (Bertie, lines 388-390).

Floyd: if you're not giving him what he wants. If he wants to work on his own, let him work on his own

Researcher: ...so give the students a bit more freedom.

Floyd: a teacher can't say 'oh that's good for you', it's not them

(Floyd, lines 643-650)

Participants acknowledged the importance of making mistakes when learning: "that's how people learn, history, they are made by mistakes they know what next time to do" (Aliyah, lines 151-153). Using the inspiration of others played a part in learning: Holly learnt from looking at other people's work in art.

Repetition and/or practice of learning was frequently cited to be helpful: "I just try and do it when I need to do it and then, then I'll probably learn it by the end of the day" (Bertie, lines 62-63); "probably learning it all over again" (Leah, line 216); "I'm the one that has to hear it twice so I can take it in and understand" (Aliyah, lines 170-171). Prior knowledge and paying purposeful attention was seen to be important in linking new information to old: "thinking of what I need to do" (Bertie, line 88); "listening to teachers and understanding the work" (Leah, line 177). Sometimes students felt that there was too much repetition, particularly if it involved a skill that was reinforced in activities outside school: "I already know what to do in wood tech, it's just like...I'm just waiting to do it while he's showing everyone else to do it" (Freddie, lines 766-770). Some students reported that they needed silence to concentrate, while others said that complete silence could be off-putting for them. Floyd reported that he had a tangle in class to support him to pay attention.

The benefit of having individual attention from the teacher when learning was frequently cited: "I like to be individual with the teacher...I find that more interesting...I can understand more" (Aliyah, lines 1177-1183). Some students said that they learnt from books or the internet; other students stressed that they didn't like books and were more auditory learners:

> Researcher: so you don't read, so how would you learn?
> Floyd: listen... [to] what's being said...[by] anyone...I have to like them...for me to listen to them...if I don't like them I won't listen to them.
>
> (Floyd, lines 126-144)

Analysis of the data showed that most students appeared to have a 'growth mindset' towards learning (see Chapter 2 for discussion of this concept); they believed that they could learn. Aliyah was an exception, she showed a relatively fixed mindset towards learning: "some people are like born clever, some people are born not clever" (Aliyah, lines 124-125). Aliyah went on to state that: "I think I'm on an average...I'm not below or above, but I'm trying to get above, but I think, I'm not like I said, some people are born clever" (Aliyah, lines 167-171). Floyd stated "I hate school anyway" (Floyd, line 67), saying "I like learning new

stuff but, in this school I don't think I've learnt anything" (Floyd, lines 76-77). For some students it appeared that frequent exclusions had 'shut down' their enthusiasm for learning at school.

Students used different sources of information for learning. Some used the internet, or found things out from watching television. Others learnt from other people, particularly their parents. Some students used the school website to engage more with their learning e.g. to find out about scheduled events, or to clarify homework requirements.

As well as individual approaches to learning, data analysis showed that participants were unanimous in stating that feelings affected how they learnt. This will be outlined in the next subtheme.

Subtheme 2.2: Feelings

Feelings were analysed as a dominant theme in participants' experiences of school. Students talked about a range of difficult feelings that affected their propensity to learn at school. These feelings included anger, frustration, regret, powerlessness, humiliation, stress, low self-esteem, demotivation, lack of respect, and feelings of being stuck.

Self regulation of feelings was a barrier for some students in resolving issues at school: "if I had to get sat down to talk to him though I would end up going schizo" (Freddie, lines 47-48); "if I get really annoyed, I do something stupid and I think why did I do that and then I think after" (Freddie, lines 154-155).

Other students seemed to feel self-conscious and lacking in confidence. Aliyah talked about her feelings of discomfort at school: "I'm not comfortable at school, I'm not comfortable also outside" (Aliyah, lines 623-624); "I really care about people think about me" (Aliyah, lines 647-648). This prevented her from doing things that she would like e.g. asking questions in class. Aliyah felt that she needed to improve her confidence to be able to achieve her goals:

> I'd like to be...more confident, cos I'm not that confident in lessons...I like to ask questions but if it's only me and the teacher...I don't like to answer them, if I get it wrong, I know, if you get something wrong, you could

make your mistakes, but...I don't think that's the me person. And...I don't…talk with...my friends...that much...To the teacher, or about the lesson (Aliyah, lines 604-615).

She wanted to increase her confidence at school, and discussed ways that she could achieve this: "my mum knows me like from my heart and outside and all, so she I think she can help me get over my confidence and all" (Aliyah, lines 953-955). Leah made comments throughout the interview that indicated low self esteem: "yay! I thought, I'm right for once...I'm always wrong" (Leah, lines 580-582).

Researcher: I want you to imagine that you're the advisor to the mayor...it means that you tell them what to do.

Leah: I would love to do that but I would probably fail it, I'd probably kick them all and I'll make them die, yeah so I'm like a...I'm a horror person.

(Leah, lines 708-716)

Researcher: imagine someone waved a wand and tomorrow when you came into school you were succeeding to the best of your ability.

Leah: that's impossible for me...I can't even do that.

(Leah, lines 802-807)

Leah said that she can get stressed about things at school. She fantasised about having someone (or something) to look after her, saying that she would like "a massive minion which is alive...which stays alive for the rest of your life and you'll be dead, and it goes with you" (Leah, lines 402-407) and that it "comes alive every day when I come home from school...I would just make sure that it helped me learn...it comes into school with me...it's my identical twin...it would make sure it gives me every single answer" (Leah, lines 453-471).

This subtheme has shown how participants' feelings were analysed to present barriers to learning. However, students also demonstrated great resilience. The next subtheme expands on this to detail student strengths and interests revealed through analysis.

Subtheme 2.3: Strengths and interests

Data analysis revealed a wealth of skills and resources that participants potentially brought to education. The researcher wondered if school staff were aware of these skills. For example, Freddie started working a year ago: "I work down the fish shop. I go fishing and I work in the shop" (Freddie, lines 302-303). He had learnt a range of skills through the job: "I can gut the fish, I can fillet flat fish...I can nearly fillet like normal fish. I can do quite a lot of things" (Freddie, lines 343-344).

Some interests were 'inherited' from family members. Freddie developed a love of the outdoors and nature from his father and grandfather, who was a bonsai tree enthusiast. Freddie didn't have any bonsai trees himself but endearingly said "I think I wanna get one for my birthday this year" (Freddie, lines 457-458). He described his garden at home, which he clearly took a lot of pride in:

> I got a hundred and fifty foot garden...mine and my dad's shed at the end...tree house...a little carving bit, a clay oven, like a pizza oven...another fire right in front of it, by a little bit that we sit in...the dog's area...my mum's got a massive allotment that takes over the front bit of the grass (Freddie, lines 884-912).

In keeping with the family's love of nature and the outdoors, Freddie's father had taken him on a number of camping trips, which he enthusiastically described:

> ...me and my dad and my uncle went camping...I brought some fish home – some trout and some bass, and I butterflied the trout...put it on sticks and cooked it over the fire...wrapped the trout in dock leaves...it was really nice when it was cooked over the fire, it tastes completely different" (Freddie, lines 1357-1369).

These interests had clearly opened a whole new world for the participant, and developed passions and interests that school had failed to instil. Freddie seemed to feel like a failure at school and emanated frustration about consistently being thrown out of classes and failing to learn. Luckily for Freddie, these interests fed into his preferred career choice (to start his own landscape

gardening and tree surgery business), and what he wanted to get out of school, despite the challenges:

> ...I know I have to do triple science...I gotta learn plant cells and how they grow...I've got to learn different species of trees, where they are most likely to grow...it's like geography and history... I gotta know the history of the trees (Freddie, lines 618-631).

Another student described her interest in design, encouraged by her father: "I just look at images...then try to copy it...this is my dad's old, he used to be an artist...and he got me a book so...I copy it...and then draw it" (Aliyah, lines 392-396). Aliyah talked about the clothes designing she does at home; she also thought she was good at being objective in disagreements, which she said she had learnt from her father. She talked about other interests: "I'm really into music…piano" (Aliyah, line 445) and "I love doing swimming and tennis" (Aliyah, lines 527-528). Aliyah is bilingual, which is good for her cognitive skills and a useful skill in itself. Aliyah thought another part of her skill-set was in organisation, also learnt from her father: "me and my dad are like each other, we have to be on time...we have to be...intelligent, smart, clever...organised...inside or outside the house, you have to...do stuff...So, I think I'm good at that" (Aliyah, lines 484-490).

Many participants were interested in computer games: "usually play some games with my friends...x-box" (Bertie, lines 200-202). They expressed an interest in being able to do games-related subjects at school, to facilitate a career in games development. Sports were an interest for some students, particularly Floyd, who had a number of badges on his blazer for: "basketball, rugby...throws...sprints and long jump" (Floyd, lines 289-290). Reading was cited by most participants as being an interest, Holly particularly enjoyed "Michael Berko books...[and] Roald Dahl" (Holly, lines 176-181). Some students commented on their personal qualities, and viewed themselves as kind, caring, and family oriented.

Students had a good idea of the skills they wanted and/or needed to learn for their preferred future: "English...cos you're gonna need to be able to spell and that...do stuff, and to write" (Bertie, lines 172-176).

I need to be good at Math...[for] measurements for...the house, or the dresses... also science, like...what ingredients I need to make...English as well, from the way I speak...I need to...know more...clever words, cos...I'm not that good at words right now...I still mumble a lot (Aliyah, lines 326-337).

Dennis had an interest in becoming a web designer and thought he would benefit from "learning how to make websites" (Dennis, line 237). Ava didn't yet know what she wanted to do but said she would like to learn more about "maths...cos I'm quite bad at it... cos like when you're older...you might have to have a job where you have to...know maths" (Ava, lines 180-193). Floyd thought "PE...and how your body works...because your body is your body" (Floyd, lines 266-270). Holly said "English and maths...cos they helps you...you need to know...technology... working in...Tescos cos...you need to know how to count and stuff...and English and stuff...read and everything" (Holly, lines 157-169).

Thus analysis showed that participants had a range of skills and interests that they brought with them to school. Not all of these were capitalised or built on in school, which could be seen as a missed opportunity. This will be discussed further in Chapter 5. The data also shows a number of areas in which students expressed an interest in developing their skills. Interest could be seen as a contributing factor for motivation at school. The next subtheme explores the aspects of motivation that were revealed through analysis of participant responses.

Subtheme 2.4: Motivation

Analysis revealed a range of motivators for participants' learning at school. Each participant had specific preferred subjects, along with subjects they were good at, which seemed to influence how they applied themselves. Participants expressed an aversion to some subjects, saying they were boring and uninteresting. Some subjects seemed to be described as relating to gender e.g. Dennis said that dance is for girls, which narrows choice for students. Some students didn't like reading. Other participants felt that they needed more study strategies: "I just need to revise, but I don't know how to revise, I know how to

revise, yeah look through your book and stuff...but sometimes it doesn't help at all" (Aliyah, lines 1161-1164).

Changing interests also affected students' learning e.g. Leah reported she hated maths in primary school, whereas now it was one of her favourite subjects. Feeling positive about and enjoying school affected how students performed; students who were frequently excluded appeared to have lost positivity about school. Some students were motivated by a fear of being reprimanded: "Yeah I never got in trouble, I don't like to get in trouble" (Aliyah, line 249). Clear instructions and expectations in class were also cited as facilitating students to learn well.

Good grades were a key motivator for students' engagement with the subject. Aliyah was particularly concerned about her grades "school's not about...what you look like, it's about education...what really matters is...what level you are now" (Aliyah, lines 669-671). Ava seemed happy and motivated to learn at school, this attitude seemed to be fuelled by getting good grades:

    Researcher: ... you're getting good grades?

    Ava: mmm hmm

    Researcher: ... So what helps you to get good grades?

    Ava: em, just like listening to the teacher

    (Ava, lines 367-370)

Other students seemed to have their eye on the future; they saw school as a means to an end:

    Researcher: why do you come to school?

    Bertie: to learn...that's it...so you can do things, so you can get jobs...do stuff

    Researcher: so do you think that's the most important thing, it's about getting a job?

    Bertie: yep

    (Bertie, lines 537-547)

Motivators for learning could be seen to be strongly linked to individual approaches to learning (subtheme 2.1). The researcher decided to make this a separate theme as motivating factors (as expressed by the participants)

seemed to precede approaches to learning. If participants weren't interested and motivated, they would be unlikely to engage with the class/subject.

Theme 2: Conclusion

This theme has identified individual factors that appear to impact on learning at school for this group of YP. Analysis showed that each student had preferred methods for learning. Individuals also expressed different feelings about school. Each participant had a different skill-set, which interacted with student interests; these skill-sets and interests were often not capitalised on in school. Lastly, motivation (or lack of it) was found to be a significant factor driving (or not) student engagement with school and particular subject areas.

The third theme explores participants' expressed hopes for the future, both for a more immediate future at school, and a more distant one in adulthood.

4.4 Theme 3: Young people's aspirations

Figure 4.4 Theme 3: Thinking about the future

This theme was constructed from participants' expressed hopes for the future. Aspirations were for both the immediate and more distant future. More immediate aspirations are clustered under 'Aspirations for learning', and related mostly to the current school and/or 6th form. All of the participants had something to say about future jobs or careers, and these were clustered into 'Aspirations for jobs'. The data showed that participants also had aspirations for more personal aspects of life e.g. the type of person they would like to be, or where they would like to be living; these are clustered under 'Aspirations for personal life'.

Subtheme 3.1: Aspirations for Learning

Learning appeared to be central to participants' thoughts and hopes about the future. Aliyah knew that she wanted to stick at her education: "people that...drop out of school at a young age are...not going to have a good life" (Aliyah, lines 128-130); "if I keep...believing in myself, and...think that I can do it I'll try to do...at least seven GCSE and complete them with...a good high grade" (Aliyah, lines 597-600). Many students expressed a wish to work harder: "try and work a bit harder" (Freddie, line 1349). "...work harder, be more organised...cos this year...I didn't take it that seriously" (Aliyah, lines 972-982); "I'd put...number 1 work hard...education" (Aliyah, lines 1507-1509). Leah wanted to keep making progress in all her lessons, "to understand the homework more" (Leah, line 1190) and to fix her school computer account so that she could attend homework clubs.

Some students wanted to change their behaviour in school: " Try not to get sent out as much, definitely...as many lessons as I do" (Freddie, lines 1234-1236). Aliyah was focused on trying to increase her confidence: "number 2, for, for me...to be confident...and independent" (Aliyah, lines 1512-1516). Leah said "try not to get in trouble any more...that's me, the annoying one every day" (Leah, lines 1234-1236).

Leah, Ava, Floyd and Dennis wanted to work towards going to 6th form college. Bertie was less sure about the kind of future he wanted, although education was mentioned; "Just probably doing my work and hang out with my friends" (Bertie, lines 334-335). Freddie said "I don't know. Good GCSEs" (Freddie, line 585). Freddie had a very definite plan to go to college to study gardening and was enthusiastic about the prospect:

> R College I'll be going to when I'm 16...instead of going to sixth form...there's [a] garden design course...they give you a hundred foot garden...you've got to make this garden look as good as you can...then competitions, and...other courses on...tree life and the best places where things grow, they take you round different places and it's just really good (Freddie, lines 867-881).

There was an aspect of fear about the future expressed by some participants, particularly a fear of failure at school:

> ...you like might end up on the streets...if you don't study...and you don't get a degree, you don't get a diploma...or complete an A level or GCSE, you can't get a job...you don't know how you're gonna end then...you can't do anything...you can't apply to a job...most the jobs, you need them (Aliyah, lines 1424-1436).

Leah, iterated this fear: "I'm probably gonna drop down every single grade soon...cos my GCSEs are coming up and it's hard" (Leah, lines 478-481).

The data showed that students thought that education was important, and their future options were dependent on doing well at school. They realised the importance of this for getting the kind of job they wanted, discussed in the next section.

Subtheme 3.2: Aspirations for Jobs

Data analysis found that most students talked about hopes for a job in the future; some had thought about this more than others. Bertie said he would like a job in games development: "I would...think of the games...then I would make the games and sketch them out and see if they would be good...if they're good then I'll release them" (Bertie, lines 256-265). Floyd wanted to do "Something related to sport...or training to be a police officer...then eventually get to be...a dog handler" (Floyd, lines 523-527). Freddie said "I wanna be a tree surgeon...cos I love being outdoors" (Freddie, lines 356-357). Dennis wanted to be a maths teacher, or a web designer. Aliyah wanted to be a businesswoman with multiple businesses.

Some students didn't yet know what they wanted to do as a job. Although Bertie expressed an interest in becoming a games developer, at other points in the interview he showed less forethought: "I don't really have dreams for the future" (Bertie, line 220) and "I'm not older, don't need to do anything until I'm older" (Bertie, line 695). Similarly Ava, Holly and Leah said that they didn't yet know what they wanted to do when they were older.

There was little data to show that students were well supported in school around career options. In fact, the opposite was the case:

> Researcher: Do you have a careers advisor in school?
>
> Bertie: don't know what that is
>
> (Bertie, lines 356-357)

> Researcher: Do you do careers in school?...
>
> Ava: eh, yeah...only sometimes.
>
> Researcher: ...and so what have you done?
>
> Ava: em, I've not really done anything yet.
>
> Researcher: right. So you don't get it very often then?
>
> Ava: no
>
> (Ava, lines 489-500)

> Researcher: Do you get careers advice here?...
>
> Floyd: yeah ... just general stuff
>
> Researcher: nothing that really interests you?
>
> Floyd: no
>
> (Floyd, lines 1219-1232)

The data showed that participants often wanted to find out requirements for preferred career paths; they knew what they wanted to do, but were vague about the steps they needed to take to get there. Students expressed the wish for more support around subject choices and career options:

> Freddie: I just know I need to have a level in science, maths and English
>
> Researcher: ...it might be good to get a bit more specific information about that so you know what you've got to work towards in each subject
>
> Freddie: yeah, what grades and that
>
> (Freddie, lines 1218-1225)

Floyd identified that he needed to research entrance requirements, in order to pursue his dream of being in the police.

More role models were suggested as a way to provide inspiration for the future: "someone famous comes and tells them about learning, tells them about their story life, how I learnt or something" (Aliyah, lines 1055-1057). Aliyah also suggested to "tell people that they've only got one chance but don't try and scare them too much" (Aliyah, lines 1108-1109).

When asked about a more distant future, say in 10 years time or more, responses showed that many students had a clear idea of what they would like to be doing. Freddie said that he would like to have expanded his own business in garden design, in the borough and beyond. After that he said that he would "Move down to Devon probably...[it's] nice out there...I'd like to own...my own little house, and...some land" (Freddie, lines 1157-1162). Aliyah liked the idea of being a businesswoman with multiple businesses:

> You can...have a variety of jobs...I can be also a business woman, and...a designer at home...or….a musician...it doesn't have to be a big company, I can start it myself, or someone might help me and it might get bigger and bigger and bigger (Aliyah, lines 566-581).

The data for this theme showed that participants had aspirations for the kind of jobs they would like to do in the future. However they didn't necessarily know the routes that would take them there. Participants also visualised the kind of person they would like to be in the future, this is laid out in the next section.

Subtheme 3.3: Aspirations for Personal life
The idea of moving to another country appealed to Floyd: "I might move to America...Florida...it's very clean...people are nice, just a nice place to live in. It's not that expensive" (Floyd, lines 536-547). Other students expressed a desire to stay in the borough, near to family and friends.

Female participants seemed to have more to say about the type of person they would like to be when they were older: "I'd like to be a nice caring...nice looking person, that...everybody knows, and loves" (Aliyah, lines 454-455), and "an independent nice...and confident woman...That...has a really nice business going on and...a good life" (Aliyah, lines 685-688). Ava said she would like to be a "nice, kind person" (Ava, line 239). Floyd expressed a desire to further his aim

"to be a passionate sportsman...And give respect to the opposition" (Floyd, lines 1399-1405).

Interestingly, participants had less to say about personal aspirations than educational or job aspirations. Perhaps this reflects the focus of school, which is often on more practical aspects of learning, rather than personal development.

Theme 3: Conclusion

Results from data analysis show that students have definite aspirations for the future. When asked about who could help them to achieve their goals, students invariably replied that school, parents and family could support them: "school will definitely help a lot...and my mum and my dad, they would help" (Aliyah, lines 939-942). One student showed some reluctance around discussing his subject options with his teachers, saying "they'll moan at you, they'll try to get you to pick something that they would like" (Bertie, lines 752-753). Responses also reflect the fact that school is perhaps not providing as much support as needed by participants; this will be discussed further in chapter 5.

Families and communities were also shown to be influential on learning and future plans. The final theme details the data collected around this theme.

4.5 Theme 4: Families, communities and role models

Figure 4.5 Theme 4: Families, communities and role models
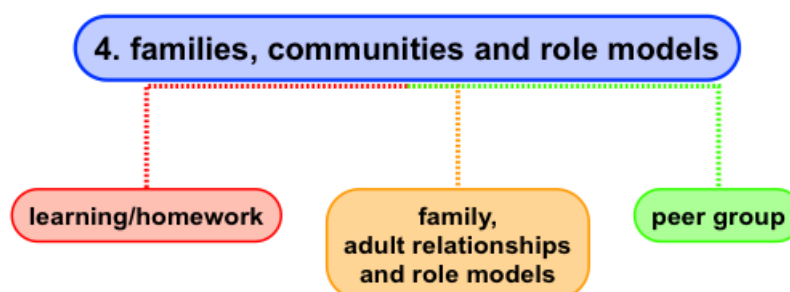
This theme outlines aspects outside school that were discussed by participants, and how they impact on learning at school and planning for the future. It was interesting that this was found to be a theme as students weren't asked directly about their home and family lives; information gathered was incidental. Data

contained in this theme is less rich than in the previous 3 themes. However, data in this theme helps to paint a fuller picture in relation to the research questions, this point will be expanded on in the discussion in chapter 5.

Subtheme 4.1: Learning/homework

Homework was a frequently cited issue in the study. Aliyah viewed it as very important and thought students needed someone to "tell them [to]...do the homework, listen, you gonna have fun as well in lessons but if there's time to study then there's time to study"   (Aliyah, lines 1113-1115).

Participants had some issues with completing homework. Leah said she didn't get help from siblings or parents to complete homework, and had to find space to do homework at home, as the family were living in overcrowded accommodation. In addition, she used her mother's laptop, which meant there were times when it was not possible to complete homework. Two students reported not having the internet at home, which has a huge impact on homework, revising, and staying in touch with friends when not at school. They reported using the library sometimes to access the internet. Students also had responsibility for younger siblings, which could impact on their ability to complete school work at home. Floyd said he completed homework sometimes; he couldn't ask any of his family about maths as they were "all bad at maths" (Floyd, line 914).

Ava said that her mum, dad and older sister helped her with learning, including homework. Floyd reported getting help from his mum, nan, and great-great-nan with some aspects of homework. He said he felt less distracted at home, and more able to learn. Bertie reported he didn't do homework, saying that the consequence of this was:

> Bertie: detentions, mainly not detentions...don't go
> Researcher: do you not get in trouble for that?
> Bertie: no, teachers just leave you
> (Bertie, lines 799-809)

Students often said they found homework too hard, and could get stuck. Leah said "if I get it wrong I just get it wrong, I leave it after...I get half the stuff right"

(Leah, lines 701-703). It seemed that after a period of being successful with homework, she had lost some motivation:

> ...ones and twos for homework...they're very good and excellent...but then I just stopped doing homework (laughs)... because homework gets boring half the time...I had a massive paper...and like [*I thought*] I can't do this...then I went on holiday I forgot about the whole thing...and she...gave me an hour and a half detention...although like it's impossible to do (Leah, lines 518-532).

Thus students got varying levels of support for homework at home. None of the participants mentioned accessing support for doing homework at school (although there was a homework club). Other aspect of families and adult role models are discussed in the next section.

Subtheme 4.2: Family, adult relationships and role models

This theme captures the fact that some students had close relationships and clearly gained valuable support and guidance from their parents and other close adults outside school. For example Freddie reported "everything bad that happens...anything that happens bad in that day I go and tell my mum and dad straight away" (Freddie, lines 1312-1314). He told me of an incident involving conflict with one of his teachers: "I told my mum and dad, they even said that he shouldn't have got in your face and I told them exactly what went on" (Freddie, lines 15-17). He said "they just think it's stupid and they tell me...calm down, ignore it...get on with whatever you've gotta say or...with whatever it's at" (Freddie, lines 1335-1338).

Freddie's father had helped him to get a job: "I wanted to do it. My dad knew the owner and everything, so my dad talked to him and [he] said yeah, I'll be able to work there" (Freddie, lines 335-337). His father had also engaged him in a range of outdoor pursuits: "I was doing all these things and...my dad always said it's keeping me out of trouble outside of school...and getting in with the wrong people" (Freddie, lines 1064-1067).

Role models were a prominent feature of participants' experience, particularly for Freddie. He talked a lot about the influence of his father and grandfather. It

was clear that they had had a major input in shaping Freddie's interests and hopes for the future:

> Freddie: my granddad is a tree surgeon
>
> Researcher: ...so has he taught you some stuff about it?
>
> Freddie: yeah he's given me everything that he's got, like his chainsaws, his harnesses, all ropes, safety hats, and everything like that
>
> (Freddie, lines 409-413)

> Researcher: ...who are you with usually when you learn things well?
>
> Freddie: my dad
>
> (Freddie, lines 442-443)

> Freddie: he's [granddad] taught me a lot of things about bonsai trees and that
>
> (Freddie, lines 452-453).

Freddie had very definite plans for the future, which appeared to have been shaped by the close adults in his life: "I'm just gonna go straight to R college...that's where my granddad went to do his course" (Freddie, lines 983-985); "me and my granddad went there and looked around and everything" (Freddie, lines 1003-1004).

Aliyah talked about the role models in her family: "I also thought of being a business woman...Like my dad, my dad's a...food and beverage businessman...as a job" (Aliyah, lines 407-411). She talked about her siblings, and their partners: "my brother's... a computer science engineer...he works for...one that make...apple devices...android... he has his own job at his house" (Aliyah, lines 1070-1078).

Some participants talked about overcrowded living arrangements at home. For example Leah

> "I share a room with A and B...T shares a room with his big sister B...my mum sleeps upstairs, my dad has a little camp bed on the floor to help

my nan cos...[she] can't really walk up the stairs...it's hard so he sleeps downstairs on to the sofa to help her" (Leah, lines 666-676).

Some students reported major health issues affecting family members. Freddie, talking about his father, said "he had a motorbike accident 5 years ago...he could have died...hasn't got a spleen, half a kidney, he's got loads of things wrong with him...whole left hand side he can't use" (Freddie, lines 252-260). His mother also had health issues (an aneurism). This meant that neither parent is permitted to drive and "she [Mum] can't work and same as my dad can't work now... just like they're getting things off the council and that, and then I go to work for my mum and that" (Freddie, lines 282-300).

Leah reported that:

> ...my nan broken her hip... and I have very sensitive bones, if I fall over I have to go up to hospital straight away, it's basically wasting my mum and my dad's time, so they get a bit annoyed and it's harder because...I have to go straight up there...and if I don't go up there and I stack over again...I can easily break it (Leah, lines 599-608).

Aliyah reported feeling constricted by the expectations of the parents of some of her friends: "So that the child's mum can go like oh that school is really good...They helped my child to be able, good and he is now....he's an engineer or something" (Aliyah, lines 804-808).

Subtheme 4.3: Peer group

Students reported seeing their friends outside school, taking part in activities such as going to the park, playing football, and playing computer games. Some students also socialised with their sibling's friends. Freddie talked about having to negotiate the threat of violence from his peer group at his workplace:

> ...me and my friend had finished and...were just waiting...these kids...started throwing metal at us...they were shouting things and we told them to shut up, they threw water balloons so we threw one back...as we were about to leave they were hiding behind a bush, a big group of them...at least 15 to 20 of them...waiting...so they could beat us

up...we just waited them out...they have knives...that's why I didn't wanna go past them (Freddie, lines 181-214).

Theme 4: conclusion

This theme shows the significance of some of the outside influences on YP's learning. Family were shown to be a very big influence on some participants. Other more material aspects of family life also have an impact, such as access (or not) to the internet. This study did not have the scope to explore these fully; this could be a focus for a future study.

4.6 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the findings from the study. These findings have been organised into themes, which reflect patterns and commonalities across participants' views. Included in these themes are facilitators and barriers to learning, along with a wide range of inventive suggestions for how school could be improved to help students to learn. Data gathered is broad ranging and rich, and relates to many issues raised in the literature review in Chapter 2. The next chapter will discuss how the data answers the research questions in more depth, and will make connections between this study and previous research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter will discuss the findings of the study in the context of previous research detailed in the literature review in Chapter 2; each research question will be looked at in turn. The data interpreted as relating specifically to poverty will be discussed. The tools used in the study will be appraised, including the LBBQ2 (Gersch & Lipscomb, 2015), videos, semi-structured interview questions, and the researcher skills in eliciting information from participants. Planned feedback for research participants, parents and school staff will be detailed. The limitations of the study and pointers for further research will be explored. This will be followed by the implications of the research for EP practice. The chapter will then reflexively explore the learning acquired by the researcher in carrying out the study. The chapter will conclude with a commentary drawing together the main points of the study.

5.2 Research Questions

The main aim of this research study was to explore the views of YP experiencing poverty around school, learning, individual strengths, and hopes for the future. Positive Psychology was used in a carefully worded semi-structured interview and the LBBQ2 (Gersch & Lipscomb, 2015).

The research questions were:
  i.   What do YP experiencing poverty think helps them to learn at school? What do they think are the barriers to learning?
  ii. What skills and resources do YP experiencing poverty think they bring to education? What additional skills do they think they need?
  iii. How do YP experiencing poverty think they could be supported in planning for the future?

Each research question will be addressed in the sections below, detailing the themes and subthemes that relate to the question. Many aspects of the findings of this study replicate those of previous research, which will be discussed. As highlighted previously, there has been little research in the area of poverty-

related educational inequality that captures the voice of young people. As a result, this study elicited views of YP around education that were not found in any of the research reviewed in Chapter 2; these will be highlighted in the discussion.

The main points extrapolated from the data for each research question was collated into feedback prepared for the school and participants (see Appendix K). This provides a useful aide memoire for the findings set out in Chapter 4.

5.2.1 Research Question 1: What do YP experiencing poverty think helps them to learn at school? What do they think are the barriers to learning?

The majority of the data collected in the study was skewed towards answering this research question, suggesting that students have very definite ideas about what helps and hinders their learning in school. Data from three of the four themes detailed in Chapter 4 are included here. These are 'Aspects of school that influence learning'; 'Students are individuals'; and 'Families, communities and role models'. The subheadings below summarise the main points extrapolated from the data.

Teacher attributes and relationships with teachers

Positive relationships with teachers were found to be central to effective learning and, on the flipside, negative relationships presented significant barriers to learning. This replicates research by Riley and Docking (2004) and Hirsch (2007). In addition to positive relationships, participants identified a number of teacher personal attributes that they viewed as helpful for learning. These included being fun, approachable, committed to students, caring, and energetic. Students also liked teachers that used pedagogies that were fun, engaging and age appropriate. This replicates findings by Gorard and See (2011), although their research was not specifically with YP experiencing poverty. Indeed Gorard & See (2011) stress that "When considering enjoyment of school and interest in lessons, there is little difference according to student family background (such as eligibility for FSM)" p.686. They go on to argue that enhancing enjoyment at school thus does not involve trying to change structural and socio-economic barriers that many other aspects of improving school for CYP experiencing poverty do.

Barriers to learning included conflicted, mistrustful relationships with teachers, where power differentials often seemed to play a part. The data suggests that students sometimes felt a lack of respect from teachers, describing feelings of humiliation in class; this replicated previous findings (Riley & Docking, 2004). Some participants were put off learning by teachers that they perceived as too strict, describing them as 'scary'. Teachers' lack of skills in managing challenging behaviour was also cited by some participants as being a barrier to learning. This suggests the need for teacher training in managing behaviour, which could include the exploring the emotional reaction that may be triggered by some students in some teachers. Another possible explanation of the data is that teacher stress could be contributing to the way that they interact with students. Stressed teachers may inadvertently pass their stress on to students. This provides a good argument for schools acknowledging and finding ways of addressing teacher stress.

Peer relationships

The data suggests the importance of the social aspects of learning in school. Friends were reported to provide support and seemed to be important as confidants e.g. to talk to about choosing subjects, or working out academic problems when stuck. This echoes findings from Save the Children (2013). Friends appeared to be a buffer for students who felt unfairly treated by teachers; participants reported that their friendship group protected one another.

Some participants talked about peers who presented barriers to learning. This was by being disruptive in class, or competitive and judgemental about academic levels; some students said that some of their peers also blamed others for things that they had done. The more negative aspects of peer relationships were not documented in any of the previous research on poverty-related educational inequality, although more general research acknowledges it to be a factor (e.g. Gorard & See, 2011).

Exclusion

Some participants felt strongly that internal exclusion (where the student was isolated within school) and external exclusion (where the student was not

allowed to come to school for a fixed period) stopped them from learning. Indeed, psychologists have long claimed that learning happens through social interaction, this is now backed up by neuroscience (Dumont et al. 2012). Frequent exclusions meant that students missed classroom learning, and resulted (they thought) in them being put down sets. Some participants were incredulous and angry about the punitive measures taken by school. This parallels research done by Riley and Docking (2004) with parents of 'disadvantaged' CYP, who thought that punitive practices in schools were one of the biggest barriers to their child's learning. This study has shown that students themselves echo this view, although no comparable previous research was found in the area of poverty-related educational inequality.

School systems

Participants found some aspects of the curriculum confusing e.g. having 3 teachers for English. The data also showed that students wanted more subject choices in school, including more contemporary subjects e.g. games development. This backs up Riley and Docking's (2004) claim that the curriculum can be rigid and may not suitable for all students. A major barrier, mentioned by all of the participants, was a paucity of careers advice in school. Some participants didn't know what a careers advisor was. This is perhaps because the participants were in years 7 and 8 and considered too young for careers input. The data provides good argument for the provision of careers advice earlier in secondary school to assist students with choosing subjects and providing motivation. It backs up research by St Clair et al. (2011) and the Cabinet Office (2008) asserting that YP experiencing poverty often do not have knowledge of the strategies or pathways towards achieving their aspirations.

Relationships between home and school were found to affect learning, especially if a student/family felt that the school had a negative view of them. This may relate to Horgan's (2007) assertion that CYP are very aware of their social position and the limitation this brings them. It backs up Hirch's (2007) claim of the importance of good home-school relationships with YP experiencing poverty. It may also link with Yeager and Walton's (2011) finding that the expectancy that one will be negatively stereotyped at school affects performance (which they refer to as stereotype threat). In addition, this finding

could be due to prejudice targeted at students/families experiencing poverty (although this is speculative). Perhaps training for school staff around the issues affecting CYP experiencing poverty, as suggested by a number of researchers (e.g. Beckett & Wrigley, 2014; Riley & Docking, 2004) may mitigate the effects of prejudice and help to nurture good home-school relationships.

Pastoral support

Students talked about how they had been supported in school, including counselling, attending a nurture base, and/or being supported through a CAF (see Chapter 4 for more details on the CAF). Connelly et al. (2014) suggest that the stress of living in poverty can increase social, emotional and mental health needs of students. The data from this study backs this assertion up, and some participants evidently needed (and enjoyed) extra pastoral support to address their stress.

The aspect of pastoral support also links in with relationships: the good relationships described by participants had a supportive element to them, as outlined above. Previous research also acknowledges the importance of relationships e.g. Beckett and Wrigley (2014). These authors proposed that more specialist pastoral staff could build relationships, provide for students' social and emotional needs, and give teachers more time to focus on academic needs.

School environment

Participants identified the size of the school to be a barrier to learning; this was due to getting lost, and finding class sizes too big and cramped. This suggests that more support around negotiating the environment and/or smaller classes would boost learning. No comparable data was found from previous studies in this area. Thus it would be advantageous to explore this aspect of learning in further research.

Preferred approaches to learning

Participants were individual in their approaches to learning, indicating that different learning techniques work differently depending on the YP and there is no 'one size fits all'. For example some students liked working on their own,

while others preferred working in a group; some liked reading, others preferred more practical and less literacy based learning. The data suggested that most participants had a growth learning mindset, although there were individual exceptions to this (see Chapter 2 for a discussion of mindsets). This fits with data from the USA, which found YP in low income groups tended towards having fixed learning mindsets and benefitted from interventions aiming to facilitate a growth learning mindset (e.g. Spitzer & Aronson, 2015). This is something that would benefit from more research in the UK, as the approach has been much lauded in the USA and requires relatively little resourcing. Schools could try this independently, ensuring that rigorous monitoring and evaluation was built in to the intervention.

Feelings

Analysis showed that positive feelings such as feeling safe, confident, supported, and having high self-esteem were thought to help learning. By contrast, students talked about negative feelings that were barriers to learning. These included anger, frustration, powerlessness, lack of confidence, stress, humiliation, low self-esteem, and feeling fearful. These findings were similar to those found by Save the Children (2013) and Hirsch (2007).

Feelings or emotions have been described as "the primary gatekeeper to learning" (Dumont, Istance, & Benavides, 2012, p.4) and have a significant effect on recall. Positive emotions facilitate long term recall, while negative emotions can interfere with the brain's learning processes (Dumont et al. 2012). Thus it appears imperative that feelings are addressed at school.

Schools could address the issue of negative feelings in two ways. Firstly, they could seek to minimise the negative feelings that some students have at school by trying to ensure that school was a more positive experience for them. Secondly, they could increase support for students that needed it in being able to process and make sense of their feelings. These suggestions link with discussion around increased pastoral support (above). Adolescence is a time of transition and change for all students, as has been argued by child development theorists (e.g. Fuhrmann, Knoll & Blakemore, 2015). Some students are more

vulnerable during the transition to adulthood and need more support. The data suggests that a good place to get this support is in school.

Motivation

Participants were motivated to learn by getting good grades/reports, being given autonomy in class, and by having a special interest in a subject. De-motivators were finding a subject boring, anxiety about academic levels, lacking revision skills, and forgetting things that had been taught. While there has been a lot of psychological research around motivation, none was found that related specifically to YP experiencing poverty, thus no comparisons could be made.

Motivation provides a way for students to "acquire knowledge and skills in a meaningful way" (Dumont et al. 2012, p.4). This also relates to the psychological approach of meta-cognition, which is being increasingly adopted in UK schools (Baas, Castelijns, Vermeulen, Martens, & Segers, 2015; EEF, 2015). The approach encourages students to think about their learning and become aware of the ways in which different techniques work for them (or not). This links in with the 'Students are individuals' theme and could be an area for development for the school in which the study took place.

Families and communities

Homework was found to be an important issue in learning. Some participants received support from family members to complete homework; other students found it difficult to do homework due to a lack of help from family members, a lack of space, and no internet access at home. This backs Hirsch's (2007) assertion that YP experiencing poverty tend to get less support to complete homework. This evidently puts them at an enormous disadvantage and suggests that schools should think creatively about solutions. One approach could be for schools to purchase laptops and/or internet dongles for students who do not have these facilities at home (e.g. using pupil premium funding). This would put them on a more level playing ground with their peers.

Some participants had intensive support from close family in planning for future careers. This proved to be crucial, as the YP were not getting this at school. For example, Freddie seemed to have almost given up on school due to his

frequent exclusions but he had very clear plans for the future; these aspirations appeared to have been nurtured by close family members, including his dad and his grand-dad. This contradicts researchers claiming that parents and YP experiencing poverty have low aspirations (documented in St Clair et al. 2011). It was quite the opposite in this study. Many students had positive role models within the family that they talked about – usually parents, grandparents, or siblings. These role models gave them ideas of the kinds of careers the YP would like to do themselves. These findings echo those of Elsely (2014) and Save the Children (2013). The data shows the importance of family factors when thinking about learning and future aspirations.

5.2.2 Research Question 2: What skills and resources do YP experiencing poverty think they bring to education? What additional skills do they think they need?

The data pertaining to this research question was contained in two themes: 'Students are individuals' and 'Thinking about the future'. This question particularly focuses on the strengths of YP experiencing poverty, using a Positive Psychology approach advocated by Seligman (2000, 2002), and Biswas-Diener and Patterson (2011) who conducted a study that took a positive perspective in addressing poverty-related issues for YP at school.

YP's skills

Participants had a wealth of skills e.g. bilingualism; creativity and design skills; outdoor skills; organisational skills; sports and physical dexterity; IT skills; customer service skills from work experience; musical skills; interpersonal skills; and more obscure skills such as gutting fish. Many of these skills did not seem to be capitalised or built on at school; perhaps teachers did not know about these skills. This parallels previous research e.g. Beckett and Wrigley, 2014, and Connelly et al. 2014. This could be seen as a missed opportunity to build student motivation and enhance learning. It also relates to the school curriculum (discussed above) which currently does not incorporate less academic skills students may have learnt out of the school context.

Skills YP would like to develop

Participants had many ideas for skills they would like to develop in school. This included personal skills such and confidence and independence. This supports Beckett and Wrigley's (2014) assertion that more focus on 'soft skills' is key to closing the poverty-related attainment gap. Students also outlined academic skills they would like to develop, in order to broaden their choices for the future. These included skills in conventional subjects such as English, maths, science and art. As detailed above, some students expressed a need for the opportunity to study more and different subjects at school, including more contemporary subjects.

5.2.3 How do YP experiencing poverty think they could be supported in planning for the future?

Data that relates to this question was mostly contained in the theme 'Thinking about the future'. The question focused on the hopes and dreams of participants, which they had in abundance.

Aspirations for the future: learning, jobs, and personal life

Participants had a range of hopes for the future. For the more immediate future, most students wanted to get good GCSE results and go on to Sixth Form College (or another form of further education). Participant ideas for a future career included interior designer, police officer, dog handler, landscape gardener, maths teacher and games developer. This backs up previous research showing that YP experiencing poverty often have high aspirations (e.g. EEF, 2014; Sinclair et al. 2010; Sosu & Ellis, 2014). Some participants mentioned more personal aspects that they aspired to developing in life, including being confident, kind, caring, having children, being near family, having a nice home or living in a different place. There was no previous research found relating to these 'softer' outcomes, meaning this aspect of the data cannot be compared.

Support needed to achieve aspirations

Although participants had aspirations for the future, most didn't have a clear idea of how to reach their goals. All participants felt that they needed more careers advice in school. This backs up research by St-Clair et al. (2011) and

the Cabinet Office (2008) which documented that YP do not have knowledge of the strategies or pathways towards achieving their aims and need more support.

Some participants felt fearful about the future and expressed a desire to develop confidence and independence, and to get reassurance. It was suggested that role models were invited into school to talk about their journey. This is backed up by research in the USA by Spetzer and Aronson (2015). They argue that having access to a range of role models can counteract stereotype threat, particularly if role models explain challenges they faced in reaching their goals.

Participants thought teachers, other school staff, peers, parents and other family members could help them to reach their goals. They also recognised that they could help themselves.

The current section has laid out data gathered that provided some answers to the research questions. While this data explores the views of YP experiencing poverty, it could be argued that there is no difference between this group and more privileged YP. The next section details the data that has been interpreted to directly relate to poverty.

5.3 Poverty related aspects of the data

As discussed previously, participants were not directly asked about their socio-economic circumstances for ethical reasons. This means that interpretation was employed in ascertaining which data related to poverty-related educational inequality. Data in this section has been presented in more detail in Chapter 4 and section 5.3.

The data showed some participants had difficulties with a range of emotions including stress, anger, powerlessness and low self-esteem. As hypothesised by previous researchers (e.g. Connelly et al. 2014; Save the Children, 2013) the effects of poverty may trigger and maintain these kinds of difficulties. Another trigger for participants' difficult feelings (e.g. anger, powerlessness or low self-

esteem) could be seen as students feeling that some school staff used them as scapegoats and humiliated them. One student felt her whole family were demonised by the school. It is possible that this was a result of prejudice or negative stereotyping on the teachers part towards YP experiencing poverty, as postulated by previous research (e.g. Beckett & Wrigley, 2014; HOCEC, 2014). However this is hard to evidence as no data was collected from school staff to back this up. An alternative explanation is that feelings of being demonised could be a result of internalised prejudice; as Horgan (2007) pointed out, YP are aware from a young age of their social position and the limitations this can bring.

Some participants talked about a lack of facilities at home, which seemed related to socio-economic circumstances. For example, one student described living in overcrowded housing. This impacted on her learning as it was difficult for her to find the space to study, and to access a computer. Two students reported not having the internet at home, which has a huge impact on completing homework, revising, and staying in touch with friends when not at school.

Some students' parents couldn't work due to health issues (e.g. Freddie and Leah). This would evidently have a negative impact on family finances. Other students said their parents were too busy to help them with homework or learning; perhaps they were working more than one low paid or unstable zero-hour contract job in order to make ends meet, leaving them with less family time. Parental employment status could have other knock on effects on participants, e.g. some participants had responsibility for younger siblings, which would impact on their ability to complete school work at home.

Floyd said he liked designer clothes, most likely to be influenced by peers and the media. This aspect of fitting in with peers is difficult for young people experiencing poverty as their parents are unlikely to be able to afford the latest styles.

Some participants said they didn't like books or reading. This was perhaps because they were not exposed to them in the home environment due to families being unable to afford them.

As can be seen from this section, much interpretation has been involved in outlining data explicitly relating to poverty. It is difficult to say what the effects of poverty were on participants as they were not directly asked. However, it is the researcher's view that this does not invalidate the responses given by participants throughout the study. Data gathered is important for understanding the 8 young people experiencing poverty in this study. As discussed in previous chapters, aspects of the data have the potential to be generalised to other young people experiencing poverty, as the themes constructed appear to be universal. This has been evidenced in the comparisons with previous research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality.

5.4 How the findings link with School Effectiveness research

Interestingly the findings of this study support the idea of systemic change as proposed by the school effectiveness movement. As discussed in Chapter 2, this movement evolved as a way to challenge the fact that CYP experiencing poverty and other minority groups were being failed by the education system in the USA (Lezotte, 2001). Themes in this study would fit into 8 of the 11 factors for effective schools postulated by Sammons et al (1995), these include: a learning environment; concentration on teaching and learning; purposeful teaching; high expectations; positive reinforcement; pupil rights and responsibilities; home-school partnership; and a learning organisation. The systemic issues this raises, and how EPs could fit into this, will be addressed later in the chapter.

The next section will briefly discuss the use of the LBBQ2 as a tool in the study.

5.5 The Little Box of Big Questions 2 (LBBQ2)

As outlined in Chapter 2, the LBBQ2 is a tool to elicit CYP's views, with the explicit aim of linking responses to questions to actions for change and development (Gersch et al. 2014). Two cards from the LBBQ2 were used in the

research. Each participant was given the card to hold during the interview process. This was intended to give them some agency and control in the interview. The tool, along with the additional questions devised for the research, proved to be useful and appropriate for the research process, and resulted in the gathering of rich data.

Despite the fact that the data gathered was rich and broad ranging, there were some limitations of the study. These will be detailed in the next section, along with suggestions for future research.

5.6 Limitations of findings and implications for further research

There were a number of methodological limitations of the current study. Perhaps the biggest limitation was not discussing socioeconomic circumstance with participants. As detailed previously, this was done for ethical reasons, to protect the dignity of participants. Perhaps future psychological research could find a way around this difficult ethical issue.

The participants were selected by the school, after being given a brief by the researcher. The school was one in which the researcher was working in a TEP role, as part of her placement training requirements. In hindsight, it may have been better to have more discussion with school staff around participant selection. It seemed that the school conflated the researcher role with the TEP role and selected students according to need rather than the extent of poverty they were experiencing, or suitability for participating in research interviews. Two of the participants had a medical diagnosis (Autism Spectrum Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), which could be argued to have skewed findings.

It was more difficult than envisaged through the initial design of the research to get the participants to open up and talk to the researcher freely. The fact that the research interview took place on only one occasion meant limited time for the researcher to build rapport with participants. A short video was used for later participants, intended as an ice-breaker and a prompt for conversation. While this appeared to be successful, it could have been coincidental that the

researcher had more reticent students initially, followed by students more ready to open up and chat later. It could be argued that the video also skewed later responses to interview questions, by imposing a view with the participants. However, the use of the video on the whole seemed to be positive; some participants referred to the character (Curtis) in the video during the interview, which showed that it was an effective prompt for further thinking.

Interviews took place in participants' own time, to comply with the school's request. This may have been a disadvantage; some participants appeared to be keen to get home at the end of the school day. Perhaps if the interviews had taken place during school time, the participants would have been more open to chatting.

The fact that there were only 8 participants, and that these participants were confined to years 7 and 8 may limit the generalisability and transferability of the data to other ages. It would be more illuminating for future research to interview more students from a range of ages and stages of education.

The study was confined to one school in one specific locality. This may further limit the generalisability and transferability of the data. However, previous research seems to suggest that solutions need to be tailored to suit the area, school, and individual. The fact that the study is limited in this way could also be interpreted as a positive aspect.

The existence of poverty-related educational inequality is argued throughout this thesis to be a political issue predominantly resulting from government management of the distribution of resources in society. Focusing on YP's views, as this study has done, could be construed as taking an individualised 'within child' approach, rather than a systemic one. It could be interpreted as focusing on working with CYP to enable them to adapt to their environment, rather than adapting the environment to accommodate the needs of YP experiencing poverty. The researcher's view is that this is a valid criticism. However, to counter this, YP experiencing poverty *do* need strategies to ensure they have some options and opportunities in the current political climate, which may

validate this research. The fact that the research is couched within a critique of the current political climate also counters this limitation.

Completing this study has illuminated the paucity of research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality from a psychological perspective. There were no UK educational psychology studies found. Most of the psychological studies discussed in Chapter 2 were from the USA. Despite this, the effect of poverty on educational attainment is currently a high profile political issue. It has become a major policy driver of the Scottish National Party (SNP). New reports are regularly published on the issue and it is seldom far from the news. This suggests that it is an important issue for EPs to research and be involved in. Research evidence could be used by schools in order to make best use of Pupil Premium funding allocated to students experiencing poverty. In addition, psychological research could add a wealth of useful information to the Sutton Trust Toolkit (EEF), which provides information on school interventions for disadvantaged students based on best evidence.

Because of the paucity of UK psychological research into poverty-related educational inequality, it seems that the implications for further research are wide-ranging. Beckett and Wrigley (2014) propose the need for "practitioner research which moves beyond the statistics and towards a critical and empathetic understanding of students' lifeworlds, learning needs and schooling experiences" (p.222).

In addition to qualitative research, measuring the effectiveness of specific psychological interventions used with students experiencing poverty in the UK context would be extremely useful. Perhaps this could be based on research with a strong evidence base from the USA, to ascertain whether they are transferable to a UK context. For example mindset approaches, students writing about their stress and/or values that are important to them, the 'possible selves' approach, or stereotype threat.

Interventions that are already being used to support CYP experiencing poverty in the UK could also be scrutinised through a poverty-based research lens. For example nurture groups, relaxation techniques, or therapeutic interventions

such as cognitive-behavioural therapy. The burgeoning of character education in the USA and the UK could be subject to research, to ascertain whether it is helpful in addressing poverty-related educational inequality.

Despite the fact that research helps to build an evidence base, evidence in the UK seems to suggest that CYP, schools, and neighbourhoods need individualised, tailored approaches (e.g. Spitzer & Aronson, 2015). Thus an evidence base can only provide a rough guide in the area of poverty-related educational inequality, as transference from one context to another can be problematic. In reality, getting it right for CYP experiencing poverty may involve some trial and error, based on careful consideration of the context as well as previous research.

Arguably the best way of finding out what helps CYP experiencing poverty learn is by asking them, as has been done in this study. More qualitative research seeking the views of CYP experiencing poverty, taking a strengths-based perspective to counter the deficit narrative could be beneficial towards understanding more about what measures can address poverty-related educational inequality.

The next section details how participants will be fed back to on completion of the study.

5.7 Feedback to participants and the school

The researcher laid out the main findings of the thematic analysis in a series of sheets to give participants (see Appendix K). This was done in a graphic facilitation style in order to make it more aesthetically pleasing and accessible for YP. Information was arranged according to research question, as the researcher thought this would be a useful format for participants and the school to see. In addition to participant feedback, a synopsis of the research with the main implications of the study for the school was given to the SENCo (see Appendix L). It was hoped that this would be taken into account by the school for future planning.

In addition to implications for future research and for schools, this study has highlighted many potential issues for EPs around addressing poverty-related educational inequality. This will be detailed in the next section.

5.8 Implications for EPs

The current political agenda in the UK is placing more children into poverty each year (CPAG, 2015; Harrop, 2015). Thus it is imperative that EPs are well equipped to address this issue. The literature review in Chapter 2 highlighted that the EP role was barely acknowledged in the literature. It argued for EPs to raise their profile in addressing poverty-related educational inequality at multiple levels, including CYP, parents, schools, LAs and governmental departments.

Anecdotal evidence, based on day to day EP practice, suggests that EPs work with CYP affected by poverty perhaps on a daily basis; they can and do make a difference in this area. As discussed, one of the implications of this study is for EPs to generate more strengths-based research. This section will discuss the implications of this research study for the day-to-day role of the EP: in both systemic work and individual work with CYP.

Systemic work

Chapter 2 set out the argument that addressing the systemic causes of poverty at a societal, government policy level is the most effective way of eradicating child poverty and closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It could be argued that change at the societal level is beyond the remit of the EP role. However, EPs may be in a position to campaign and lobby for policy change, if their contract of employment allows them to be politically proactive. As part of this lobbying for change, EPs could lend their knowledge and skills to high profile lobbying groups, to support the construction of strong arguments (e.g. the Child Poverty Action Group; Save the Children). Psychologists Against Austerity[2] is a growing movement of applied psychologists (mainly clinical psychologists) campaigning against, and raising awareness of, the psychological effects that austerity has on individuals and groups. Perhaps more EPs could join their

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[2] https://psychagainstausterity.wordpress.com/

ranks, to raise their profile and to join with other applied psychologists to devise solutions.

Systemic interventions at the school level may arguably be the most influential way for EPs to address poverty-related educational inequality. Chapter 2 detailed that school quality appears to be a significant factor affecting the attainment of CYP experiencing poverty (e.g. Hopkins et al. 2014; Macleod et al. 2015; Riley & Docking, 2004). On a large scale, EPs are potentially in a position to contribute towards "the development of a series of potentially testable theories of systemic change in education" (Hopkins et al. 2014, p.257).

On a smaller scale, EPs could consult with schools around how best to support CYP experiencing poverty, including optimal use of pupil premium funding. Systemic approaches such as a no excuses culture; pastoral support; the tracking of data; adequate funding; finding alternatives to exclusion; curricular changes; careers advice; introducing evidence based interventions; effective pedagogies based on active learning; teacher training around poverty; nurturing positive relationships; or incorporating student voice into school reforms could be advised and/or delivered by EPs. Advice given to individual schools could be based on small scale surveys or research projects. For example the EP could gather information on the school system, and CYP experiencing poverty at the school could be asked questions similar to those in this study – how they learn best, their strengths and their aspirations for the future.

EPs could be more involved with parents in order to address poverty-related issues, which seem to be likely to escalate under the current government. For example, ensuring that parents are supported in addressing housing and other welfare issues; ensuring that home-school collaboration is taking place, and that parents feel involved in their child's education (Ellis & Sosu, 2015). This could involve coaching parents on how to support their child to learn more effectively, assist with homework, or read with and talk to their child. EPs could raise awareness with parents around new school systems (marketisation) and give information on the choices open to them for their child's education. Perhaps EPs could take on more therapeutic roles with families, where the stress of poverty may have taken its toll on family dynamics.

Change at a societal systemic level is a long term solution that requires governmental buy-in. As discussed, it is unlikely that the current government will buy-in to the structural changes needed to reduce and/or eradicate child poverty (Harrop, 2015). Thus, in the short term, EPs may have to participate in more direct work with CYP experiencing poverty, to mitigate against its effects. This is described below.

Direct work with CYP

Individual EP work with CYP experiencing poverty would involve a process of psychological assessment to ascertain what changes are needed for that individual. Once individual work is complete the EP would liaise with the school to ensure follow through for the CYP's needs, and review regularly to ensure they stay on track.

A range of tools could be (and are) used in assessment when working with CYP experiencing poverty. For example, as in this study, the LBBQ2 (Gersch & Lipscomb, 2015) could be used to gather views about learning, strengths and aspirations; action planning can be built in to discussion. Personal construct psychology (PCP) could be useful in ascertaining CYP's views about themselves and their learning. This was first introduced by Kelly (1955) and has been expanded on by Beaver (2011), who uses a range of drawing techniques to elicit children's views. An awareness of the pertinent issues and asking the right questions with CYP experiencing poverty is crucial (Ravenette, 1999), the PCP approach includes a number of discursive techniques to use with CYP.

In addition to individual work, EPs could work with groups of CYP to reduce poverty-related educational inequality. EPs could design and facilitate group interventions for schools based on approaches used in the USA (discussed in Chapter 2). For example, growth and belonging mindsets; meta-cognitive strategies; writing about 'possible selves'; writing about personal values; character education; and strengths based interventions e.g. Strengths Gym (Proctor & Eades, 2009). It is important to bear in mind that these interventions (with the exception of Strengths Gym) do not yet have an evidence base in the

UK. Thus, rigorous monitoring and evaluation of any interventions would be paramount to ascertain effectiveness.

5.9 Reflexivity: learning from the thesis

This section will be written in the first person to adequately reflect how the process of research affected the researcher's thought processes and learning.

I have mixed feelings about this piece of research. It has presented me with valuable learning experiences, but also many challenges. I am passionate about poverty and inequality, and found it informative and stimulating to study in depth. This acquired knowledge is very relevant to my role as trainee EP. I have learned a huge amount about the process of research, and there are a range of considerations I would take into any future research projects, which are explored below.

Despite this learning, I think there are a number of limits to the study's usefulness in a wider arena, particularly around the methodological limitations (outlined above). The lack of time, and the pressure I was under to complete other pieces of work associated with trainee placement, meant that the research process was not given the time and consideration I felt it should have been. In my opinion, the quality of the research suffered as a result of this.

The process of research took a long time and I found it very isolating. Although I had good support from university and placement supervisors and my peers, I spent long hours, days and weeks on my own, painstakingly transcribing and analysing data and then writing it up into this thesis. If I take part in research in the future, I would like to do this as part of a team; this may make it less of a lonely process.

I found the most enjoyable aspect of the research was interviewing the YP. I felt incredibly privileged to be the recipient of some participants' innermost thoughts and feelings. However, it was more difficult than I expected for some students to open up and talk in the interviews. Despite meticulous planning on my part, some students seemed reticent, perhaps even intimidated. This prompted me to

reflect on things that I may have been doing (or not doing) to affect this dynamic. It seemed inevitable that, no matter how much I tried to reduce its effects, the power differentials between me and the participants were ever present. The fact that the research took place in a school, where power differentials between adults and YP are clearly demarcated, probably fuelled this dynamic.

On the other hand, some participants were very chatty, particularly Freddie. I reflected that Freddie was (understandably) upset and agitated on the day I interviewed him. He had been put in isolation for an incident that had taken place the previous week, and his parents had not been informed. The injustice of this clearly riled him and it seemed that he needed a space to express his feelings. Perhaps he would not have been so expressive had I interviewed him on a different day.

I met with participants only once as a group before the interviews, and each participant was only interviewed once as part of the process. In any future research I carry out, I will experiment with more ice-breaking tools, and I will endeavour to meet participants more frequently in order to develop rapport. As mentioned above, time constraints, as well as the research design prevented this in this study.

As set out in Chapter 1 my positioning in this study was from a social justice standpoint. I am in disagreement with current governmental policy that, in my view, increases poverty and inequality in the UK. This is an area in which I feel strongly and in this sense I sometimes found it difficult to remain impartial in interviews. I found myself wanting to become outraged on the participant's behalf if they were describing situations where they appeared to be the victim of prejudice or injustice. Part of me wanted to condemn teachers and schools, as they seemed to be implicated in the prejudice/injustice. However, I stayed 'meta' to this; I showed my empathy by acknowledging how difficult the situation must be for the YP. I also held in mind that I was hearing the participant's interpretation; behind the injustice described was perhaps a very stressed and unsupported teacher or other school staff trying to do their very best in the circumstances.

I found it difficult to separate the roles of researcher and TEP during the process. If a YP was describing difficulties they were experiencing, it was hard to be solely in the role of data gathering, and not to spend time acknowledging difficulties and/or trying to find solutions with the YP. For example, Freddie was facing many challenges at school; I think it would have been unethical for me to ignore the fact that he appeared to desperately need to be heard, understood and supported. I did spend some time with him jointly thinking about how he could approach the problems he was having at school. I also debriefed the school SENCo and Assistant SENCo after the interview took place, and indicated ways in which Freddie thought he could be supported. While this perhaps muddied my role as researcher, I also think that the process produced qualitative data that could be used in the findings.

The findings of the research are distinctive in that, as far as I know, no similar research from an EP perspective has been done in the UK. In addition there is a paucity of CYP's voices in research around poverty-related educational inequality. While this study is important, it cannot be argued that it threw up groundbreaking discoveries in the data. The constructed themes are rather common-sense, and it could be argued that the research doesn't really tell us anything new as many of the findings were similar to previous research. A counter argument to this could be that the process of research was perhaps as important as the outcomes. The process ensured that YP were listened to and their views were considered as important in order to find solutions. In addition, although many of the findings had been documented previously, some of the data had not in the research area of poverty-related educational inequality. The fact that the young people echoed academic arguments (e.g. those of the school effectiveness movement) reinforces possible changes that would reduce poverty-related inequality.

To conclude, while there are limitations to the research, it is in keeping with the kind of EP I want to be. I consider the EP role as being potentially powerful in challenging social injustice and mitigating the inequality that poverty currently brings to education. Conducting the process of research has provided me with valuable learning that I will bring into my role as a qualified EP.

5.10 Conclusion

This chapter has set out the data that has answered the research questions. The data collected was rich, and comparable to a range of previous research in the area of poverty-related educational inequality. This study was distinctive in that it took a psychological view to exploring the views of YP experiencing poverty.

The breadth of research discussed in this thesis indicates the complexity underlying poverty-related educational inequality, and implies that solutions will be similarly broad-ranging and complex.

While yielding interesting and useful findings, the context-specificity and small scale of this study limits the generalisation of findings. This implicates that further research is needed in the area of poverty-related educational inequality, from an educational psychology perspective and including student voice.

It could tentatively be surmised that the findings, along with previous research, indicate that a systemic approach (incorporating student voice) is arguably the most effective approach for EPs to address poverty-related educational inequality. However, this does not preclude EPs working with both individuals and groups of CYP to mitigate the effects of poverty on learning. These are evidently areas in which EPs can contribute, given their knowledge and skills in the psychology of systems and organisations, in addition to the psychology of groups and individuals.

This thesis has argued that it is imperative for the issue of educational inequality to be addressed as "providing a shelter from the impact of disadvantage is one of the main reasons for having and supporting a state-funded education system" (Gorard & See, 2011, p.687). To make changes, the political will needs to be there. The UK government argues that "The Children and Families Bill...underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background" (Department of Education, 2013, p.1). However, Fox (2015) argues that "the social lotteries of gender, race and class are not addressed by the Act and neither are the families' or schools'

circumstances" (p.391-392). It seems evident that an analysis of poverty should be factored into any consideration of educational needs. In the researcher's view it is time for the government to put their money (and more of their efforts) where their mouth is, and begin to seriously tackle the issue.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Strategy for narrative literature review

The issue of poverty-related educational inequality has been analysed and researched in a range of academic disciplines. The purpose of the review was to bring this disparate literature together in a holistic overview. The reviewed literature was organised by broad themes: the voice of the child; the social and cultural capital of the family; school systems; and psychological factors.

The table below indicates searches performed on databases and terminology used in the search. Journal articles were sourced between October 2014 and January 2016. Green, Johnson & Adams (2006) state that the "minimum requirements for narrative reviews are that authors should state the database searched, a starting year, and the ending year and month of the search" (p.107).

Papers relating to poverty-related educational inequality and dated from January 2000 to January 2016 were included, due to the fast changing nature of the policy context. (With the exception of the Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore (1995) paper on the Key Characteristics of Effective Schools which was included due to its relevance to the review). Articles not relating to the UK or USA context were excluded, as the UK has a distinctive policy context which may not be comparable to other countries. Psychological research conducted in the USA was included, due to the dearth of research in the UK.

The search terms below were used in varying combinations on the listed databases. It was difficult to pinpoint articles that were relevant to the research questions, which is why so many search terms were used. Abstracts of articles were scanned and if they were relevant and fitted the criteria outlined above, they were included in the review. Reference lists in the articles selected for review were scanned to locate further relevant journal articles. This resulted in a total of 83 publications being used in the narrative review.

Database/s	Search terms/keywords
EBSCO: Academic Search Complete, British Education Index, Child Development and Adolescent Studies, Education Abstracts, Education Research Complete, Educational Administration Abstracts, ERIC (Education Resource Information Center), PsycARTICLES, PsychINFO, Teacher Reference Center	Poverty, education*, UK, inequality, attainment gap, achievement gap, underachievement, working-class, social class, deprivation, disadvantage, educational psychology, Positive Psychology, psych*, young people, intervention, social justice, school, socio-economic, school improvement, pupil voice, student voice
Scopus	
Google Scholar	
Joseph Rowntree Foundation Online	
Google	

Appendix B: Information sheet, letters and consent forms

Information sheet: for school
Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Attainment at School: Summary of proposal

The attainment gap between children and young people (CYP) experiencing poverty and their better off peers in the UK is widening, despite an increasing media and policy focus in this area. This is a complex area and there is no conclusive evidence in what works to close the attainment gap. There is a plethora of research on the impact of poverty on education, however very little of it includes the voice of CYP. Hearing the views of CYP is a central tenet of educational psychology, as is social justice and facilitating access to the curriculum for all students.

The aim of this research is to explore the views around attainment of young people (YP) experiencing poverty in [*name of borough*]. YP will be supported to discuss aspects of their lives (both in and out of school) that enable them to attain at school, and aspects that present barriers to attainment. The research will use Positive Psychology, taking a strengths based approach to explore the skills YP think they bring to education, and skills they would like to develop. In addition YP will be asked how they can be supported in planning for the future.

It is hoped that the study will highlight some themes in school that, if addressed, could potentially raise the attainment of CYP experiencing poverty. Education is seen as one way of lifting CYP out of poverty, giving them more options in their future careers.

The study will use qualitative methods. Questions from the Little Box of Big Questions 2 (LBBQ2) (Gersch & Lipscomb, forthcoming) will be used as a tool to elicit YP's views in semi-structured interviews, in addition to questions devised by the researcher. Secondary school students in key stages three and four from a 'deprived' secondary school in [*name of borough*] will participate in the study.

[*name of borough*] falls within the 20% highest scoring boroughs in inequality, which measures the highest scoring localities with the lowest (Local Futures, 2010). Almost a quarter of children in the borough experiences poverty, compared with a fifth across England (Public Health England, 2014). [*name of borough*] has one of the highest attainment gaps in England, ranking 4th out of 326 districts with a gap of 38.4% (DfE, 2012). 66.8% of students not eligible for FSM in [*name of borough*] achieve five or more General Certificates of Secondary Education (GCSEs) at grade A-C, in contrast to 28.2% of FSM students (DfE, 2012).

The current government's stated aim is to 'ensure that a child's socioeconomic disadvantage does not limit their educational outcomes by age 19, compared to their peers' (HOCEC, 2014:5). A raft of legislation and interventions in the last decade has aimed to address the attainment gap, with varying success. Sinclair et al. (2010) assert that recent policy is distinct for its increased stress on individual responsibility rather than structural (or systemic) causes of disadvantage and social exclusion.

Letter to parent/guardian/s:

Dear Parent/Guardian

My name is Anna Griffiths and I am writing to ask for your support for your child to participate in a research project I am doing in [*school name*]. This is being done as part of my training to become an educational psychologist at the University of East London. I am on a two year placement in [*name of borough*] and have been working with staff and students at [*school name*] since September 2014.

I met with your child today to explain my research and they gave their consent to participate in the project. This means that I will be meeting with them to talk to them at school on a specified date. I will meet with them at 2.25pm, so they will be late home from school on that day.

I want to find out about things that young people think help them to do well at school, as well as things that are less helpful. I am also interested in the skills young people think they have, and the skills they would like to develop. I am particularly interested in young people who are entitled to pupil premium grants. It is hoped that information gathered from the project will help the school to support students to reach their potential at school.

I would like to talk to your child for around 60 minutes in school. I will ask questions about learning and hopes for the future. By the end of the interview each young person will have an action plan for things they would like to do over the next year. I hope to talk to eight young people all together.

Interviews will be audio recorded and written up anonymously; once written up, the recordings will be permanently deleted. This project will be written into a research thesis to be submitted as part of my training. All information gathered will be treated with the strictest confidence and any reports resulting from the study will not identify the names of participants.

Participation in the project is voluntary. Participants are free to withdraw at any time and do not have to give a reason. It is very unlikely that your child will feel any distress from participation. However, if this does arise, I will offer information on what provision is available in school or locally to support your child with any issues that may emerge.

Please contact me to ask me any questions. If you are happy for your child to continue you do not need to do anything; I will follow up this letter with a phone call to check that you are in agreement for the interview to go ahead. If you would not like your child to participate then please contact me. Please retain this invitation letter for reference.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this study, I look forward to speaking to you.

Anna Griffiths
E-mail: xxxx; Tel: **xxxx**

Letter for students:

Dear ....

My name is Anna Griffiths and I am training to become an educational psychologist. I work with children and young people in [*name of borough*]. I am doing some research as part of my training and would be happy if you could take part.

I want to find out what young people think helps them at school, and things that may not help them. I am also interested in what skills young people have, and the skills they would like to develop. I hope that the information from the study will help the school to support young people to do their best at school.

I would like to chat to you for around 60 minutes in school, with a break half way through. I will ask you some questions about school, your learning, and your hopes for the future. I will be chatting to 7 other young people too.

I will record our chat, to make sure I remember what was said. Afterwards I will write about what I have learnt but I won't use your name, so that no-one will know what you said. Once it has been typed up, the recording will be deleted forever.

If you agree to take part, you can withdraw from the research at any time without giving a reason. It will not affect the rest of school.

If you have any questions about this you can contact me – my details are below.

I hope to chat to you soon ☺.

Anna Griffiths

E-mail: xxxxx
Telephone number: xxxxx

Consent form for young people

My name is: .... I am in Year ....

1. I have read the information and understand what Anna's project is about:

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No (I would like to chat more about it)

2. I would like to take part in the project and chat with Anna:

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

3. I am happy for Anna to record what I say so she can remember the discussion:

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Signature: ....

Date: ....

Thank you ☺

Letter for school:

Dear *[school name]*

Project Title: Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Learning in School

My name is Anna Griffiths and I am training to become an educational psychologist at the University of East London. I am on placement at [*name of borough*] Educational Psychology Service until summer 2016.

I am carrying out research as part of my training and I am writing to ask for your support for [*name of school*] to participate in my research study. I want to find out what young people think helps (and hinders) them to do well at school. I am also interested in what skills young people have, and the skills they would like to develop. I am particularly interested in young people who are in receipt of free school meals.

It is hoped that the information from the study will provide information to help schools to support lower income students to reach their potential at school. I hope to interview eight students (four male and four female) from key stages three and four at [*name of school*]. Each interview will take about 60 minutes (with a break half way through) and students will be asked questions about their learning and hopes for the future.

It would be necessary to obtain informed consent from the student, their parent/carer, and the school. Students will have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. It is unlikely that students will feel any distress from participation. However, if this does arise, I will offer information on what provision is available in school or locally to support with any issues that may emerge.

Interviews will be recorded and later I will write about what I have found out from the young people I have chatted to. This will be done anonymously and recordings will be then be deleted forever. All information gathered will be treated with the strictest confidence and any reports resulting from the study will not identify the names of participants.

Students are not obliged to take part in this study and should not feel coerced. Participants, if agreed to take part, will be free to withdraw at any time without disadvantage and without any obligation to give a reason.

Results of the study will be reported back to the school. I hope that the findings will help the school in planning for and supporting students from lower income households.

Please feel free to ask me any questions, my contact details (and those of my supervisor) are below.
Thank you for taking the time to consider this study.

Anna Griffiths
E-mail: xxxxx; Telephone number: xxxxx

If you have any questions or concerns about how the study has been conducted, please contact my Director of Studies: xxxxxx

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: xxxxxx

Consent form for head teacher:

Name of school: ....

Please fill this in if you are happy for the selected young people from your school to take part in the research project:
'Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Attainment at School'

1. I have read the information about the project and I understand what it is about:

about it) ☐ Yes   ☐ No (I would like to chat more

Signature: ....

2. I am happy for the selected young people in the school to participate in the research project, pending permission from parents/guardians and young people:

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Signature: ....

3. I am happy for young people's responses to be recorded and destroyed afterwards:

☐ Yes   ☐ No

Signature: ....

Thank you

Appendix C: Questions used in semi-structured interviews

Thanks to Small World Publishing and Professor Irvine Gersch for permission to reproduce the questions here.

LITTLE BOX OF BIG QUESTIONS 2 (LBBQ2): SELECTED QUESTIONS
(Highlighted prompt questions were taken from other cards in the box)

How do people learn things?
- How do you learn best? Who with? Where? With what?
  - What helps you to do well at school?
  - Is there anything that stops you from learning at school?
- Who has been your very best teacher? Why?
- What do you think is the most important thing for you to learn about now?
  - Why?
  - Where can you learn about these things?
- What would you like to learn about in the future?
  - Why?

What are your dreams for the future?
- What sort of person would you like to be when you are an adult?
  - What are your key strengths? What do you love doing? What are your passions?
- What are your hopes and dreams for the future? How could you achieve your dreams?
- If you definitely could not fail, what would you choose to do?
- What would you like to achieve in 5 years time? 10 years time? By the time you are a much older person? Who can help you?
- What plans or goals could you make for this year?

SUPPLEMENTARY INTERVIEW QUESTION:
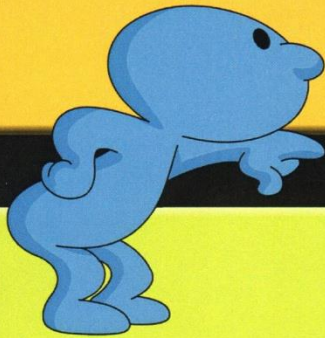
- If you were advising the mayor of [*name of borough*] what would you tell him/her to do to ensure that every child/young person succeeded at school?

Thanks to Small World Publishing and Professor Irvine Gersch for permission to reproduce the cards here. Please do not copy.

Card 1:

Thanks to Small World Publishing and Professor Irvine Gersch for permission to reproduce the cards here. Please do not copy.

Card 2:

Set Three: My Future

What are your dreams for the future?

What sort of person would you like to be when you are an adult?
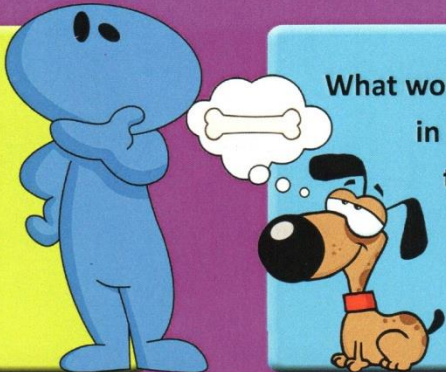
What are your hopes and dreams for the future?

How could you achieve your dreams?

What plans or goals could you make for this year?

What would you like to achieve in 5 years time? 10 years time? By the time you are a much older person?

Who can help you?

Appendix D: Example of Interview Transcription: Freddie (please see Appendix M for all transcriptions)

1   Researcher: do you want some water?

2   Freddie: no thanks, I'm ok, I've got a bottle.

3   Researcher: no, oh ok. Right so to start off with, I've got a little

4   film clip to watch....Right let me just find it...

5   So what time did that happen this morning?

6   Freddie: no, er last week

7   Researcher: oh it happened last week?

8   Freddie: I went in yesterday, or I went in yesterday or

9   Monday. But they haven't rung my parents or told my

10   parents or anything.

11   Researcher: right

12   Freddie: so, I've been isolated and my parents don't even

13   know about it.

14   Researcher: ok, and it happened last week?

15   Freddie: yeah, they should have told my mum and dad first.

16   I told my mum and dad, they even said that he shouldn't

17   have got in your face and I told them exactly what went on

18   and they say I was making up things er at assembly, they

19   made up something about my friend. My friend apparently

20   assaulted him, when he tapped him.

21   Researcher: Right

22   Freddie: He said sir, like that, tapped him

23   Researcher: right

24   Freddie: he said it was assault and sent him out

25   Researcher: really. And does he have arguments with lots of

26   students, the teacher?

27   Freddie: yup, we are the main people that he would always

28   have a go at

29   Researcher: yeah, is he quite strict?

30   Freddie: no, he's not strict he just seems to have a go at me

31   and N, or me and N and M and H

32   Researcher: right

33   Freddie: even if we are just, like, sitting down on our chair

34   doing nothing he'll shout at us and send us outside. He

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A1]: Isolation in school
Isolation

Comment [A2]: Honest communication between student and parents.
Parents

Comment [A3]: Parents expressing honest opinion about school staff.
Parents

Comment [A4]: Different versions of events – staff/students
Conflict with teachers

Comment [A5]: Lack of communication between school and home
Home-school communication

Comment [A6]: Delayed punishment (internal exclusion the week following incident)
Exclusion

35	don't do it to anyone else, like, say if we're talking he
36	sends us out but when everyone else is talking he don't
37	sent anyone else out.
38	Researcher: right, so it kinda feels like you're being picked on
39	Freddie: yeah
40	Researcher: yeah, and will you get a chance to sit down and
41	have a conversation with him about it?
42	Freddie: I don't want to
43	Researcher: you don't want to cos you're... will your mum and
44	dad have to come in?
45	Freddie: no
46	Researcher: no
47	Freddie: if I had to get sat down to talk to him though I would
48	end up going schizo
49	Researcher: what cos you still feel very annoyed about it?
50	Freddie: yeah
51	Researcher: yeah. Will you have him next year?
52	Freddie: hopefully not
53	Researcher: might you have a different teacher? So what do
54	you do when you are in isolation?
55	Freddie: nothing apart from work that's been set
56	Researcher: right so you've got work to do, yeah.
57	Freddie: I'm not learning anything in isolation cos it's not the
58	same as being in the actual class. So it's like I'm stuck in
59	isolation doing writing and work and then I get back into
60	class and they're doing a whole lot of different things.
61	Researcher: yeah, so you've missed a load of stuff. Yeah that
62	must be difficult.
63	Freddie: mm hmm. I've been set these tests about 5 times
64	in a row now, to do
65	Researcher: that you're doing today, yeah?
66	Freddie: yeah, I've had to do it again, I've had to do art
67	again. I've had to do loads of different things again.

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A7]: Friends in similar situation (feeling picked on)
Peer support

Comment [A8]: Conflict with teachers

Comment [A9]: Scapegoating/blame of students by teachers
Teacher scapegoating student

Comment [A10]: Feeling picked on by teachers
Teacher scapegoating student

Comment [A11]: Being sent out of class
Exclusion

Comment [A12]: Conflict with teachers

Comment [A13]: Feelings - **anger**

Comment [A14]: Conflict with teachers

Comment [A15]: Feeling – stuck, frustrated
Frustration
Feeling stuck

68	Researcher: so it feels like a bit of a waste of time? Because
69	you've already done them.
70	Freddie: yeah
71	Researcher: yeah, yeah that must be frustrating. Right, so I've
72	got a video here. Right this is just to give you a little bit of
73	an introduction. It's a young person who lives in St
74	Anne's, which I think is in Nottingham, I don't know if you
75	know it?
76	Freddie: what?
77	Researcher: St Anne's, a place called St Anne's.
78	Freddie: no
79	Researcher: and he's talking about school, and his experience
80	of school. OK?
81	
82	VIDEO PLAYS
83	Researcher: that's it, what did you think of that?
84	Freddie: I thought it was right
85	Researcher: what's that?
86	Freddie: I thought it was right what he was saying
87	Researcher: everything was right, you agree with him?
88	Freddie: mm hmm
89	Researcher: yeah, so you feel the same sort of way? And have
90	you ever had a teacher like, what he was talking about?
91	
92	Freddie: yeah
93	Researcher: yeah, who was that?
94	Freddie: Miss T, she left. She's gone to a different school.
95	Researcher: Was that in [school name] or in primary school?
96	Freddie: she was here
97	Researcher: she was here, and what did she teach?
98	Freddie: em, everything. I was in nurture.
99	Researcher: ah ok
100	Freddie: it was like a smaller class and there was only like 7
101	of us.

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A16]: Isolation – wasting time, not learning
Exclusion

Comment [A17]: Isolation in school

Comment [A18]: Withdrawal of support – nurture base
Closure of nurture base

143

102	Researcher:	yeah

103 Freddie: she taught us every single day, every lesson. But
104 then she left us and like this year. So we haven't got her
105 any more. I've just got teachers who always argue with
106 me.

> Comment [A20]: Nurture – consistency of same teacher
> **Same teacher - continuity**

> Comment [A21]: Withdrawal of support – nurture
> **Closure of nurture base**

107 Researcher: who are always?

108 Freddie: like arguing

109 Researcher: arguing with you

110 Freddie: like if they start saying things, and then I argue
111 back

112 Researcher: right. So they kind of wind you up, rub you up the
113 wrong way. Whereas Miss Tucker didn't. So tell me about
114 Miss Tucker, what was it about her that was good?

> Comment [A22]: Scapegoating/blame of certain students by teachers
> **Teacher scapegoating student**

> Comment [A23]: **Conflict with teachers**

115 Freddie: she, she knew how to calm us down and
116 everything

117 Researcher: yeah

118 Freddie: she knew how to handle, say if we got really badly
119 told off and everything, and we would come into her class
120 really annoyed she would know, she would leave us alone
121 and let us calm down and then we would get on with our
122 work or she would take me out of the class and talk to me

> Comment [A24]: Teacher knows how to calm you down
> **Calming**

> Comment [A25]: **Feelings – anger, calm**

123 Researcher: right, and could you, could you talk to her about
124 anything then?

125 Freddie: yeah

126 Researcher: yeah

127 Freddie: all of us could, everyone who was in the class
128 could

> Comment [A26]: Can talk to teacher about anything
> **Confiding**

> Comment [A27]: **Good relationship** with teacher

129 Researcher: and so nurture didn't continue into this year? Is
130 there a nurture class still?

131 Freddie: no because she's left.

132 Researcher: right

133 Freddie: she was the nurture teacher.

134 Researcher: yeah

135 Freddie: now she's left

Freddie (male) – Y8

144

136	Researcher: and did you know that she was gonna leave?
137	Freddie: no
138	Researcher: ah, you didn't did you not get a chance
139	Freddie: no-one knew she was gonna leave
140	Researcher: to say good bye then? No?
141	Freddie: no-one knew she was gonna leave
142	Researcher: ahh. So it must have been quite difficult for you this
143	year, coming back and she wasn't here and having to just
144	get on with it without her
145	Freddie: yeah
146	Researcher: yeah
147	Freddie: I have one teacher but, er, em Miss F, she helps a
148	lot
149	Researcher: right
150	Freddie: you know Miss F don't you?
151	Researcher: oh, T...
152	Freddie: yeah, T F
153	Researcher: yeah, yeah. So she teaches you as well.
154	Freddie: no she don't teach me she just helps me with
155	things
156	Researcher: right
157	Freddie: like say if get annoyed I tell her and she would help
158	me and everything else
159	Researcher: what so she would talk to you about what to do
160	when you get annoyed and how to calm down and
161	Freddie: how to calm down is different. I don't seem to calm
162	down
163	Researcher: no?
164	Freddie: if I get really annoyed, I do something stupid and I
165	think why did I do that and then I think after
166	Researcher: so it's usually afterwards you kind of regret it?
167	yeah? I suppose, with time, you'll be able to learn how to
168	to control yourself a bit more. I mean it's not uncommon

Comment [A28]: Withdrawal of support – **closure of nurture base**

Comment [A29]: Feelings - anger

Comment [A30]: Teacher helps with regulation of anger
Teacher is calming

Comment [A31]: Good relationship with teacher

Freddie (male) – Y8

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169		that people your age, that sounds a bit patronising I know
170		but
171	Freddie:	see it used to wind me up when people wind me up
172		and call me things
173	Researcher:	mm hmm
174	Freddie:	but, I just laugh at it now
175	Researcher:	you just laugh now, well that's
176	Freddie:	it ain't true so
177	Researcher:	yeah. That's a step forward as well then, so you're
178		not reacting in a, you're not lashing out, you just laugh
179		and you just laugh it off
180	Freddie:	mm hmm
181	Researcher:	water off a duck's back
182	Freddie:	I get annoyed sometimes when they take the mick
183		out of my friends and that
184	Researcher:	yeah
185	Freddie:	and when they cos the other day, em do you know
186		the Old Linn? Have you ever been down the Old Linn?
187	Researcher:	no
188	Freddie:	you haven't?
189	Researcher:	no
190	Freddie:	oh em, there's like a wall for the boats come up to
191	Researcher:	yeah
192	Freddie:	and er I was at work and me and my friend had
193		finished and me and my friend were just waiting over
194		there and we had these kids throwing water balloons over,
195		and then started throwing metal at us and all this
196	Researcher:	right
197	Freddie:	and then we shouted like, they were shouting
198		things and we told them to shut up, they threw water
199		balloons so we threw one back. One of them got annoyed
200		and come over, and then my mate just told him to shut up
201		and go away and one of them said something about his
202		mum. But his mum's dead

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A32]: Feelings – calm, anger, regret

Comment [A33]: Student coping mechanisms – getting angry, laughing
Coping mechanism

Comment [A34]: Self regulation – hard to calm down
Self regulation

Comment [A35]: Feelings - anger

Comment [A36]: Friends – feeling protective towards
Peer protection

Comment [A37]: Works a job
Work experience

203	Researcher: right
204	Freddie: his mum died when he was young. And then he
205	was swinging punches
206	Researcher: yeah
207	Freddie: and then the other one come over. He's in this
208	school
209	Researcher: did they know him then? Did they know that his
210	mum was dead?
211	Freddie: nah
212	Researcher: right
213	Freddie: but then em, oh the other one come over, his
214	name was Shane or something like that and he was like,
215	em, basically, he was throwing more metal at us and then
216	as we were about to leave they were hiding behind a
217	bush, a big group of them. There was at least 15 to 20 of
218	them
219	Researcher: and did you
220	Freddie: waiting for me and my mate to go so they could
221	beat us up
222	Researcher: and what did you do?
223	Freddie: we just waited them out. They got bored and then
224	walked over there and then we went
225	Researcher: right. Ah, that sounds horrible. Were you scared?
226	Freddie: they have knives and that but, that's why I didn't
227	wanna go past them
228	Researcher: yeah
229	Freddie: I mean my sister works in the shop still, but she
230	was still in there, so she was waiting, they come over
231	before, started mouthing off, and then my sister come out
232	and
233	Researcher: so were you quite scared?
234	Freddie: yeah worried I was gonna get stabbed
235	Researcher: yeah
236	Freddie: cos they usually do have knives

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A38]: Friends (outside school)

Comment [A39]: Conflict with other YP outside school
Conflict (outside school)

Comment [A40]: Siblings – sister works the same job
Sibling support

Comment [A41]: Support from family – protection from older sister
Sibling support

237	Researcher: and do you have a phone or anything, could you
238	have phoned someone to come and get you? Like your
239	Dad or...
240	Freddie: I wouldn't have phoned my Dad
241	Researcher: no? Who would you phone?
242	Freddie: bikers
243	Researcher: bikers?
244	Freddie: my Dad's in the Hells Angels
245	Researcher: oh is he, right
246	Freddie: I would have phoned them and one of them would
247	have come down and like let me get past them
248	Researcher: yeah, just looked out for you. So you would have
249	had someone to phone if you...if the worst came to the
250	worst
251	Freddie: I got a shop and the sea going all the way down
252	and then Peter Pan's all the way down there, just across
253	the road and then down the road a little bit, that's where
254	they all are, all the Hell's Angels
255	Researcher: right
256	Freddie: they all go to the tattoo shop and that
257	Researcher: so do you hang out with them sometimes?
258	Freddie: yeah
259	Researcher: yeah
260	Freddie: my Dad used to work as a tattooist as well
261	Researcher: ok
262	Freddie: used to ride with them and everything
263	Researcher: so has your Dad got a bike then? Do you go on it
264	with him? That sounds fun
265	Freddie: well he can't ride it any more
266	Researcher: how come?
267	Freddie: he had a motorbike accident 5 years ago
268	Researcher: oh no
269	Freddie: em, he could have died. He had half a.. he hasn't
270	even got a spleen any more

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A43]: Adult support outside school
Adult support

Comment [A44]: Adult role models – Dad (tattooist & biker), bikers (Hell's Angels)
Adult role models

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271 Researcher: right

272 Freddie: hasn't got a spleen, half a kidney, he's got loads of
273 things wrong with him

274 Researcher: yeah

275 Freddie: whole left hand side he can't use

276 Researcher: oh no

277 Freddie: but he still gets on the bike and rides it

278 Researcher: just, slowly I hope yeah. He still gets on it...

279 Freddie: flies down the road

280 Researcher: yeah. I think that's the thing. My uncle is really into
281 riding bikes. He lives in the Isle of Man. Have you heard of
282 the TT?

283 Freddie: nods

284 Researcher: so he's quite involved in the TT and there's lots of
285 accidents in that I think

286 Freddie: yeah

287 Researcher: but the thing is that bikers just love it so much.
288 They know it's dangerous but they love it so much that
289 they don't want to give it up

290 Freddie: (laughs) my Dad don't, he don't want to give the
291 bike, he don't want to sell the bike, but he has to. It's just
292 going to be sitting there rotting away

293 Researcher: yeah. And what about your Mum? Does your mum
294 ride a bike?

295 Freddie: my mum loves the bike

296 Researcher: yeah

297 Freddie: my mum can't ride one cos she hasn't got a
298 license, she's got a, she's got a tumour. Not a brain
299 tumour but it's like em, she's got something wrong with
300 her head

301 Researcher: an aneurism is it?

302 Freddie: yeah I think that's it

303 Researcher: right

> **Comment [A45]: Parental health issues** (Dad) – bike accident

> **Comment [A46]:** Dad – role model, interests (bikes), health issues, **Family role models**

Freddie (male) – Y8

304	Freddie: and then, she's not allowed to do it just in case
305	something happens when she's driving
306	Researcher: ok
307	Freddie: and she crashes and she causes another crash
308	and all this.
309	Researcher: yeah
310	Freddie: she's not allowed to get a license, same as she
311	can't work and same as my dad can't work now
312	Researcher: because of his, the way he's been injured
313	Freddie: yeah
314	Researcher: right
315	Freddie: just like they're getting things off the council and
316	that, and then I go to work for my mum and that
317	Researcher: you work? Yeah. What do you do?
318	Freddie: I work down the fish shop. I go fishing and I work in
319	the shop and everything
320	Researcher: oh wow. So you go fishing, what with the in one of
321	the fishing boats. Or do you go like fly fishing
322	Freddie: on the fishing boats, sometimes
323	Researcher: yeah
324	Freddie: and then in the shop most of the time
325	Researcher: right. So the fishing boats like hauling in the big
326	nets?
327	Freddie: yeah
328	Researcher: yeah, wow. That sounds pretty amazing. Do you
329	enjoy it?
330	Freddie: yeah it's fun but it stinks
331	Researcher: yeah
332	Freddie: you come home, you're used to the smell in there,
333	but when you come home it stinks.
334	Researcher: so what, do you just put your clothes straight in the
335	washing machine and wash them?
336	Freddie: yeah go straight in, put them in the washing
337	machine

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A47]: Dad – can't work
Parental unemployment

Comment [A48]: Parental health issues – Mum (aneurism), Dad (bike accident)

Comment [A49]: Mum – role model, feels protective towards, health issues, has aneurism, prohibited from driving, can't work
Family role models
Parental unemployment
Parental health issues

Comment [A50]: skills learnt in job – fishing, customer service
Skills – fishing
Skills – customer service

Comment [A51]: works a job – fish shop & fishing
Work experience

338   Researcher: and leave your shoes outside the door?

339   Freddie: yeah I have welllies, so I leave them

340   Researcher: right. So how often do you work?

341   Freddie: only Saturdays

342   Researcher: right

343   Freddie: or like in the holidays, whenever you need it

344   Researcher: good for you

345   Freddie: whatever day it doesn't matter but em

346   Researcher: yeah, and how long have you been doing that?

347   Freddie: nearly a year

348   Researcher: wow. So how old are you now?

349   Freddie: 13

350   Researcher: so you have been doing it since you were 12? Wow

351   that's really impressive. And did you want to do it?

352   Freddie: yeah

353   Researcher: or was it your Mum and Dad that suggested it?

354   Freddie: no I wanted to do it. my dad knew the owner and

355   everything, so my dad talked to him and said yeah, I'll be

356   able to work there

357   Researcher: yeah. So have you learnt quite a lot working there?

358   Freddie: yeah

359   Researcher: like different kinds of fish and fishing and...

360   Freddie: mm hmm

361   Researcher: I suppose you can gut the fish and...

362   Freddie: I can gut the fish, I can fillet flat fish er i can nearly

363   fillet like normal fish. I can do quite a lot of things.

364   Researcher: yeah wow. And what about cooking, do you cook

365   it?

366   Freddie: we don't cook it but we can cook it if they want to,

367   we just serve fish but em some, the shops getting

368   knocked down and then we're having a whole lot of, like

369   basically like 3 shops put into one

370   Researcher: ok

371   Freddie: and then it's gonna be just massive

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A52]: works a job – been working since age 12, works Saturdays and in holidays
Work experience

Comment [A53]: Support from family - Dad helped to get a job
Family support

372	Researcher: yeah. So do you think you'll keep on working there
373	or do you think it's more of like a job that....
374	Freddie: yeah I'll keep on working there
375	Researcher: yeah, even when you leave school
376	Freddie: yeah, just to get money and then I wanna be a tree
377	surgeon
378	Researcher: a tree surgeon, ah ok. And what makes you want to
379	be a tree surgeon?
380	Freddie: cos I love being outdoors
381	Researcher: yeah, so you spend a lot of time outdoors?
382	Freddie: yeah, me and my dad to camps and bushcraft
383	camps and that
384	Researcher: ah. What so what is like organised...the bushcraft
385	camps
386	Freddie: yeah
387	Researcher: is that with a lot of people would all get together, or
388	is it just you and your dad?
389	Freddie: a lot of people sometimes and em and then we do
390	like a meeting, there's like 5, 6 of us, we all just go out
391	and camp wherever we want to camp
392	Researcher: yeah, so what kind of tent have you got?
393	Freddie: I don't sleep in a tent
394	Researcher: oh
395	Freddie: I sleep on the floor with a tarp over the top of me
396	Researcher: and just outdoors? Wow. So what do you have
397	underneath you?
398	Freddie: just a roll mat
399	Researcher: a roll mat. And a sleeping bag?
400	Freddie: yup
401	Researcher: and what like a bivvy bag type thing?
402	Freddie: well, sometimes I take the bivvy bag but other
403	times I don't.

Comment [A54]: Skills learnt from job – knowledge of fish, gutting/filleting fish, cooking, customer service
Work experience
Skills – knowledge of fish, cooking, customer service

Comment [A55]: Aspirations – job – to be a tree surgeon

Comment [A56]: Adult role models – camping, bushcraft meetings

Freddie (male) – Y8

404	Researcher: oh, that sounds amazing. I love camping but I've
405	never, I think maybe 2 or 3 times in my life that I've slept
406	outdoors, usually I'm in a tent. So where do you go?
407	Freddie: anywhere.
408	Researcher: is it mainly around this sort of area? Have you been
409	to Scotland?
410	Freddie: no but me and my dad want to go to Scotland
411	Researcher: Scotland's amazing for camping. Really amazing. I
412	think, yeah, if you are into sleeping outdoors and stuff
413	you'd love it. Especially the west coast and the top of
414	Scotland.
415	Freddie: we've been up north and down south.
416	Researcher: right
417	Freddie: down by past devon and Somerset and that
418	Researcher: right
419	Freddie: and we've been all the way up to Leeds to camp
420	Researcher: right
421	Freddie: but that's basically it
422	Researcher: yeah, wow
423	Freddie: he's Dad's wanting to go further as well
424	Researcher: so are you gonna do that in the summer holidays?
425	Freddie: he wants to go to Scotland definitely
426	Researcher: yeah, oh you must go to Scotland. I think you,
427	yeah, you and your dad would love it if you are into
428	outdoorsy stuff. So tree surgeon
429	Freddie: yeah
430	Researcher: have you done anything like that before?
431	Freddie: yeah, my granddad is a tree surgeon
432	Researcher: ok, so has he taught you some stuff about it?
433	Freddie: yeah he's given me everything that he's got, like
434	his chainsaws, his harnesses, all ropes, safety hats, and
435	everything like that
436	Researcher: so he doesn't do it anymore?
437	Freddie: shakes head

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A60]: Dad – role model – exploring new places/travelling
Family role models
Interest - travelling

Comment [A61]: Interests – camping in new places
Skills/interests – camping

Comment [A62]: Grandad – role model – used to be a tree surgeon
Family role model

438	Researcher: right. So you're just use them once you're...do you
439	need a license to use a chainsaw?
440	Freddie: no
441	Researcher: cos they're pretty dangerous
442	Freddie: you need to be over 18 to use them
443	Researcher: right ok. Yeah, cos you need to be pretty careful
444	with them. Wow. That's really inspiring, and you're only
445	13. I've got some cards here with questions on. So I'm
446	just gonna give you the first one. So I think you'll be able
447	to talk quite a lot about this, cos it sounds like you have
448	learnt a lot. OK, so there's a main question on the front,
449	and then some sub questions on the back and then I've
450	got. I've got this, which has basically got the same
451	questions on it. I'm just gonna get a pencil...
452	OK, so the main question – how do people learn things.
453	So if you think about you you and I (alarm goes off)
454	Freddie: that's for people going to class
455	Researcher: oh right, it's not usually that loud in here
456	Freddie: dunno
457	Researcher: em, yeah so you've obviously learnt a lot of stuff
458	out of school as well as inside of school. So, the question
459	how do you learn things. It's about just in life in general.
460	So what about for you, how do you learn things best?
461	Freddie: em being it like, it being shown to me, how to do it.
462	Researcher: right ok, so like demonstration
463	Freddie: yeah
464	Researcher: and who are you with usually when you learn
465	things well?
466	Freddie: my dad
467	Researcher: your dad, so he, he's taught you a lot
468	Freddie: mm hm
469	Researcher: about, the fish, the em
470	Freddie: fishing, camping
471	Researcher: yeah

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A63]: Aspirations – job – to be a tree surgeon

Comment [A64]: Learns best by being shown
Learning through demonstration

154

472	Freddie:	all sorts of things
473	Researcher:	outdoorsy sort of stuff
474	Freddie:	yep
475	Researcher:	yeah. And what about your granddad?
476	Freddie:	he's taught me a lot of things about bonsai trees
477		and that
478	Researcher:	right
479	Freddie:	he loves bonsai trees
480	Researcher:	ok, have you got any bonsai trees?
481	Freddie:	no, we haven't but I think I wanna get one for my
482		birthday this year
483	Researcher:	right. And has your granddad got quite a few then?
484	Freddie:	he's, his garden's full of them.
485	Researcher:	his garden? Oh right, wow
486	Freddie:	you can't walk anywhere without seeing a bonsai
487		tree
488	Researcher:	right
489	Freddie:	he's got a path going all the way around and
490		everywhere there's, he got massive like greenhouses, and
491		there like massive tunnels going all the way down
492	Researcher:	yeah
493	Freddie:	and all three of them just filled up, back sheds are
494		filled up
495	Researcher:	and does he sell them or does he..
496	Freddie:	he sells them
497	Researcher:	yeah, ok, I didn't...
498	Freddie:	he's got a 185 year old bonsai tree as well
499	Researcher:	wow
500	Freddie:	which are the 2nd oldest bonsai trees
501	Researcher:	and what, what kind is it?
502	Freddie:	I don't know what kind it is, it's, he said it was like
503		some Japanese something
504	Researcher:	right, quite a sort of rare specialised kind
505	Freddie:	yeah

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A65]: Learns best with Dad
Learning with family

506	Researcher: wow, cos I always thought people kept bonsai trees
507	indoors and they didn't have them in the garden
508	Freddie: right, in the summer he keeps them out. In the
509	winter he puts them in the tunnels.
510	Researcher: ok
511	Freddie: but in the winter he puts like bubble wrap over the
512	top, layers it and then he puts heaters in it, cos they need
513	to be warm, cos if they get cold and then they'll die
514	Researcher: right ok, yeah that makes sense
515	Freddie: dyou know, er normal trees they grow out and but
516	he does it so they grow upwards and then out at the top,
517	so it looks more
518	Researcher: right, so they're a bit taller then than
519	Freddie: yep
520	Researcher: right ok. Wow, so it sounds like you're you're quite
521	a sort of practical sort of person and very hands on and
522	really good with like handy things. What about at school,
523	like with school subjects. How do you learn best at
524	school?
525	Freddie: I don't know . i don't really learn much
526	Researcher: you don't learn much
527	Freddie: I always get kicked out of. I always get kicked out
528	of the classes and...
529	Researcher: yeah. What about last year when you were in
530	nurture class, how did you learn best?
531	Freddie: getting it shown to us and like, doing the lesson bit
532	by bit
533	Researcher: right
534	Freddie: so we'd have like, one part of the lesson and then
535	we'd like do a little bit of the lesson, and then we'd like go
536	on to play a game or something like that, and then we'll do
537	the rest of the lesson
538	Researcher: right
539	Freddie: so it's like

Comment [A66]: Skills/interests – keeping bonsai trees

Comment [A67]: Grandad – role model – taught about bonsais
Learning with family
Adult role models

Comment [A68]: Doesn't learn at school (exclusion)
Exclusion

Freddie (male) – Y8

156

540	Researcher: so you're doing it in short chunks and then sort of
541	coming back to it
542	Freddie: yeah
543	Researcher: yeah. And what about at primary school, what
544	primary school were you at?
545	Freddie: eh [school name]
546	Researcher: oh ok. How did you learn best when you were at
547	primary school?
548	Freddie: i didn't much
549	Researcher: you didn't learn much?
550	Freddie: no
551	Researcher: did you enjoy it. do you like going to school?
552	Freddie: no
553	Researcher: no, what about primary
554	Freddie: in primary school it was worse than it is here
555	Researcher: really?
556	Freddie: actually it is worse here than it was there
557	Researcher: yeah
558	Freddie: because primary school i was getting kicked out of
559	my class or I was constantly being like, i was throwing
560	things at teachers and all that
561	Researcher: so you don't, and you've never, did you enjoy
562	school when you were younger? Like maybe in reception,
563	year 1, year 2
564	Freddie: yeah, it was better back, it would have been better
565	back then than it is now.
566	Researcher: yeah. So you've never really enjoyed school very
567	much?
568	Freddie: nope
569	Researcher: so what kind of things do you think they should,
570	what would make you enjoy school? What would they
571	have to do in school for you to think in the morning, oh I'm
572	looking forward to going to school today?

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A69]: Learns best by chunking – broken up lesson, learning in steps, graduated learning **Chunking learning**

Comment [A70]: Learns best by demonstration/being shown **Learning through demonstration**

Comment [A71]: Conflict with teachers in primary school

Comment [A72]: Negative experience in primary school - **exclusion**

Comment [A73]: Doesn't enjoy school – in the past or now **Lack of enjoyment**

573	Freddie: more practical, more, instead of doing it about like
574	things that we've done here before, doing something
575	different but fun
576	Researcher: yeah. More things that you're interested in?
577	Freddie: yeah
578	Researcher: cos it sounds like you've got tonnes of interests,
579	but none of them you really learn at school do you?
580	Freddie: nope
581	Researcher: so if there was more things like that at school, do
582	you think you would look forward to going to school?
583	Freddie: yeah
584	Researcher: you would enjoy it. what else would make it better
585	for you?
586	Freddie: i don't know. ...if the teachers can understand
587	Researcher: yeah, if the teachers are on the same wavelength
588	as you, instead of, you feel like you're being picked on by
589	the teachers.
590	Freddie: yeah
591	Researcher: yeah
592	Freddie: I know I do things wrong sometimes but other times
593	I'm not doing something wrong, I always get blamed for
594	doing something. That's why I usually get kicked out of
595	the class and everything
596	Researcher: yeah, and when you get kicked out the class once
597	do you just think the next time, I don't care, it kind of
598	demotivates you does it?
599	Freddie: yeah, cos if I get kicked out of the class twice
600	that's a call out, and in another lesson if I get another call
601	out, that's isolation
602	Researcher: yeah
603	Freddie: and then if I get a callout from isolation, I'm
604	excluded
605	Researcher: have you ever been excluded?
606	Freddie: yeah, a lot of times

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A74]: Ideal world – more practical subjects; different subjects; more fun; more understanding teachers
More practical subjects
Teachers don't understand
Fun - learning

Comment [A75]: Scapegoating/blame of certain students by the teacher
Teacher scapegoating student

Comment [A76]: Isolation in school
Isolation
Exclusion

607	Researcher: really, what for, arguing with teachers and
608	Freddie: arguing with teachers, shouting things out in class,
609	swearing, all different things
610	Researcher: right. So what, I mean obviously you have to go to
611	school don't you? Cos it's the law until you're 17 at the
612	moment
613	Freddie: yeah
614	Researcher: and you're 12, so what what would you hope to get
615	out of school for the next 5 years?
616	Freddie: i don't know. Good GCSEs, I dunno
617	Researcher: good GCSEs, yeah. Have you chosen your
618	subjects yet?
619	Freddie: yeah
620	Researcher: yeah, so what have you, what have you chosen?
621	Freddie: eh geography and em wood tech
622	Researcher: wood tech?
623	Freddie: yup
624	Researcher: ah, so that sounds kind of up your street, do you
625	enjoy that?
626	Freddie: yeah
627	Researcher: yeah. So what is it, making things out of wood?
628	Freddie: yeah
629	Researcher: what have you made?
630	Freddie: a paper aeroplane shooter, at the moment we're
631	making litter pickers
632	Researcher: litter pickers? And do you choose what you make
633	or does the teacher set it for you?
634	Freddie: the teacher sets it
635	Researcher: right
636	Freddie: and then when we get into year 9 or 10 then we
637	start choosing what we make and have to design it and
638	everything
639	Researcher: right, so wood tech sounds, and what was the other
640	one you said you'd taken, geography?

Comment [A77]: Self regulation

Comment [A78]: Conflict with teachers

Comment [A79]: Feelings – anger, demotivation

Comment [A80]: Isolation in school

Comment [A81]: Exclusion from school

Comment [A82]: Aspirations – next 5 years – to get good GCSEs

Comment [A83]: Skills – wood tech

Comment [A84]: Favourite subject – wood tech

Freddie (male) – Y8

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641   Freddie: mm hmm

642   Researcher: what else?

643   Freddie: well that's the only 2 I'm allowed to take

644   Researcher: and so all the other ones are compulsory

645   Freddie: yeah like I have to take, I have to do English

646   Researcher: mm hmm

647   Freddie: so I have to do probably triple English, double
648   maths, and triple science

> **Comment [A85]:** Student autonomy(or lack of) – choosing what to do in lessons (wood tech); choosing subjects (lack of autonomy/choice in GCSEs)
> **Autonomy**
> **Lack of autonomy**

649   Researcher: ok

650   Freddie: i know I have to do triple science, cos I gotta learn
651   plant cells and how they grow and everything like that

652   Researcher: yeah

653   Freddie: cos I've got to learn different species of trees,
654   where they are most likely to grow, and all that

655   Researcher: yeah, so you've taken that intentionally cos you
656   know you want to be a tree surgeon

657   Freddie: yep

658   Researcher: yeah. So some, not all of school is completely
659   irrelevant for you, some of it is actually good for you like
660   wood tech and

661   Freddie: it's like geography and history

662   Researcher: oh yeah

663   Freddie: it's like I gotta know the history of the trees, and all
664   that

> **Comment [A86]: Interests – trees and plants**

> **Comment [A87]:** Some school work relates to job aspirations (e.g. tree surgeon)
> **Learning relevant to career**

665   Researcher: yeah. So it sounds like you're quite focused, that
666   you've got, you've got a goal. Something that you want to
667   do and you're kind of aiming for it

668   Freddie: yeah, and then I can't do it basically. Cos then I
669   usually get kicked out and it's all the same. Goes down in
670   every lesson

> **Comment [A88]: Feelings - demotivation**

671   Researcher: every lesson is it, even...

672   Freddie: every lesson I'll get either shouted at or kicked out,
673   even in maths lesson

> **Comment [A89]: Isolation**

674   Researcher: even the ones that you enjoy like wood tech and

> **Comment [A90]: Conflict with teachers**

Freddie (male) – Y8

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675	Freddie:	not not wood tech, because that is more practical
676		and we don't really do writing
677	Researcher: yeah
678	Freddie:	we just sat there and told what to do and then we
679	do it
680	Researcher: yeah
681	Freddie:	just straight away. Cos it's fun, we get to make
682		things and that.
683	Researcher: yeah
684	Freddie:	everyone, no trouble, we all just get on with it
685	Researcher: right. So it's more in classes where you have to
686	write?
687	Freddie:	yeah, in maths every lesson, I can guarantee every
688		lesson for this whole year, I've been sent out, sent out and
689		call outs, every single lesson
690	Researcher: right. And do you ever try to go in, thinking, you
691		know like the guy said in the video, thinking right I'm not
692		gonna get in trouble this lesson, I'm just gonna...
693	Freddie:	yeah I do that but then I still get kicked out, cos
694		something gets blamed on me
695	Researcher: yeah
696	Freddie:	or someone's getting told off for something, then
697		they blame it on me
698	Researcher: what someone, one of your friends in the class
699	Freddie:	not one of my friends but if other people and then
700		like they're sitting near me and they'll go oh it's his fault or
701		something like that
702	Researcher: and then the teacher would act on that?
703	Freddie:	yeah
704	Researcher: yeah, and do you explain to someone else
705		afterwards that you felt that it wasn't your fault, like Ms F?
706	Freddie:	I've done it before, like because of that incident
707		what happened last week I reported him for getting in my
708		face

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A91]: :Learning supports – learning not based on literacy; more practical learning; clear instructions and expectations; learning as fun
Non-literacy based learning
Clear instructions/expectations
Fun - learning

Comment [A92]: Conflict with teachers

Comment [A93]: Isolation in school

Comment [A94]: Scapegoating/blame of certain students by teachers
Teacher scapegoating student

Comment [A95]: Scapegoating/blame by other students
Students scapegoating peers

709	Researcher: yeah
710	Freddie: and I didn't do anything wrong, I wrote everything
711	that happened
712	Researcher: yeah
713	Freddie: but yet I'm still in isolation
714	Researcher: yeah
715	Freddie: it's unfair
716	Researcher: what you feel that they listen to the teacher over
717	you?
718	Freddie: yeah
719	Researcher: yeah. Yeah that does sound unfair.
720	Freddie: I just think cos he's an adult they listen to him more
721	than they do me. Cos it's like he actually like, N tapped
722	this other kid and then Sir said how dare you touch
723	another kid, sir went how did you even tap him, and N
724	went I tapped him like that. And then he reported him for
725	assault and apparently N punched him in the arm and he
726	got done for assault, when there was a camera right there
727	pointing in our classroom and outside the classroom, and
728	they didn't even look at the security cameras
729	Researcher: so N punched the teacher in the arm?
730	Freddie: poked him like that, literally just tapped him.
731	Researcher: oh poked him, I thought you said punched
732	Freddie: no that's what the teacher said he did, but he didn't
733	Researcher: right
734	Freddie: I was standing outside at the same time, N was
735	standing outside with me when sir literally came flying out
736	the classroom, he just, in my face, proper that close
737	Researcher: sounds difficult
738	Freddie: it's really annoying, but then he'll get away with it
739	Researcher: and what about next year, what do you think it's
740	going to be like?
741	Freddie: I think I'll get put down a set
742	Researcher: you'll be what?

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A96]: Isolation

Comment [A97]: Feelings – powerless, demotivation

Comment [A98]: Conflict with teacher

Comment [A99]: Different versions of events – staff/students

Comment [A100]: Power differentials between student and teacher

743	Freddie:	put down a set now
744	Researcher:	in maths?
745	Freddie:	yeah, I'm good at maths but then he kicks me out
746		of the lesson so obviously my grades are going down
747		down down down, cos I'm not there
748	Researcher:	yeah
749	Freddie:	and now I'm gonna be in set 5, the lowest set
750	Researcher:	so you could have a strategy for next year
751	Freddie:	yeah, have a different teacher
752	Researcher:	yeah you will have a different teacher so you've got
753		a new start, just keep your head down, cos I guess maths
754		is gonna be useful for you in the future as well isn't it
755	Freddie:	yeah
756	Researcher:	for what you want to do. And what about English,
757		how do you find that?
758	Freddie:	it's ok. Depends what teacher I've got. I've got 3
759		different teachers and they all teach 3 different things
760	Researcher:	right
761	Freddie:	which is really confusing
762	Researcher:	is it?
763	Freddie:	yeah, cos you have 1 teacher doing 1 thing, the
764		other teacher doing another, and then 1 teacher doing the
765		same thing as what we did like 2 months ago
766	Researcher:	ok
767	Freddie:	so it's really confusing
768	Researcher:	so what, what so one, one is doing revision
769	Freddie:	yeah
770	Researcher:	so she's going over what you have already done.
771		And what are the other 2 then, is one literature and...
772	Freddie:	they've done 2 different things
773	Researcher:	is one literature, so it would be like books and stuff
774	Freddie:	no it's not that. So we've got to work on one thing,
775		we're doing something about em some thing that
776		Shakespeare wrote or, yeah we were doing that and then

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A101]: systemic – **grades going down** due to **exclusion**

Comment [A102]: systemic – put down a set in maths **put down sets**

Comment [A103]: conflict with teacher/s

Comment [A104]: confusion with aspects of the curriculum – 3 teachers for English **curricular confusion**

777	we went in the other one, we one of them is doing
778	something else, had to write essays and all this.
779	Researcher: right ok
780	Freddie: and then the next one we had to do things that we
781	did in that class about 2 months ago
782	Researcher: right, that does sound quite confusing. I wonder
783	why they don't just have one English teacher
784	Freddie: that's what I mean, that's what I already said to
785	them but then they said that just the (inaudible) that the
786	teachers that the head teachers set and all this
787	Researcher: right
788	Freddie: it's really really confusing

Comment [A105]: confusion with aspects of the curriculum
curricular confusion

789	Researcher: right, mmm. So, just to continue with these
790	questions, what helps you to do well at school?
791	Freddie: nothing
792	Researcher: the teacher, cos you were talking about your
793	teacher Ms T last year.
794	Freddie: she helped me but this year (inaudible)
795	Researcher: this year you feel just completely
796	Freddie: yeah
797	Researcher: you sound quite down about it
798	Freddie: it's just, I ain't learnt nothing this year

Comment [A106]: exclusion – **not learning** due to **exclusion**

799	Researcher: you've learnt nothing
800	Freddie: no
801	Researcher: in any of your classes? What about wood tech? It
802	sounds like that class goes well.
803	Freddie: I know, I already know what to do in wood tech, it's
804	just like
805	Researcher: so it's kind of like you've already got the skills
806	you're just

Comment [A107]: Barriers to learning – covering skills already learnt
Too much repetition

| 807 | Freddie: I'm just waiting to do it while he's showing |
| 808 | everyone else to do it |

Freddie (male) – Y8

809	Researcher: yeah, so you've not actually learnt anything even
810	though you've enjoyed it. and what do you think would
811	help?
812	Freddie: I don't know
813	Researcher: to have different teachers? Certainly in maths, cos
814	that sounds quite...
815	Freddie: oh I want a different teacher in maths
816	Researcher: yeah
817	Freddie: I've already asked if I can get, like, go in a different
818	class
819	Researcher: right
820	Freddie: I don't want to be in that class at all, next maths
821	lesson I'm literally just gonna sit there doing nothing, cos I
822	know he's just gonna have a go at me if not. Cos last
823	time, like I asked if I can have help
824	Researcher: mm hmm
825	Freddie: so he said yeah hold on I'll be over in a minute, he
826	walks outside, talks to some other kid, and then come
827	back in, I asked him again, he told me to shut up
828	Researcher: right
829	Freddie: so I already asked him, and then I asked him again
830	cos he's already walked off and it's been 10 minutes and
831	then he just tells me to shut up
832	Researcher: and he doesn't give you any help?
833	Freddie: no. I just sat there doing nothing
834	Researcher: well hopefully the teacher you get next year will be
835	a bit more helpful
836	Freddie: mm hm
837	Researcher: so there's quite a lot of things that are stopping you
838	from learning at school at the moment, mainly because
839	you feel that the teachers are singling you out
840	Freddie: yeah

Comment [A108]: skills – wood tech

Comment [A109]: ideal world – to have a different teacher if you don't get on **flexibility (able to change teacher)**

Comment [A110]: disrespect from teacher **disrespectful**

Comment [A111]: power differentials between student and teacher

Comment [A112]: conflict with teacher

Freddie (male) – Y8

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841   Researcher: and you're not being treated fairly. And I suppose
842   that kind of puts you into a certain frame of mind where
843   you are feeling just picked on and defensive

844   Freddie: yeah

845   Researcher: which probably just makes the situation worse, it
846   can go in a spiral then

847   Freddie: it's like, if I get in trouble, and if the teacher don't
848   like me saying something back. Or, it's like, when they
849   have a teacher shouting at me. Last time I asked them
850   like three four times will you stop shouting at me, and they
851   didn't stop shouting so I shouted back, they didn't like that
852   so they sent me up to Mr A upstairs

853   Researcher: mm hm

854   Freddie: and then he excluded me for disobeying any of the
855   teachers, like whatever the teacher told me to do I didn't
856   do it

857   Researcher: yeah

858   Freddie: but I explained to him about the shouting as well
859   and he said you shouldn't have shouted back at them and
860   I said they shouldn't have been shouting at me in the first
861   place

862   Researcher: mm hm

863   Freddie: cos I did ask them if they would stop, so I shouted
864   back, and they still didn't stop

865   Researcher: yeah, I mean at school I guess there is always
866   going to be a power imbalance isn't there? The teacher's
867   always gonna have more power than you are as a
868   student, and that's just something I think you need to
869   accept. Not that I think it's right, but that's just the way it is

870   Freddie: mm hm

871   Researcher: and I suppose it's just about how you can get
872   through school learning, and not feeling annoyed every
873   day and not feeling like yeah, just

Comment [A113]: **exclusion** and **isolation**

Comment [A114]: **power differentials** between students and teachers

Comment [A115]: **conflict with teacher**

Freddie (male) – Y8

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874	Freddie: the fact the teachers think that they can like back
875	you down like
876	Researcher: yeah
877	Freddie: make you feel small
878	Researcher: you feel like they try and, they try and humiliate
879	you?
880	Freddie: yep, cos they do it in class, they embarrass you
881	like, and they shout something out, or shout at me in front
882	of the class, cos everyone would get annoyed about that,
883	if like
884	Researcher: yeah of course
885	Freddie: whole class went silent, and then he was just
886	shouting at you in front of the class
887	Researcher: yeah, yeah of course. But I guess, for you, it's
888	about finding the best way to sort of negotiate your way
889	through it and come out of school in one piece and be
890	able to just go on and do what you want to do, like tree
891	surgeon stuff
892	Freddie: yeah, so when he goes at, so ain't gonna let him
893	make a fool out of me. So I end up saying something back
894	or
895	Researcher: yeah
896	Freddie: and then when they like when the teacher makes
897	you feel like, all horrible, I don't like it so I say something
898	back as well
899	Researcher: yeah. So you're trying to do the same thing back to
900	them
901	Freddie: like, I'll try making them feel small
902	Researcher: yeah
903	Freddie: I've done that before and the teacher didn't like it
904	and I got excluded for it. shouldn't have been doing it to
905	me, trying to embarrass me in front of the whole class

Comment [A116]: **teacher humiliates** student

Comment [A117]: **feelings - humiliation**

Comment [A118]: **conflict with teachers**

Comment [A119]: **power differentials** between student and teacher

Comment [A120]: **exclusion**

Freddie (male) – Y8

906	Researcher: yep, I hear you. But then there is that power thing
907	as well. So whenever, if you do something like that then
908	you know that you're gonna get punished for it
909	Freddie: I don't care if they're older, I still will like shout at
910	them
911	Researcher: you still would, yeah? So to do your tree surgeon,
912	to do that job, do you do training for it, are there training
913	courses?
914	Freddie: yeah, R College I'll be going to when I'm 16
915	Researcher: ok
916	Freddie: I'll be going, instead of going to sixth form and that
917	I'll be going straight to R and I'll be going on the courses.
918	And er, it's like there's garden design course
919	Researcher: uh huh
920	Freddie: or you've gotta design, they give you a hundred
921	foot garden and then eh they give you all these different
922	materials and everything and you've got to make this
923	garden look as good as you can
924	Researcher: right
925	Freddie: and then competitions, and then you do other
926	courses on eh like gardening and tree life and the best
927	places where things grow, they take you round different
928	places and it's just really good
929	Researcher: yeah, it sounds amazing. Have you got a garden at
930	home?
931	Freddie: yeah, I got a hundred and fifty foot garden
932	Researcher: 150 foot? Sounds pretty big
933	Freddie: yeah it is
934	Researcher: so do you do a lot in that?
935	Freddie: yeah, I got mine and my dad's shed at the end, and
936	then we've got tree house, and we've got a little carving
937	bit, a clay oven, like a pizza oven sort of bit,
938	Researcher: right
939	Freddie: it's like all made out of clay and everything

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A121]: power differentials between student and teacher

Comment [A122]: conflict with teacher

Comment [A123]: feelings - humiliation

Comment [A124]: aspirations – college, then job in **garden design**

Comment [A125]: Interests **Shared interests** (with family)

940 Researcher: so the clay oven is for pizzas yeah?

941 Freddie: yeah

942 Researcher: It's not for firing your own pottery or anything

943 Freddie: mm, got a clay oven at the back and then we've got

944   another fire right in front of it, by a little bit that we sit in

945 Researcher: yeah

946 Freddie: and then we've got a em, it's like a dome, but that's

947   my mum's bit, and then the rest of the garden's just grass

948   and

949 Researcher: right

950 Freddie: er, by the back door you've got a massive piece of

951   concrete, and then we fenced that bit off, that's the dog's

952   area, and then you've got this massive stone bit and then

953   it goes onto grass and then all the way down to the back

954   doors

955 Researcher: right, so do you grow any of your own veg or herbs

956   or fruit or anything?

957 Freddie: yeah my mum, er just er from the stone bit my

958   mum's got a massive allotment that takes over the front

959   bit of the grass and then we've got like a little path going

960   down the edge and going up and everything

961 Researcher: yeah, wow. And, have you got brothers and

962 sisters?

963 Freddie: yeah, I got 2 brothers. One who lives in Scotland.

964 Researcher: oh ok

965 Freddie: one who lives in Leeds. But they're

966 Researcher: whereabouts in Scotland?

967 Freddie: I can't remember the place

968 Researcher: right

969 Freddie: but em, he's up there for plane engineering, cos

970   that's the only place he can get a good course

971 Researcher: right

972 Freddie: and he's 19

973 Researcher: ok

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A126]: Mum & Dad – role models – nice garden set up at home **Family role models**

Comment [A127]: interests/skills – garden design, carving

974	Freddie:	and my other brother's 16 so, he's in Leeds when
975		he's supposed to be in Scotland, but he's in Leeds with
976		his granny
977	Researcher:	right. What's he doing in Leeds?
978	Freddie:	well, he was at our house, he was gonna live with
979		us, because he was like being horrible to his mum and all
980		this
981	Researcher:	right, so his, your mum isn't his mum?
982	Freddie:	no
983	Researcher:	right
984	Freddie:	but em, like they moved, he moved down here, and
985		then his nan come down and he said that like they're just
986		taking him out and then they he got all his packed all his
987		stuff, put it in the car and then went back to Leeds
988	Researcher:	right, so 2 older brothers you've got.
989	Freddie:	2 older brothers, 2 older sisters, and a younger
990		sister
991	Researcher:	right, and what are your older sisters in
992		[placename]?
993	Freddie:	yeah
994	Researcher:	do they...
995	Freddie:	one lives in the ?? yeah, the other lives on her own
996	Researcher:	right
997	Freddie:	and little sister lives with me and
998	Researcher:	what age is she?
999	Freddie:	10
1000	Researcher:	right. So do you all do kind of outdoor stuff together
1001		or is it mainly just you and your dad?
1002	Freddie:	mainly me and my dad. Me and my mum and my
1003		dad we all do that. But now everyone's left and everything
1004		it's they do their own thing
1005	Researcher:	yeah
1006	Freddie:	we do whatever we need to do

Comment [A129]: Large family – 2 brothers, 3 sisters
Large family

Freddie (male) – Y8

1007   Researcher: yeah. So to get into college then, you'll need

1008   GCSEs yeah?

1009   Freddie: yeah

1010   Researcher: and then you'll leave the year after your GCSEs so

1011   you'll be, after year 10 then yeah? So I guess that's just

1012   another 3 years that you're gonna be here until you go to

1013   college, sixth form college. And what are you gonna

1014   Freddie: 2 years, not even 2 years

1015   Researcher: oh yeah cos you're at the end of year 8.

1016   Freddie: yeah

1017   Researcher: I was thinking year 7

1018   Freddie: so I'll be in, so it will be like a year and a half

1019   Researcher: yeah another 2 years, yeah. 2 years goes past

1020   really quick

1021   Freddie: a year and a half cos in year 10 we only have half a

1022   year cos we do our exams and then we leave

1023   Researcher: right

1024   Freddie: as soon as we finish the exams then we leave

1025   Researcher: yeah

1026   Freddie: like all the year 10s this year have left

1027   Researcher: ok

1028   Freddie: but then the, some year 10s stay, and then the

1029   other year 10s leave

1030   Researcher: so if they're going somewhere else they leave

1031   Freddie: yeah

1032   Researcher: yeah. Well that's a good way of thinking of it, so

1033   you've only got another year and a half here. And what

1034   course are you going to apply for in 6th form, the

1035   gardening one?

1036   Freddie: yeah R college, so I'm just gonna go straight to R

1037   college.

1038   Researcher: R?

1039   Freddie: yeah, that's where my granddad went to do his

1040   course

Freddie (male) – Y8

1041 Researcher: oh really. And do they do a specific tree surgeoning

1042   course?

1043 Freddie: I don't know

1044 Researcher: cos I would imagine that's quite specialised, tree

1045 surgery

1046 Freddie: yeah

1047 Researcher: cos you'd have to do different things with different

1048   trees wouldn't you? OK, so you've got a year and a half to

1049   go, wow. So you've talked about the most important thing

1050   for you to learn about now, because you've got quite a

1051   good vision for yourself, what you want for the future and

1052   you know which subjects you're gonna need for that

1053 Freddie: mm

1054 Researcher: have you been in touch with R college to see what

1055   the requirements are, the entrance?

1056 Freddie: yeah, I've already got em the books and leaflets

1057   and all that sent through

1058 Researcher: right

1059 Freddie: and me and my granddad went there and looked

1060   around and everything

1061 Researcher: oh brilliant, and did you like the look of it?

1062 Freddie: yeah

1063 Researcher: yeah

1064 Freddie: it's like, it's just like a massive building in the

1065   middle of a field but it looks really nice. And then it's like

1066   just massive, they've got fields and fields and fields

1067 Researcher: yeah

1068 Freddie: so it's just massive, you've got like woodland there,

1069   everything

1070 Researcher: sounds exactly what you need and what you want

1071   and it's quite close by?

1072 Freddie: not that far, just er, it's like, I would say just past

1073   [large city 40 miles away]

1074 Researcher: oh ok, so it's, it's quite far then?

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A131]: Support from Family - Grandad – took him to look at college **Family support**

Comment [A132]: Aspirations – found out about **college** requirements; been to look around college

1075	Freddie:	yeah, I'll get the train there. If not I'll get my dad to
1076		drive me there

1077	Researcher:	right. And will it be 5 days a week?
1078	Freddie:	4 days
1079	Researcher:	right, that's not so bad then
1080	Freddie:	it's like Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday off and then
1081		Thursday and Friday. Or it will be like different days I'll
1082		have off
1083	Researcher:	yeah, excellent. OK, now I'm gonna give you, I've
1084		got another card that I'm gonna give you. Your lunch is at
1085		1 isn't it?
1086	Freddie:	yeah
1087	Researcher:	yeah, I just didn't want to keep you longer.
1088	Freddie:	well not at 1, it's like 10 to 1, first bell goes
1089	Researcher:	oh is it 10 to 1
1090	Freddie:	and then we've got like basically, yeah from 10 to 1
1091		we've got like half hour, 20 minutes
1092	Researcher:	OK
1093	Freddie:	but I'll go straight back to the base
1094	Researcher:	have you got, where will you have your lunch?
1095	Freddie:	in the isolation base
1096	Researcher:	in there, they'll bring it up to you in there yeah?
1097	Freddie:	yeah
1098	Researcher:	oh ok
1099	Freddie:	I'm not allowed out the base at all. Not unless
1100		there's like something like this

1101	Researcher:	right
1102	Freddie:	or cos I'm going home at 2
1103	Researcher:	yeah, you've got an optician's appointment haven't
1104	you?	
1105	Freddie:	yeah
1106	Researcher:	is there something, do you wear glasses?
1107	Freddie:	only to read and that but

Freddie (male) – Y8

1108	Researcher: is it just like a routine appointment where they are
1109	checking?
1110	Freddie: yeah
1111	Researcher: yeah. Ok, what are your dreams for the future, so
1112	you already talked about that quite a lot. Em, what sort of
1113	person would you like to be when you're an adult?
1114	Freddie: dunno. I just wanna keep, when I'm older I just
1115	wanna keep myself to myself and just ... dunno
1116	Researcher: yeah, carry on with what you're doing cos it sounds
1117	like you get a lot of enjoyment out of all the stuff that you
1118	do when you're not in school at the moment
1119	Freddie: yeah
1120	Researcher: and it sounds
1121	Freddie: I was doing all these things and out of my dad
1122	always said it's keeping me out of trouble outside of
1123	school
1124	Researcher: yeah
1125	Freddie: and getting in with the wrong people
1126	Researcher: yeah. And do you see any of your friends outside of
1127	school?
1128	Freddie: yeah, I see some of my friends outside of school.
1129	It's like my other friend who was here before and er he got
1130	kicked out, the teachers didn't like him because he would
1131	have always something to say back and me, and then he
1132	got kicked out, he got told by Mr R he needed to find
1133	another school by the end of such and such and leave, so
1134	he did
1135	Researcher: was he in the same year as you
1136	Freddie: yeah
1137	Researcher: yeah
1138	Freddie: I think he's gone to [special school name]
1139	Researcher: right
1140	Freddie: or [another special school name], I don't know, one
1141	of them

Comment [A135]: Support from family –
Dad – encourages outside interests to keep
him 'out of trouble'
Family support

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1142   Researcher: and he was quite a good friend of yours

1143   Freddie: yeah

1144   Researcher: so do you miss him then?

1145   Freddie: yeah, he only lives down the road from me

1146   Freddie: yeah, I don't see him a lot, sometimes I'm not out

1147   or he's not coming out, it's a load of different things

1148   Researcher: right, and em so what kind of things do you do with

1149   your friends outside of school?

1150   Freddie: we just rather go swimming, go in the woods or just

1151   play around in the garden and all that

1152   Researcher: so it's all kind of outdoors stuff as well?

1153   Freddie: yeah

1154   Researcher: and what about computer games or anything like

1155   that, are you into them?

1156   Freddie: no

1157   Researcher: you're not into them?

1158   Freddie: I own a playstation but I only use it to watch things,

1159   like, things on youtube and that

1160   Researcher: right, you're not that into it at all, you'd rather be

1161   outside, yeah?

1162   Freddie: it's like when I'm grounded I'll be in watching films

1163   and that, but that's it

1164   Researcher: right

1165   Freddie: that'll be the only time I'll be in

1166   Researcher: what's that?

1167   Freddie: that'll be the only time I'll ever be in if I'm grounded

1168   Researcher: yeah, do you get grounded much?

1169   Freddie: no, not much.

1170   Researcher: so in 5 years time,

1171   Freddie: mm hm

1172   Researcher: I guess you're, you'll still be at college won't you,

1173   you'll still be at R. How long is the course?

1174   Freddie: it's like a year or two

1175   Researcher: ok, oh so you might be finished then

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A137]: friends outside school – play outdoors, not computer games

1176	Freddie:	yeah
1177	Researcher:	so what would you like to be doing in 5 years time?
1178	Freddie:	owning my own business
1179	Researcher:	right, in [place name]?
1180	Freddie:	yeah, but like all the way round like [large city near
1181		place name] and [place name]
1182	Researcher:	and would it just
1183	Freddie:	just all the way round
1184	Researcher:	yeah, do you want to do just tree surgery or do you
1185		want to do like more sort of general gardening?
1186	Freddie:	it's like tree surgery, garden designing, and like I
1187		dunno, just that

> **Comment [A138]: Aspirations** – next 5 years – own his own business
> **Have own business**

1188	Researcher:	yeah, I think there's a lot of money to be made in
1189		that. I know someone in Scotland who does that, and he
1190		does really well.
1191	Freddie:	it's a lot of money because you're risking your own
1192		life
1193	Researcher:	cos you're what?
1194	Freddie:	you're basically risking your own life
1195	Researcher:	yeah
1196	Freddie:	cos you're going up a tree, even like storming or
1197		proper windy, with just the harness tied to the tree and if
1198		the wind blows too hard and that bit snaps that you're tied
1199		onto you're going down with it
1200	Researcher:	yeah, so I guess you need to be really super
1201		careful
1202	Freddie:	my granddad used to just climb up it with no
1203		harness or anything he used to just climb up it and cut it
1204		down
1205	Researcher:	really, and did, would he recommend that you did
1206		that?
1207	Freddie:	no
1208	Researcher:	does he tell you to use the harness, yeah
1209	Freddie:	yeah

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1210	Researcher: yeah
1211	Freddie: but when you're cutting down a tree you need to
1212	cut it at a certain bit, cos if they want the whole tree down
1213	then you cut the whole tree down, if they want just the tree
1214	trimmed down then you'll cut it in certain bits, so it can
1215	grow back and then you cut it back down and everything
1216	Researcher: yeah, so you need to know
1217	Freddie: need to know where to cut it
1218	Researcher: so what about in 10 years time? Where would you
1219	like to be? What would you like to have achieved?
1220	Freddie: I don't know. Move down to Devon probably.
1221	Researcher: oh really, why's that?
1222	Freddie: just nice out there
1223	Researcher: mm hmm
1224	Freddie: I'd like to own a little, my own little house, and then
1225	some land
1226	Researcher: down near the sea?
1227	Freddie: shakes head
1228	Researcher: a bit inland then?
1229	Freddie: yeah
1230	Researcher: and what about when you're much older? Like say
1231	about 40?
1232	Freddie: I'd still stay down there
1233	Researcher: yeah, and would you like to have a family?
1234	Freddie: yeah
1235	Researcher: yeah, have your own kids and stuff yeah? OK, so
1236	I've got a different question for you now. So i want you to
1237	imagine that you're an advisor to the mayor of Southend
1238	and the mayor is coming to the school and you had to
1239	advise the mayor on what they needed to do to make sure
1240	that every single child and young person succeeded at
1241	school. What would you tell them to do?
1242	Freddie: I would not know
1243	Researcher: you would not know?

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A139]: Role model – Grandad – teaches about tree surgery
Family role models

Comment [A140]: Aspirations – 10 years time – move to Devon
Move away

Comment [A141]: Aspirations – much older – stay in Devon, **have a family**
Move away

1244	Freddie:	no

1245 Researcher: from your experience, cos it's, you've you've had
1246   quite a hard experience at school by the sounds of things
1247   but at the same time you've got loads and loads of skills
1248   that really haven't been capitalised on at school. That's
1249   my reading of it.
1250 Freddie: I just wouldn't know what to say
1251 Researcher: no, but you've talked a little bit this morning about
1252   things that you think should be different, imagine if it was
1253   just for you then at school, what would you tell the mayor
1254   in Southend needed to be different about school, so that
1255   you succeeded...
1256 Freddie: need to do more practical things
1257 Researcher: yeah
1258 Freddie: more fun things that people like, and learning
1259   things that are going on now
1260 Researcher: and have a bit more respect from the teachers?
1261 Freddie: yeah
1262 Researcher: would that be something?
1263 Freddie: a lot more respect from the teachers yeah
1264 Researcher: yeah
1265 Freddie: because I like to be, I treat people how I like to be
1266   treated. If they treat me in different ways then I treat them
1267   horrible
1268 Researcher: then you react to that yeah
1269 Freddie: yeah
1270 Researcher: and is there anything else you would tell them to
1271 do?
1272 Freddie: probably not
1273 Researcher: no..ok. Now I've got a card here, just gonna fill it.
1274   Oh it's only half past 12, we've got loads of time. So on
1275   the front it's just the things that we've been discussing
1276   really this morning. What's most important about your
1277   learning, what are your strengths, what do you love doing,

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A142]: Feelings – respect
Aspirations - respect

Comment [A143]: Ideal world – **more practical subjects** at school; **more fun**; **more contemporary subjects**; **more respect from teachers**
Aspirations

1278		what plans do you want to make for next year, and who
1279		can help you, what's most important to you in your life. So
1280		it seems like your focus really is to get into college, to get
1281		into R, it's called yeah?
1282	Freddie:	yeah
1283	Researcher:	em, did you say that you knew what you needed, in
1284		terms of GCSEs, to get in?
1285	Freddie:	I just know I need to have a level in science, maths
1286		and English
1287	Researcher:	yeah. So it might be good to get a bit more specific
1288		information about that so you know what you've got to
1289		work towards in each subject
1290	Freddie:	yeah, what grades and that
1291	Researcher:	yeah, so that could be one of your plans, so find
1292		out what grades, what GCSEs grades are needed to get
1293		in, is it [spelling college name], is that how you spell it?
1294	Freddie:	no, R
1295	Researcher:	oh R, right
1296	Freddie:	[spells college name]
1297	Researcher:	right, oh yeah, ok. What else would you like to put
1298		in your top 3 plans for the next year?
1299	Freddie:	I don't know. Try not to get sent out as much,
1300		definitely. Try not to as many lessons as I do
1301	Researcher:	right, try not to
1302	Freddie:	sometimes I do get sent out and I know why, but
1303		other times I just get things blamed on me
1304	Researcher:	so sometimes you think you deserve it, cos you've
1305		been misbehaving?
1306	Freddie:	yeah
1307	Researcher:	yeah, and sometimes you think you don't deserve it
1308	at all	
1309	Freddie:	no, cos I if I would do something usually and I'd
1310		been sent out for it before, if someone else does it so like
1311		the teacher always turns round and blames it on me,

Freddie (male) – Y8

Comment [A144]: Targets – things I can do in the next year – find out grade requirements for college
Aspirations
Find out requirements

Comment [A145]: Targets – things I can do in the next year – try not to get sent out of class as much
Aspirations
Stay in class

Comment [A146]: Sometimes misbehaves in class
Misbehaviour

1312	Researcher:	mm hmm
1313	Freddie:	cos I'm the one who would usually do it
1314	Researcher:	yeah
1315	Freddie:	but I just don't...
1316	Researcher:	it's not fair, yeah
1317	Freddie:	I explain it to them like I know, I know I've done it
1318		before and everything but it ain't me this time and then
1319		they would like get me a call out for arguing back

> **Comment [A147]: Conflict with teachers**

> **Comment [A148]:** Scapegoat/blame by certain teachers
> **Teacher scapegoating student**

1320	Researcher:	yup, that sounds impossible really, unless you just
1321		quietly go and don't say anything when it's, and that's
1322		really unfair because you didn't do anything, and you get
1323		sent out for nothing
1324	Freddie:	plus that goes on my record, and that goes for me
1325		getting a job doesn't it?
1326	Researcher:	yeah, so what do you think...
1327	Freddie:	misbehaving and not
1328	Researcher:	yeah
1329	Freddie:	do something about like rules that have been given
1330	Researcher:	yeah it will go on your reference. What do you think
1331		the best way of dealing it, dealing with it is gonna be?
1332	Freddie:	I don't know. I just think it's, usually I just walk
1333	away	
1334	Researcher:	mm hmm
1335	Freddie:	em I'll just let them say what they gotta say and
1336		then just nod, and say oh yeah yeah
1337	Researcher:	mm hmm
1338	Freddie:	but, em
1339	Researcher:	so ignoring it? even when you think it's unfair
1340	Freddie:	yeah cos they tell me like I shouldn't have done it
1341		and all this

> **Comment [A149]:** Targets – things I can do in the next year – ignoring conflict with teacher, even if it seems unfair
> **Aspirations**
> **Ignore conflict**

1342	Researcher:	mm hmm
1343	Freddie:	it's like, I haven't done it
1344	Researcher:	so that's, that's definitely one where you're dealing
1345	with it	

Freddie (male) – Y8

1346 Freddie: and I'll be like don't, don't try that, i heard you
1347 (inaudible)
1348 Researcher: so it's like you can't win
1349 Freddie: I can't. I got sent out, I got basically nearly
1350   excluded because er N was standing in front of me, and I
1351   got kicked out for tapping the (inaudible) and disrupting
1352   the class and sir was shouting at me so I started shouting
1353   back
1354 Researcher: mm hmm
1355 Freddie: and I was about to get excluded
1356 Researcher: it sounds impossible. And I don't blame you for
1357   feeling so frustrated
1358 Freddie: it's just impossible for me to say what actually went
1359   on before they just jump down my throat and start saying
1360   things that ain't true
1361 Researcher: yeah
1362 Freddie: that'll I know he going to start saying this that and I
1363   ain't even said nothing yet so
1364 Researcher: yeah, and what about if you ignored it and you
1365   went out when they asked you to go out and then later, if
1366   you give a bit of time for everybody to calm down a bit
1367   later you could go back, or even write it down, write it
1368   down when you're outside
1369 Freddie: I've done that before but he just threw it straight in
1370   the bin, he just looked at it and then threw it straight in the
1371   bin, didn't say anything to me
1372 Researcher: what about if you went along with it and you kept a
1373   log yourself and then you would give it to Ms F afterwards,
1374   not necessarily the class teacher, somebody else
1375 Freddie: mmm
1376 Researcher: who's a bit more objective. Do you think that might
1377 help?
1378 Freddie: yeah

Freddie (male) – Y8

> **Comment [A150]:** Scapegoating/blame of certain students by the teacher
> **Teacher scapegoating student**

> **Comment [A151]: Conflict with teacher**

1379 Researcher: so, ignoring and writing down, well first of all it
1380   would be staying calm wouldn't it? staying calm, writing
1381   down what happened. And who would be the best person
1382   to give it to, Ms F yeah? Writing down what happened

> **Comment [A152]:** Targets – things I can do in the next year – write down what happened and tell another teacher
> **Aspirations**
> **Tell another teacher**
> **Write things down**

1383 Freddie: like everything bad that happens, like anything that
1384   happens bad in that day I go and tell my mum and dad
1385   straight away

> **Comment [A153]: Honest communication** with parents

1386 Researcher: yeah
1387 Freddie: about what happened and what I said, what
1388   actually happened and then, because we have a TA and
1389   this in the class. So they'll say one thing and then get the
1390   other teacher who weren't even like, who didn't even hear
1391   it or see it, get involved and then they'll say oh yeah this,
1392   and then obviously cos there's more people saying this
1393   they'll, the head teacher or whoever dealing with it would
1394   say oh yeah to them and not to me. With the 2 of them
1395   against me

> **Comment [A154]: Different versions of events** – staff/students

> **Comment [A155]: Power differentials** between student and teacher

1396 Researcher: so the teacher and the TA
1397 Freddie: yeah, it's only the teacher that would like say I
1398   didn't hear this or something. It's, it's just stupid
1399 Researcher: yeah it just sounds like a battle, like it's like a power
1400   struggle
1401 Freddie: mm hm
1402 Researcher: yeah. And what do your mum and dad think? What
1403   do they advise you to do?
1404 Freddie: they just think it's stupid and they tell me things
1405 Researcher: what do they tell you to do?
1406 Freddie: calm down, ignore it
1407 Researcher: yeah
1408 Freddie: get on with whatever you've gotta say, or get on
1409   with whatever it's at

> **Comment [A156]:** Parents expressing honest opinion about school staff
> **Honest communication**

> **Comment [A157]: Honest communication** between student and parents

> **Comment [A158]:** Support from family – advice on how to deal with conflict with teachers
> **Family support**

1410 Researcher: yeah, and I suppose the more you practice doing
1411   that the better you'll get at it
1412 Freddie: mm hm

Freddie (male) – Y8

1413	Researcher: and I know it's not always gonna be fair, but
1414	sometimes maybe you just have to let it go. OK, so find
1415	out what GCSEs are needed, try not to get sent out of
1416	lessons, and what else, number 3
1417	Freddie: don't know
1418	Researcher: what about working? Studying in the subjects that
1419	you're gonna need?
1420	Freddie: try and work a bit harder
1421	Researcher: yeah, try and work harder in the subjects that you'll
1422	need?
1423	Freddie: yeah

Comment [A159]: Targets – things I can do in the next year – work harder in subjects needed for college
Aspirations
Work harder

1424	Researcher: for R. Right I'm just gonna copy this onto another
1425	one. And I'm gonna give you this to take away....Do you
1426	want any sweets, or biscuits, there's some biscuits there,
1427	help yourself if you want any. So do you do cooking as
1428	well when you're camping?
1429	Freddie: yeah, em me and my er, me and my dad and my
1430	uncle went camping before
1431	Researcher: mm hm

Comment [A160]: Role models – dad and uncle
Family role models

1432	Freddie: and em, it was like some weeks ago, I brought
1433	some fish home – some trout and some bass, and I
1434	butterflyed the trout
1435	Researcher: right
1436	Freddie: put it on sticks and cooked it over the fire like that.
1437	And then wrapped the trout in dock leaves and then put
1438	that in the fire and then cooked that up
1439	Researcher: ah, was it delicious?
1440	Freddie: yeah it was really nice when it was cooked over the
1441	fire, it tastes completely different
1442	Researcher: really?
1443	Freddie: you would like taste the fish like, in the oven and
1444	then you'd try that and you'd be like (inaudible)

Comment [A161]: Interests/skills – fish, cooking, camping

| 1445 | Researcher: laughs. The thing I find about trout is that it's quite |
| 1446 | bony |

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1447   Freddie: yeah

1448   Researcher: like lots of little bones in it

1449   Freddie: like we do in the shop we cut, basically if we're

1450   butterflying it, we cut the main spine out and then we get

1451   the knife and then we just slowly go across the meat and

1452   it'll just put every single bone out the edge and then you'll

1453   need to cut the first one and the middle one and then all of

1454   them will come out at the same time

1455   Researcher: ah

1456   Freddie: cos it's all connected on like the little butt, the like

1457   bone

1458   Researcher: right

1459   Freddie: it's like a massive piece of string going like that

1460   Researcher: yeah

1461   Freddie: and you'll pull the middle one and it'll just come

1462   straight out and then you'll pull the back one

> **Comment [A162]: Skills** – deboning fish
> **Knowledge of fish**

1463   Researcher: and what about mackerel, can you debone that as

1464   well? C   os mackerel

1465   Freddie: mackerel

1466   Researcher: is another one that's quite bony

1467   Freddie: mackerel's tiny

1468   Researcher: yeah. Cos some people eat them don't they, the

1469   bones?

1470   Freddie: yeah, their bones are like nothing, they're like jelly,

1471   you can eat just chew straight through them

1472   Researcher: sometimes, but then other times I find them quite

1473   spiky

1474   Freddie: depends how big it is

1475   Researcher: right. What's your favourite kind of fish?

1476   Freddie: my favourite, er, skate. It's gotta be skate

1477   Researcher: oh, I don't, I think I might have tried that once or

1478   something but I

1479   Freddie: skate wings, you can only eat the skate wings and

1480   the skate cheeks

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1481 Researcher: right, and what, is it a white fish?

1482 Freddie: yeah it is

1483 Researcher: so why, why is that your favourite?

1484 Freddie: there's not many bones in it, and it's very meaty.

1485 The taste of it is just really nice

> Comment [A163]: Interests - fish

1486 Researcher: right

1487 Freddie: I've actually never seen one of these (looking at

1488 sweets)

1489 Researcher: you've never seen what?

1490 Freddie: the moam sour strips

1491 Researcher: oh have you not? They're, I quite like them. I think

1492 they're made by Haribo. So this, this plan is for the next

1493 12 months

1494 Freddie: OK

1495 Researcher: we're gonna meet again, probably in about 6

1496 months time, so it'll be in about December time, just to

1497 see, but it will be a much shorter meeting time, it will be

1498 like 15 20 minutes or something, just to see how you're

1499 getting on, and just to have another look at these and

1500 review it, and see how it's going

1501 Freddie: will we just like, either, you know all the people that

1502 was in the class last time. Is it like, just with all of them?

1503 Researcher: yeah, cos it's part of the, cos I'm doing a course at

1504 the moment, I'm studying to be an educational

1505 psychologist, so it's part of my research

1506 Freddie: oh, you're not doing it in other schools, you're only

1507 doing it in this school?

1508 Researcher: I'm just doing it in this school. Yeah, so I'm just

1509 doing 8 interviews with 8 young people and then I'm

1510 gonna write about it. But all the, it'll all be confidential

1511 Freddie: there's not 8 of us is there?

1512 Researcher: there was 8 of you yeah

1513 Freddie: I thought there was only 7, although you had...

1514 yeah

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1515	Researcher:	yeah
1516	Freddie:	you had [*girl's name*] in here as well
1517	Researcher:	yeah, so I think I'm seeing her tomorrow
1518	Freddie:	and you had 4 year 7s and 4 year 8s
1519	Researcher:	yeah
1520	Freddie:	yeah
1521	Researcher:	yeah, and I might, I don't know yet, I haven't tried
1522		yet.
1523		Knock at the door.,,,
1524	Researcher:	yeah
1525	JL (asst SENCO):	hello
1526	Researcher:	hiya
1527	JL:	I'm just gonna to a class and give a student something.
1528		Shall I come back for [*interviewee's name*] then?
1529	Researcher:	yeah, we've more or less finished, so whenever
1530	JL:	OK, I'll just take you back up Freddie. I keep calling you
1531		[*wrong name*] today
1532	Freddie:	I ain't called [*wrong name*] so's you come and get
1533		me
1534	JL:	OK, alright
1535	Researcher:	OK thanks. Em oh yeah, so I might go to a youth
1536		club. Do you know of any youth clubs in Southend?
1537	Freddie:	what do you mean?
1538	Researcher:	like places that young people go
1539	Freddie:	YMCA
1540	Researcher:	YMCA?
1541	Freddie:	yep
1542	Researcher:	Is it all, is that just boys?
1543	Freddie:	boys, girls, my sister goes there
1544	Researcher:	oh mixed, yeah?
1545	Freddie:	but they do like course and everything, and they do
1546		it for young people who are having a hard time at home
1547		and
1548	Researcher:	right

Freddie (male) – Y8

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1549 Freddie: hard times at school, and they go there and it's like,

1550   just a break basically, they all play games and

1551 Researcher: oh ok

1552 Freddie: it's like open for people to come in and that, yep,

1553   basically they've gotta go there, tell em and it all happens

1554   from there

1555 Researcher: yeah

1556 Freddie: and there's loads of different YMCAs

1557 Researcher: cos when I saw YMCA I thought it was just for

1558   boys, cos it's young, young men's Christian association

1559   isn't it, that's what it stands for?

1560 Freddie: I don't know

1561 Researcher: yeah, but that's good to know that it's boys and

1562 girls cos it's

1563 Freddie: cos my sister lives there, and my other sister's best

1564   mate lives there but it's all, it's all

1565 Researcher: so all the young people live there?

1566 Freddie: yeah

1567 Researcher: ok

1568 Freddie: my sister's living there til next year, and then she's

1569   getting given a flat

1570 Researcher: right

1571 Freddie: which she's gonna have to pay and it's all gonna

1572   go up

1573 Researcher: yeah, and do people, can people come in who

1574   don't live there as well, or is it

1575 Freddie: yep

1576 Researcher: right

1577 Freddie: they can come in, do courses, not courses but they

1578   can talk to 'em, and like...

1579 JL: right Freddie, come on then

1580 Researcher: ok, thanks a lot Freddie. Here, do you want to take

1581   this? Have you got a bag with you?

1582 Freddie: no, my bag's in my locker

Freddie (male) – Y8

1583   Researcher: Or you can just put it in your pocket can't you.

1584   Thankyou very much, that was really good...Bye Freddie

Freddie (male) – Y8

Appendix E: Photo documentation of initial data analysis
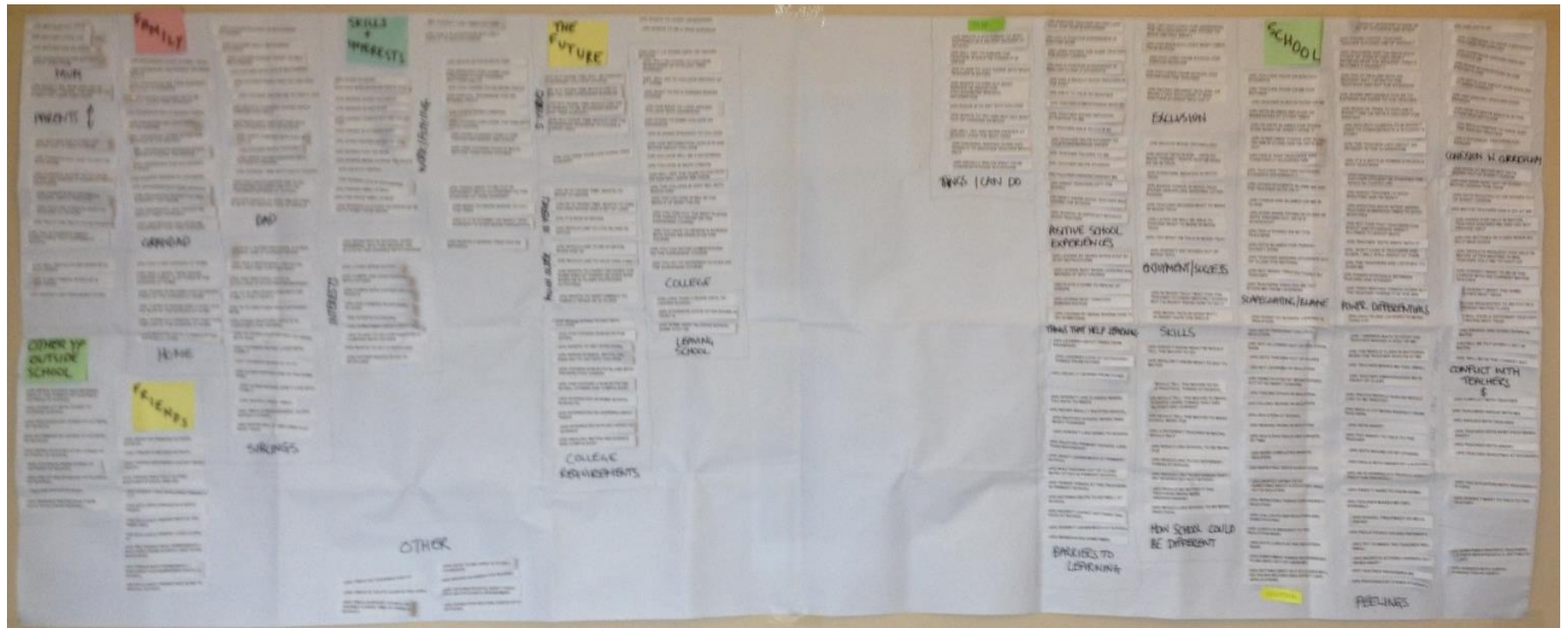
a. Illustration of arrangement of initial cluster of data extracts from 1ˢᵗ transcription (see Appendix M for electronic copy)
NB. It is acknowledged that this photo is not clear or large enough to read the text, it is provided as an indication of the data analysis method and process.

Column 1 (partial left edge):
LAST
E IN
ACHER
...
ER IN
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ITH ME
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L
...
BY
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ARE
...
OW TO

Column 2:
(AR) GET EXCLUDED FOR ANSWERING THE TEACHER BACK AND TRYING TO MAKE HIM FEEL SMALL

(AR) HAS BEEN EXCLUDED MANY TIMES FROM SCHOOL

(AR) EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL FOR VARIOUS REASONS

(AR) EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL FOR DISOBEYING THE TEACHER

(AR) RECENT INCIDENT IN CLASS, AR NEARLY GOT EXCLUDED, IT WAS ANOTHER STUDENT WHO DID IT

EXCLUSION

(AR) ENJOYS WOOD TECHNOLOGY

(AR) WOOD TECH IS FUN – GETS TO MAKE THINGS – THAT'S WHY HE DOES AS HE IS TOLD

(AR) EVERYONE BEHAVES IN WOOD TECH

(AR) MAKES THINGS IN WOOD TECH (PAPER AEROPLANE SHOOTER, LITTER PICKER)

(AR) TEACHER DECIDES WHAT TO MAKE IN WOOD TECH

(AR) LATER ON WILL BE ABLE TO CHOOSE WHAT TO MAKE IN WOOD TECH

(AR) I DO WHAT I'M TOLD IN WOOD TECH

(AR) DOESN'T GET KICKED OUT OF WOOD TECH

ENJOYMENT/SUCCESS

(AR) IN WOOD TECH I WAIT FOR THE TEACHER TO FINISH BEFORE I STARTS BUT I ALREADY KNOW HOW TO DO IT

(AR) WOOD TECH IS GOOD BUT I ALREADY HAVE THE SKILLS

Column 3 (SCHOOL post-it at top):
SCHOOL

(AR) TEACHER PICKS ON SPECIFIC STUDENTS

(AR) TEACHER PICKS ON ME FOR NOTHING

(AR) TEACHER ALWAYS PICKS ON ME

(AR) GETS BLAMED BECAUSE HE MISBEHAVES AT OTHER TIMES

(AR) HE GETS BLAMED FOR THINGS EVEN WHEN HE HASN'T DONE IT

(AR) SOMETIMES THINGS ARE BLAMED ON HIM IN CLASS AND HE GETS SENT OUT

(AR) FEELS THAT TEACHERS ARE CONSTANTLY ACCUSING HIM

(AR) TEACHER TREATING DIFFERENT STUDENTS DIFFERENTLY

(AR) OTHER STUDENTS BLAME ME AND THE TEACHER ACTS ON IT

(AR) THINGS ARE BLAMED ON ME IN CLASS

(AR) EVEN WHEN TRYING IN CLASS HE GETS THROWN OUT, HE IS A SCAPEGOAT

(AR) FEELS PICKED ON BY THE TEACHERS

(AR) GETS BLAMED FOR THINGS I HAVEN'T DONE

(AR) TEACHER SENDING STUDENTS OUT OF CLASS FOR NOTHING

(AR) NOT BEING TREATED FAIRLY BY TEACHER

(AR) TEACHERS SINGLING ME OUT STOPS ME FROM LEARNING

SCAPEGOATING/BLAME

(AR) EVENT AT SCHOOL LEADING TO ISOLATION

Column 4 (partial right edge):
/FEREN
ENT BY

(AR) FRIEND TA... TEACHER ACC...

(AR) TEACHER... OTHER UP, EV... WITNESS/HEA... BECOMES 2 A...

(AR) THE HT... INCIDENT WI... TEACHERS A...

(AR) SEEMS I... EXPRESS HIS...

(AR) WHEN I... WASN'T HIM... ARGUING

(AR) SECU... USED TO C... STORY

(AR) THE T... INCIDENT

(AR) IT'S... WITH TEA...

(AR) TE... ANOTH... WHEN...

(AR) AS... SHOUT...

(AR) S... TEACH... SHOUT...

(AR) N... SHOUT... ALLOW...

(AR) T...

(AR) D... OLDER...

(AR) T... OVER...

(AR) PO... TEACH...

(AR) T... THE T...

POW...

(AR...
THA...

---

b. Excerpt: School (became one initial theme) and initial clusters under this theme

(AR) MOTHER CAN'T DRIVE

(AR) MOTHER LOVES THE N   ORBIN

(AR) MOTHER HAS AN ANEURISM

(AR) DANGEROUS FOR MOTHER TO DRIVE (ANEURISM)

MUM

(AR) MAINLY ME, MUM AND DAD DO OUTDOORSY THINGS, THE REST OF THE FAMILY DO THEIR OWN THING

PARENTS ↕

(AR) MOTHER AND FATHER CAN'T WORK DUE TO HEALTH ISSUES

(AR) PARENTS SAY JUST TO GET ON WITH WORK

(AR) PARENTS ADVISE AR TO CALM DOWN AND IGNORE IT (CONFLICT WITH TEACHERS)

(AR) PARENTS NOT INFORMED BY SCHOOL ABOUT ISOLATION

(AR) TOLD HIS PARENTS ABOUT AN INCIDENT AT SCHOOL

(AR) TELLS THE TRUTH TO HIS PARENTS

(AR) TELLS PARENTS ABOUT EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS AT SCHOOL

(AR) WILL WATCH FILMS WHEN HE IS GROUNDED

(AR) IS ONLY INSIDE WHEN HE IS GROUNDED

(AR) DOESN'T GET GROUNDED OFTEN

FAMILY

(AR) GRANDDAD LOVES BONSAI TREES

(AR) GRANDDAD HAS BONSAI GROWING SKILLS

(AR) GRANDDAD DID TREE SURGERY WITHOUT A HARNESS

(AR) GRANDDAD ADVISES AR TO BE CAREFUL DOING TREE SURGERY

(AR) GRANDDAD SELLS BONSAI TREES

(AR) GRANDDAD HAS LOTS OF BONSAIS IN HIS GARDEN

(AR) GRANDDAD LOOKS AFTER THE BONSAIS IN THE WINTER

(AR) GRANDDAD'S BONSAIS GO INTO TUNNELS DURING THE WINTER

( ) GRANDDAD HAS AN ANCIENT SAI

(AR) ANCIENT BONSAI IS JAPANESE

(AR) GRANDDAD IS A TREE SURGEON

(AR) GRANDDAD DOESN'T DO TREE SURGERY ANY MORE

(AR) GRANDDAD HAS TAUGHT ME ABOUT TREE SURGERY

(AR) GRANDDAD HAS GIVEN ME EQUIPMENT FOR TREE SURGERY

GRANDAD

(AR) HAS A BIG GARDEN AT HOME

(AR) HAS A SHED, TREE HOUSE, CARVING AREA, CLAY OVEN IN THE GARDEN AT HOME

(AR) THERE IS A

c.   Excerpt: initial data extracts clustered into similarities

SKILLS
+
INTERESTS

(R) DOESN'T LIKE COMPUTER GAMES

(AR) HAS A PLAYSTATION BUT ONLY USES IT TO WATCH VIDEOS

(AR) SKATE IS FAVOURITE FISH

(AR) BROUGHT FISH HOME AND PREPARED IT FOR COOKING (BUTTERFLIED IT)

(AR) GOES TO WORK

(AR) HAS BEEN WORKING SINCE AGE 12

(AR) HAS LEARNT TO DE-BONE TROUT

(AR) WORKS EVERY SATURDAY

(AR) SPECIAL TECHNIQUE FOR DE-BONING TROUT

(AR) WORKS IN FISH SHOP

(AR) COOKS WHEN CAMPING

(AR) LEARNT HOW TO GUT AND FILLET FISH

(AR) COOKED FISH OVER THE FIRE WITH DOCK LEAVES

(AR) FISHES IN A FISHING BOAT

(AR) GOES FISHING (AS PART OF JOB)

(AR) FOOD COOKED OVER A FIRE TASTES DIFFERENT/ DELICIOUS

(AR) WORKS FOR HIS MUM

(AR) FIRE COOKED FOOD IS MUCH BETTER THAN OVEN COOKED

(AR) WORKS MORE DURING HOLIDAYS

(AR) ENJOYS FISHING

WORK/FISHING

(AR) WORKPLACE IS EXPANDING

(AR) FISHING SMELLS BAD

(AR) TREES NEED TO BE CUT IN DIFFERENT WAYS ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE OF TREE SURGERY

(AR) FISH SHOP SMELLS BAD

(AR) WASHES CLOTHES AS SOON AS HE GETS HOME FROM WORK

(AR) NEED TO KNOW WHERE TO CUT THE TREE

(AR) IF IT IS STORMY OR WINDY TREE SURGERY IS EVEN MORE DANGEROUS

(AR) WHEN NOT IN SCHOOL GOES SWIMMING, INTO THE WOODS, OR PLAYS IN THE GARDEN WITH FRIENDS

(AR) WANTS A BONSAI TREE FOR HIS BIRTHDAY

(AR) LOVES BEING OUTDOO

(AR) CAMPS AND DOES BUSHCRAFT WITH FATHER

(AR) CAMPS WITH FATHER

d. Excerpt: initial data extracts clustered into similarities

... NEED A LOT MORE RESPECT FROM TEACHERS

(AR) GETS ANGRY

(AR) TOO ANGRY TO TALK TO THE TEACHER

(AR) GETS WOUND UP BY OTHERS

(AR) DEALS WITH ANGER BY LAUGHING

(AR) HE IS HORRIBLE IF PEOPLE DON'T TREAT HIM PROPERLY

(AR) FINDS IT HARD TO CALM DOWN

(AR) TEACHER MAKES ME FEEL HORRIBLE

(AR) SCHOOL TREATMENT OF ME IS UNFAIR

(AR) FEELS PICKED ON AND DEFENSIVE

(AR) TRY TO MAKE THE TEACHER FEEL SMALL

(AR) REGRETS ACTIONS CARRIED OUT WHEN ANGRY

(AR) TEACHER PROVOKING ME

(AR) PROVOKED BY OTHER STUDENTS

Anger / Self-regulation

(AR) SOMET...
FOR THEIR...
FACE

(AR) AGREE...
(CHARACTE...

FEELINGS

e. Excerpt: initial data extracts clustered into similarities

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Appendix F: Initial list of codes: 4 themes

Theme 1: aspects of school that influence learning

Teacher attributes: supports
- Teacher has nice personality
- Teacher is approachable
- Likes subject because of teacher
- Importance of good teacher for learning
- Improvement in grades due to teachers
- Teacher as calm
- Teacher as fair
- Teacher as fun
- Teacher as sporty
- Teacher is energetic and upbeat
- Teacher is strict in a good way – helps to learn
- Teacher motivates student
- Teacher doesn't mind repeating things
- Teacher gives 1:1 support (Individual support – from teacher)
- Teacher gives support without student having to ask
- Teacher good at explaining things
- Teacher helps when you're stuck
- Teachers could help to reach goals.

Teacher attributes: challenges
- Doesn't like subject because of teacher
- Some teachers are boring, and make the lesson/subject boring
- Teacher doesn't explain well - when I'm stuck
- Teacher doesn't help you – to make plans
- Teachers don't listen

- Teacher unable to manage challenging behaviour
- Teacher wasting time telling people off Teachers moan at you
- Won't discuss subject options with teachers
- Provoke teacher to get them sacked

Relationships with teachers: supports
- Can talk to the teacher about anything
- Teacher believes in student
- Teacher is caring
- Teacher trusts the students
- Teacher invested in student – wants them to learn
- Teacher helps you to grow up
- Teacher gives praise
- Teacher helps with regulation of anger (Teacher knows how to calm you down)
- Favourite teacher – tech teacher
- Good relationship with teacher/s – PE, NG
- Has to like the teacher to learn
- Someone has to know me in order to help me

Relationships with teachers: challenges
- Scared of teacher
- Strict teacher can put you off a subject
- Teacher shouts at you
- Teacher humiliates student
- Conflict with teachers – in the present and in the past (inc. primary school)
- Different versions of events – staff/students

- Disrespect from teacher
- Doesn't like subject because of teacher
- Power differentials between student and teacher Scapegoating/blame of certain students by teachers
- Teachers don't care about students
- Teacher humiliating student – teachers as cocky
- Feeling picked on by teachers

Peer relationships: supports
- Has many friends in school
- Friends – feeling protective towards
- Friends in similar situation (feeling picked on)
- Learning with/from friends
- Talk to friends about choosing subjects

Peer relationships: challenges
- Other students being disruptive in class – can't concentrate
- Boys are more disruptive than girls
- Scared to tell friends about grades
- Other students are mean
- Scapegoating/blame by other students
- Sometimes believes other people's lies. Can be gullible
- Everyone lies
- Doesn't always believe what her friends tell her
- Likes playing on his own
- Rejection from peers if not academically high (in Egypt)

Theme 1 (continued): aspects of school that influence learning

Pastoral support
- CAF – student and family supported by CAF; student enjoyed being supported by a CAF, wants to be back on CAF (now ended); had targets to work towards on CAF; made progress on the CAF.
- Nurture – positive school experience, intensive support, small classes,
- Counsellor in school for support with stress
- School environment is important for learning

Pastoral support: challenges
- Withdrawal of support – closure of nurture base
- Prefers being out of nurture base

School environment
- Learning to negotiate the school environment (not getting lost)
- The environment makes no difference if the YP doesn't want to learn
- Classes are too big for learning (no of students)

Exclusion leads to disengagement
- Being sent out of class
- Callout from class – often
- Delayed punishment (internal exclusion the week following incident)
- Detention - for not completing homework – doesn't attend
- Difficult to make progress, progress is hard
- Grades going down due to exclusion
- Isolation – wasting time, not learning
- Isolation in school
- Doesn't learn at school (exclusion)
- Wasting time in school (isolation)

School systems: challenges
- Confusion with aspects of the curriculum – 3 teachers for English
- Detention – doesn't attend
- Doesn't get much careers advice in school
- Lack of communication between school and home.
- Parents feel that family is demonised by the school.
- Put down sets (in maths)
- Student autonomy (or lack of) - choosing what to do in lessons (wood tech); choosing subjects (lack of autonomy/choice in GCSEs)
- Attending numerous schools (4 in 3 years)

Theme 2: students are individuals (different strokes for different folks) / personalised learning

Preferred approaches to learning
- Learning as fun
- Learning as relaxed
- Learning best by working on own
- Learning by reading (e.g. instructions)
- Learning by thinking of what you need to do
- Learning by working hard
- Learning in small groups
- learning not based on literacy;
- Learning through mistakes
- Learning through practice
- Learns best by chunking – broken up lesson, learning in steps, graduated lesson
- Learns best by demonstration/being shown
- Learns by listening – auditory learner - has to like the person he is listening to
- Learns by understanding the work
- Learns by using a computer
- Learns from looking at other people's work (art)
- Repetition helps learning /Need repetition to learn
- Silence helps learning
- more practical learning;
- Moving around when learning
- Prefers 1:1 with the teacher
- Learns best at home
- Learns best at school (and at home)
- Learns on his own at home
- Teacher providing intensive support to small groups
- Listens to the teacher
- Learns best when with Dad
- Works things out on own

- Hasn't tried studying with friends

Feeling secure
- Dreams of minion helping her in school and being with her at home
- Gained in confidence in England
- Student coping mechanism

Feeling Insecure
- Negative experience in primary school - exclusion
- Sometimes misbehaves in class
- Student can be distracted / Too many distractions at school
- Lack of confidence - Would like to have more confidence in school – to ask teacher questions
- Competitiveness at school – impacts negatively on self esteem
- Cried about science mark, didn't tell friends
- Feelings – anger, annoyed in the past, stuck, frustrated, regret, demotivation, powerless, humiliation, respect, low self-esteem, stress
- Low self-esteem
- Past experience (negative)
- Self regulation – hard to calm down
- Stress
- Student being disruptive in class
- Student coping mechanisms – laughing, getting angry,

Student strengths and interests
- Bilingualism – helps learning
- being creative
- being outdoors, camping, bushcraft, camping in new places; keeping bonsai trees, trees, plants, garden design, carving, fish, cooking, wood tech
- Being objective in disagreements
- designs clothes (drawing) at home
- Job - fish shop & fishing – since age 12 (13 now), holidays & weekends; learnt many skills. Fishing, gutting/filleting/deboning fish, customer service, knowledge of fish, cooking,
- Good at organising / Organisational skills
- Interests: reading, minecraft; sports, PE, the body; computer games, seeing friends, going to the park; art; swimming and tennis
- Learning computer games – through practice and reading instructions
- Likes: chart music; designer clothes; dogs – Labradors; computer games, sports; iPad
- Loves to play the piano
- Strengths – exercising, sports (basketball, rugby, throws, sprints, long jump); art, kind person, caring towards family

Theme 2 (continued): students are individuals (different strokes for different folks) / personalised learning

Motivators
- Motivation – in preferred/favourite subjects – e.g. wood tech, art, maths, technology, ICT, PE, drama, tech, music, media studies, history, English
- Changing interests in subjects – didn't like maths in primary
- Likes learning (about people)
- Subjects I am good at
- Importance of prior knowledge for learning
- School work – good reports. Did well in most subject tests
- Gets good grades at school
- Levels at school really matter
- Wants to learn and do well at school
- Student doesn't like to get into trouble at school
- Levels improved in England (compared to Egypt)
- Working hard to learn
- Studies – when she needs to
- Feels positive about school
- Enjoyment in school
- Have fun and work hard at the same time
- Thinks she is reaching her potential at school
- clear instructions and expectations;
- Likes having autonomy in classes
- Has a tangle to help concentration in class
- Learning to prioritise time
- Small classes

De-motivators
- Attending numerous schools (4 in 3 years)
- was travelling from Egypt on same day as science test
- Doesn't like/find subject interesting –hard to make progress
- Boring work stops learning
- Hates all subjects except PE
- Barriers to learning – gendered subjects – dance isn't for boys
- Covering skills already learnt (e.g. wood tech)
- Music at school is dull
- Not interested in school / Hates school

- Likes to do things on his own, doesn't think he needs help
- Books not important, don't like reading
- Doesn't enjoy school – in the past or now
- Anxiety around school levels in comparison with peers
- doesn't know how to revise
- Doesn't want more help – help can make him stressed (certain people)
- Forgets things that have been taught
- Too much silence doesn't help learning

Student fixed mindset
- Fixed mindset – some people are born clever, some not; impossible for me to do that
- I wasn't born clever
- Science is difficult, no matter how much I study
- Sometimes feels helpless at school

Homework
- Homework is important to do
- Homework – doesn't do
- Homework – too hard sometimes
- Homework – good reports, success in maths,
- Usually does homework
- Homework is manageable
- too much homework
- Doesn't find school homework club helpful

Sources of knowledge
- Finds things out by asking parents
- Finds things out on the internet
- Learns new things from other people or on phone
- Learns by using a computer at home
- Learns from TV
- gets inspiration from others
- uses the internet at home for designing
- Uses the school website to find out what's on

Theme 3: looking to the future/ in an ideal world

Aspirations: supports
- Teachers, school, parents and family can help to achieve goals/ reach targets
- Has chosen subjects
- I can help myself – by thinking about what I want to do; by making a list/plan; try and be good; research requirements for chosen career; try and be good
- Important subjects to learn – English, maths, science, art

- School can ensure a good life later
- Working hard at school can help to achieve dreams
- Need qualifications for getting a job
- Some school work relates to job aspirations (e.g. tree surgeon)
- Would like to be a more independent designer
- Thinks about the future a lot
- Aspirations – next 5 years/in 5 years time –
  - Do garden design; found out about requirements; been to visit college. Get good GCSEs.
  - doesn't know (re job)
  - still be at school, hang out with friends
  - would like to have completed 7 GCSEs with high grades
  - going to 6th form college, doing maths, geography, media
  - wants to learn and do well at school

- Aspirations – job
  - Web designer, maths teacher
  - to be a policeman
  - to be a landscape gardener & tree surgeon, own his own business.
  - To run multiple businesses. To be an architect, fashion designer, business woman. Wants to study business or art at university
  - try and get a job in games development
- Aspirations –when older
  - wants to be a kind person. Wants to be near family in future, to stay in [home town]
  - Wants to be a nice, caring, nice looking person as an adult. Known and loved by everyone. A nice home; confidence, good job; pay taxes; independent; polite children. May have moved back to Egypt. May go to university in Egypt.
  - move to Devon. Stay in Devon, have a family
  - to have a car

Aspriations: challenges
- No dreams/ideas for the future
- Doesn't want to go to college – it's boring
- Doesn't want to think about the future
- Too young to think about the future
- No-one can help reach goals
- Doesn't want help – likes to do things on his own
- Resistance to making plans for the future
- Little careers advice from the school
- Unclear about career pathway for job
- Careers advice at school not individualised
- Careers advisor – doesn't know what that is
- Fear of the future – if good grades aren't secured
- Would like to develop more confidence
- Worried about the future - GCSEs
- Sometimes it's difficult at school – to keep applying yourself
- May be moving back to Egypt in the next year
- Parents bragging about their child's achievements
- School is very hard in Egypt
- Uncertainty over the future – sabotaged the chance of moving to a school in Egypt
- Emphasis on 'being clever' in Egypt

Theme 3 (continued): looking to the future/ in an ideal world

Targets – things I can do in the next year

- In the next year – 1. work harder,2. increase confidence and independence, 3. increase levels. Also be more organised, take school more seriously; find out more about requirements for careers.
- Find out re GCSE/grade requirements for college; try not to be sent out of class so much; ignoring conflict with teachers, even if it seems unfair; write down what happened and tell another teacher; work harder in subjects needed for college
- Talk to friends about choosing subjects;
- Get help and guidance in choosing subjects; learn more stuff; more information on pursuing career path
- Keep making progress; to get computer account fixed – to be able to access homework club; try not to get in trouble any more
- Keep doing the same – being organised, enjoying school, enjoying friends

If I could wave a magic wand at school

- don't be too strict,
- Don't give detention/punish students for not wanting to learn
- Ensure teachers aren't cocky – don't humiliate students
- Fire the horrible teachers, bring back the nice ones
- Ensure that teachers are fair
- Ensure that teachers are not boring
- Teachers should be tested for their commitment
- more respect from teachers
- more understanding teachers;
- teachers who see the students as individuals;
- have a different teacher if you don't get on
- sack boring teachers,
- Ensure that schools have enough staff
- school more relaxed, less forcing things onto you, could take time;
- important to consider different ways of teaching;
- Make classes smaller (20 students)
- Teacher providing intensive support to small groups
- Someone in class to help understand the questions (that doesn't make me feel stressed);
- make learning age appropriate;
- Talking to someone about subject choices for career options
- provide students with role models, examples of success;
-

- don't make students scared of what may happen if they don't succeed;
- ensure that students know that their life choices may be limited if they don't work at school;Would do up the school environment – YP want to learn in a nice environment
- school environment is important for learning;
- Wouldn't make any changes to the school
- Make school / lessons / learning fun
- Have more/different subjects at school: more practical subjects; more contemporary subjects e.g. games development
- Get rid of PE
- YP should learn about things that they like

- Give students more freedom/autonomy – to learn in the best way for them
- working by yourself
- important to feel safe at school;
- acknowledge that children have different backgrounds;

Misc.

- would take over the country, be prime minister – be stricter on immigration, pay more to nurses, sack fat teachers,

Theme 4: Families, communities and role models

Learning/Homework: supports
- Help with learning/homework etc.- mum and dad; mum, Nan and great great Nan; Older sister
- Usually completes homework (not always)
- Finds space upstairs to do homework
- Uses the library for learning – out of school
- Uses mum's computer for homework
- Less distractions at home – learns more
- Listens more at home
- Understands more at home

Learning/Homework: barriers
- Homework – completes without help from family members
- Doesn't have the internet at home (x2)
- Doesn't get help with homework from family members
- Mum can't help with homework – not good at maths
- Mum and dad too busy to help with learning
- Homework – doesn't do, then gets detention and doesn't attend
- Parents – doesn't always listen
-
Role Models
- Adult role models (outside family)
    o Camping, bushcraft meetings
- Parents
    o Learns from parents
- Mum – role model
    o Nice garden set up at home; student goes to work 'for mum';

- Dad - role model –
    o interests (bikes), bushcraft, camping, exploring new places/travelling
    o is an artist, business man
- Granddad – role model
    o Used to be a tree surgeon; taught about bonsais & tree surgery; went to same college
- Older brother – role mode
    o Studying engineering in Scotland
    o Computer engineer
    o Sister in law – role model – child therapist

Adult relationships: Supports
- Adult role models
- Adult support outside school (other than family)
- Interested in finding out about people
- Someone has to know me in order to help me

Family relationships, role models & supports
- Large family
    o 2 brothers, 3 sisters
- Reassurance and support from family
- Will be both happy and disappointed if the family moves back to Egypt
- Usually picks up brother from primary school
- Honest communication between student and parents.
- Mum –
    o feels protective towards
    o helps to learn things at home e.g. learning how to talk
    o works as college volunteer
- Parents expressing honest opinion about school staff.
- Siblings – sister works the same job; 4 younger siblings
- Support from family –
    o protection from older sister; dad helped to get a job, will drive him to college, encourages outside interests to keep him 'out of trouble'; granddad took him to look around college; advice on how to deal with conflict with teachers
- Looking after sibling – picking him up from school
- Nan

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Theme 4 (continued): Families, communities and role models

Family relationships: barriers
- Sometimes feels embarrassed about little brother
- Close family member ill in Egypt
- Student thought parents didn't care when student was in trouble at school
- Parents aren't always honest with their children
- Sibling/s –
    - don't help with learning; doesn't get on well with sister; doesn't play with siblings
    - younger sister, rivalry re school grades
- Mum
    - couldn't get a job (due to unspoken incident)
    - student thinks she is not interested in his school life
    - has health issues (aneurism) preventing her from getting a job & driving.
- Dad
    - Has health issues preventing him from getting a job & driving

Relationships: barriers
- Lots of fat people are good at maths
- Fat people have made themselves fat
- Fat people should be living on the streets
- People shouldn't be allowed to smoke in the street

Family: barriers
- Parental/family health issues –
    - Dad – bike accident, health issues, can't work, prohibited from driving
    - Mum – aneurism, health issues, prohibited from driving
    - mum, nan – health issues
    - mum – couldn't get a job
    - shares bedroom with 2 sisters; nan sleeps on sofa, dad sleeps on floor in living room
- Student health issues

Peer group: supports
- Friends (outside school)
- Gets on with sister's friends
- Friends outside school
    - 1 was excluded and now attends special school; play outdoors, not computer games;
    - Play games online with friends;
    - Play outdoors

Peer group: barriers
- Conflict with other YP outside school

Appendix G: 2nd list of codes: 11 themes

Theme 1: the importance of teachers		Theme 2: systemic structures in school
Supports • Can talk to the teacher about anything • Improvement in grades due to teachers • Individual support – from teacher • Likes subject because of teacher • Teacher as calm • Teacher as fair • Teacher as fun • Teacher as sporty • Teacher believes in student • Teacher doesn't mind repeating things • Teacher gives 1:1 support • Teacher gives praise • Teacher gives support without student having to ask • Teacher good at explaining things • Teacher has nice personality • Teacher helps when you're stuck • Teacher helps with regulation of anger – knows how to calm you down • Teacher helps you to grow up • Teacher invested in student – wants them to learn • Teacher is approachable • Teacher is caring • Teacher is energetic and upbeat • Teacher is strict in a good way – helps to learn • Teacher motivates student • Teacher trusts the students • Teachers could help to reach goals. • Teachers help learning	Barriers • Doesn't like subject because of teacher • Scared of teacher • Some teachers are boring, and make the lesson/subject boring • Strict teacher can put you off a subject • Teacher doesn't explain well - when I'm stuck • Teacher doesn't help you – to make plans • Teacher humiliates student • Teacher shouts at you • Teacher unable to manage challenging behaviour • Teacher wasting time telling people off • Teachers don't listen • Teachers moan at you • Won't discuss subject options with teachers	Supports • CAF – student and family supported by CAF; student enjoyed being supported by a CAF, wants to be back on CAF (now ended); had targets to work towards on CAF; made progress on the CAF. • Nurture – positive school experience, intensive support, small classes, • Counsellor in school for support with stress • School environment is important for learning Barriers • Classes are too big for learning (no of students) • Confusion with aspects of the curriculum – 3 teachers for English • Detention – doesn't attend • Doesn't get much careers advice in school • Lack of communication between school and home. • Learning to negotiate the school environment (not getting lost) • Parents feel that family is demonised by the school. • Put down sets • Student autonomy (or lack of) - choosing what to do in lessons (wood tech); choosing subjects (lack of autonomy/choice in GCSEs) • The environment makes no difference if the YP doesn't want to learn • Withdrawal of support – closure of nurture base

Theme 3: students are individuals (different strokes for different folks)		
Students approach learning in different ways: supports • being creative • Bilingualism – helps learning • Changing interests in subjects – didn't like maths in primary • clear instructions and expectations; • favourite subjects – provide motivation • Finds things out by asking parents • Has a tangle to help concentration in class • Have fun and work hard at the same time • Homework is important to do • Importance of prior knowledge for learning • Learning as fun • Learning as relaxed • Learning best by working on own • Learning by doing - more practical learning; • Learning by reading (e.g. instructions) • Learning by thinking of what you need to do • Learning by working hard • Learning in small groups; • learning not based on literacy; • Learning through mistakes • Learning through practice • Learning with/from friends • Learns best by chunking – broken up, steps, graduated • Learns best by demonstration/being shown • Learns best when with Dad (4) • Learns by listening – auditory learner • Learns by understanding the work • Learns by using a computer • Learns from looking at other people's work (art)	• Learns new things from other people • Learns things on the internet/phone • Levels at school really matter • Levels improved in England • Likes having autonomy in classes • Likes learning (about people) • Motivation – in preferred subjects • Moving around when learning • Prefers 1:1 with the teacher • Prefers being out of nurture base • Repetition helps learning • Silence helps learning • Student doesn't like to get into trouble at school • Uses the school website to find out what's on • Works things out on own • Small classes Students approach learning in different ways: barriers • Anxiety around school levels in comparison with peers – levels at school really matter • Attending numerous schools (4 in 3 years) • Barriers to learning – gendered subjects – dance isn't for boys • Books not important, don't like reading • Boring work stops learning • Boys are more disruptive than girls • Covering skills already learnt (e.g. wood tech) • Doesn't enjoy school – in the past or now • Doesn't find school homework club helpful • doesn't know how to revise • Doesn't learn at school (exclusion)	• Doesn't like/find subject interesting –hard to make progress • Doesn't want more help – help can make him stressed (certain people) • Fixed mindset – some people are born clever (I wasn't born clever), some not; impossible for me to do that • Forgetting things that have been taught • Hasn't tried studying with friends • Hates all subjects except PE • Homework – doesn't do; too hard; too much • Likes learning but not learning in school • Likes to do things on his own, doesn't think he needs help • Music at school is dull • Negative experience in primary school - exclusion • Other students being disruptive in class – can't concentrate • Science is difficult, no matter how much I study • Sometimes feels helpless at school • Sometimes misbehaves in class • Student can be distracted; too many distractions at school • Too much silence doesn't help learning • Wasting time in school (isolation) • Would like to have more confidence in school – to ask teacher questions

Theme 4: The importance of relationships in learning		Theme 5: feelings affect learning
School relationships: Supports • Adult role models • Adult support outside school (other than family) • Favourite teacher – tech teacher • Friends (in school) • Friends (outside school) • Gets on with sister's friends • Good relationship with teacher/s – PE, nurture group, • Has to like the teacher to learn • Interested in finding out about people • Learning with/from friends • Learns best when with Dad (3) • Learns by listening – auditory learner - has to like the person he is listening to (3) • Learns new things from other people (3) • Someone has to know me in order to help me School relationships: Barriers • Attending numerous schools (4 in 3 years) • Conflict with teachers – in the present and in the past (inc. primary school) • Different versions of events – staff/students • Disrespect from teacher • Doesn't like subject because of teacher • Feeling picked on by teachers • Other students are mean • Power differentials between student and teacher • Scapegoating/blame by other students • Scapegoating/blame of certain students by teachers • Someone has to know me in order to help me	• Teacher humiliating student – teachers as cocky • Teachers don't care about students • Lots of fat people are good at maths. Fat people have made themselves fat. Fat people should be living on the streets • Sometimes believes other people's lies. Can be gullible. Everyone lies **Miscellaneous** • People shouldn't be allowed to smoke in the street	Feeling secure • Dreams of minion helping her in school and being with her at home Supports • Did well in most subject tests • Enjoyment in school • Gained in confidence in England • Homework is manageable • Feels positive about school • Student coping mechanism Barriers • Competitiveness at school – impacts negatively on self esteem • Cried about science mark, felt very disappointed about science level, didn't tell friends about science mark • Feelings – anger, annoyed in the past, stuck, frustrated, regret, demotivation, powerless, humiliation, respect, low self-esteem, stress • Fixed mindset – that's impossible for me • Hates all subjects except PE • Hates school • lack of confidence • Likes to do things on his own, doesn't think he needs help • Low self-esteem • Not interested in school • Past experience (negative) • Self regulation – hard to calm down • Student being disruptive in class • Student coping mechanisms – laughing, getting angry, • Travelling from Egypt on day of science test

Theme 6: looking to the future		
<u>Learning to facilitate getting a job: supports</u> • Important subjects to learn • Need qualifications for getting a job • School can ensure a good life later • Some school work relates to job aspirations (e.g. tree surgeon) <u>Learning to facilitate getting a job: barriers</u> • Careers advice at school not individualised • Careers advisor – doesn't know what that is • Doesn't have ideas of what to do in the future <u>Aspirations: supports</u> • Aspirations – as an adult (a nice, caring, nice looking person; kind person; nice home; independent; confidence, good job; pay taxes; polite children; known and loved by everyone; live in Egypt; go to university in Egypt; live near family; stay in home town; move to Devon, run a business;have a family; no dreams for the future; have a car) • Aspirations – job (web designer; maths teacher; policeman; landscape gardener & tree surgeon; architect; fashion designer; business woman; study business or art at university; games development; run multiple businesses) • Future learning interests (how to make websites; games developer; get good GCSEs)	• Aspirations – next 5 years/in 5 years time – (college; university in Egypt; do garden design course; doesn't know; still be at school; hang out with friends; have 7 GCSEs with high grades; 6th form college; learn and do well at school; work hard at school) <u>Aspriations: barriers</u> • Doesn't want help – likes to do things on his own • Doesn't want to go to college – it's boring • Doesn't want to think about the future • Emphasis on 'being clever' in Egypt • Fear of the future – if good grades aren't secured • Little careers advice from the school • May be moving back to Egypt in the next year • No dreams for the future- • No-one can help reach goals • Parents bragging about their child's achievements • Resistance to making plans for the future • School is very hard in Egypt • Sometimes it's difficult at school – to keep applying yourself • Too young to think about the future • Uncertainty over the future • Unclear about career pathway for job • Worried about the future - GCSEs • Would like to develop more confidence •	<u>Targets – things I can do in the next year</u> • Teachers, parents and family can help to reach goals • Think about what I want to do • Make a list/plan – think about what I need to do • Increase confidence and independence • Increase school levels • Be more organised • Learn more stuff • Take school more seriously • Find out about requirements for preferred career (GCSE subjects/grades) • More information on pursuing preferred career path • Try not to be sent out of class / try not to get in trouble / try and be good • Ignore conflict with teachers, even if it seems unfair • Write down what happened and tell another teacher • Work harder in subjects needed for college • Talk to friends about choosing subjects • Get help and guidance in choosing subjects • Keep making progress in school • Get computer account fixed • Keep doing what I'm already doing – being organised, enjoying school, enjoying friends, getting help from teachers, parents, family • Has chosen subjects for GCSEs <u>Who can help</u> • teachers, parents and family can help

Theme 7: Student strengths and interests		Theme 8: exclusion leads to disengagement
School • School subjects: (wood tech, media, drama, PE, art, technology, ICT, tech, music, history, English, maths) • Gets good grades at school • Homework – good reports, success in maths, • Listens to the teacher • School work – good reports • Usually does homework • Wants to learn and do well at school • Working hard to learn • Studies – when she needs to Learning out of school • Learning computer games – through practice and reading instructions • Learning to prioritise time • Learns best at home • Learns best at school (and at home) • Learns by using a computer at home • Learns from TV • Learns on his own at home Interests/strengths • Creativity / art - gets inspiration from others. designs clothes (drawing) at home inc. using internet • Being objective in disagreements • Bilingual • chart music • computer games e.g. minecraft • designer clothes • dogs – Labradors • Favourite possession - iPad • going to the park	• kind and caring • Organisational skills • Outdoor activities: camping, bushcraft; keeping bonsai trees, trees, plants, garden design, carving, fish, cooking • playing the piano • Reading, • seeing friends, • Skills learnt from job: fishing, gutting/filleting/deboning fish, customer service, knowledge of fish, cooking, • sports / exercising e.g. basketball, rugby, throws, sprints, long jump, swimming, tennis the body	• Asked to leave the class (thrown out) • Being sent out of class • Callout from class – often • Delayed punishment (internal exclusion the week following incident) • Detention - for not completing homework – doesn't attend • Difficult to make progress, progress is hard • Grades going down due to exclusion • Isolation – wasting time, not learning • Isolation in school • Not learning due to exclusion • Provoke teacher to get them sacked – dreams of

Theme 9: in an ideal world

Teachers
- Ensure teachers aren't cocky – don't humiliate students
- Teacher providing intensive support to small groups
- Teachers should be tested for their commitment
- don't be too strict,
- Ensure that teachers are fair
- Ensure that teachers are not boring
- Fire the horrible teachers, bring back the nice ones
- more respect from teachers
- have a different teacher if you don't get on
- more understanding teachers
- teachers who see the students as individuals;

Learning
- make learning/lessons fun,
- make learning age appropriate;
- students could take time with their learning;
- Get rid of PE
- Make classes smaller (20 students)
- More/different subjects incl more practical subjects and more contemporary subjects e.g. games design
- Someone in class to help understand the questions
- important to consider different ways of teaching;

School
- Ensure that schools have enough staff
- Ensure a nice school environment
- school more relaxed,

Students
- Give students more freedom/autonomy e.g. to learn in the best way for them
- less forcing things onto students
- Being able to work by yourself
- YP should learn about things that they like
- important to feel safe at school
- acknowledge that children have different backgrounds;

Future planning/career
- Talking to someone about subject choices for career options
- provide students with role models, examples of success;
- don't make students scared of what may happen if they don't succeed;
- ensure that students know that their life choices may be limited if they don't work at school;

Discipline
- Don't give detention/punish students for not wanting to learn

Theme 10: Families, role models and the impact on learning		Theme 11: Peer group

Homework: supports
• Homework – completes without help from family members
• Family help with learning – homework etc. (Mum, Dad, Nan and great great Nan, older sister)
• Usually completes homework (not always)
• Finds space upstairs to do homework
• Uses the library for learning – out of school
• Uses mum's computer for homework
Homework: barriers
• Doesn't have the internet at home
• Doesn't get help with homework from family members
• Parents - mum and dad too busy to help with learning
• Homework – doesn't do, gets detention (doesn't attend)
Role Models
• Adult role models (outside family) (Mum, Dad, Granddad, Older brother, sister in law)
Family relationships, role models & supports
• Large family
• Reassurance and support from family
• Someone has to know me in order to help me
• Will be both happy and disappointed if the family moves back to Egypt
• Usually picks up brother from primary school
• Honest communication between student and parents.
	Home Environment
	• Less distractions at home – learns more
	• Listens more at home
	• Understands more at home
	• Nice garden setup at home
	Family relationships: barriers
	• Sometimes feels embarrassed about little brother
	• Parents aren't always honest with their children
	• Close family member ill in Egypt
	• Parents didn't care when student was in trouble at school
	• Sibling/s – (don't help with learning; doesn't get on with sister; doesn't play with siblings; rivalry re grades)
	• Mum (couldn't get a job, not interested in school)
	• Parental/family health issues – (Dad; Mum;, nan; shares bedroom with 2 sisters; nan sleeps on sofa, dad sleeps on floor in living room
	• Student health issues
		• Doesn't always believe what her friends tell her
		• Has many friends in school
		• Likes playing on his own
		• Conflict with other YP outside school
		• Rejection from peers if not academically high (in Egypt)
		• Friends in similar situation (feeling picked on)
		• Friends in school
		  o Will discuss subject options with
		• Friends – feeling protective towards
		• Friends outside school
		  o 1 was excluded and now attends special school; play outdoors, not computer games;
		  o Play games online with friends out of school;
		  o Play outdoors
		
		Misc
		• would take over the country, be prime minister – be stricter on immigration, pay more to nurses, sack fat teachers, get rid of cocky teachers

Appendix H: Final list of themes, subthemes and codes – with poverty highlights

Theme 1: Aspects of school that Influence learning			
Subthemes	**Codes**		
Teacher attributes Positives	Teacher is calming Trusts the students Understanding Supportive Relaxed Committed	Fun – teacher Nice personality See students as individuals Helpful Gives support without student having to ask Approachable	Good at explaining things Patient Acknowledge different backgrounds Gives praise Sporty Fair	Strict (in a good way) Using different pedagogies Motivating Likes subject due to teacher Energetic/upbeat Doesn't mind repeating things Gives 1:1 support
Challenges	Disrespectful Strict (in a bad way) Make me stressed Boring	Teacher humiliates Unable to manage challenging behaviour Doesn't listen	Doesn't explain well Not helpful Unsupportive	Telling people off (wasting time) Doesn't like subject due to teacher
Relationships with teachers Positives	Good relationship Has to like teacher to learn Favourite teachers	Confiding in Trusts students Likes teacher	Caring Invested in student	Teacher believes in student Helps student grow up
Challenges	Conflict with teachers Teachers don't understand Teachers don't listen	Teacher scapegoating student Teachers don't care Scared of teacher	Lack of autonomy Different versions of events Strict teacher	Power differentials Teachers moan at you Teacher humiliates
Peer relationships	Peer support Students scapegoating peers Prefers being solitary	Peer protection Students being disruptive	Learning with/from friends Competitiveness/peer pressure	Friends Other students mean
Exclusion leads to disengagement	Isolation Not learning Wasting time	Exclusion Misbehaviour	Grades going down Hates school	Put down sets Delayed punishment
Challenges of school systems	Home-school communication	Curricular confusion	Homework club unhelpful	Detention – doesn't attend
Pastoral support	Nurture base Progress is hard	Closure of nurture base Counsellor in school	CAF	Withdrawal of support
School environment	Learns best at school	Nice environment	Getting lost	Classes too big

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Theme 2: Students are individuals (personalised learning)			
Subthemes	**Codes**		
Preferred approaches to learning Positives	Small classes Chunking learning Non-literacy based learning Silence Inspiration from others Learning through practice Moving around when learning Practice	Same teacher – continuity Fun – learning Clear instructions/expectations 1:1 teaching Thinking of what you need to do Enjoyment Using a computer Uses tangle	Learning through demonstration Repetition Some noise Internet Learning with/from friends Solitary learning Understanding Listening (auditory) School website	Favourite subject Autonomy Making mistakes Small groups Creativity Working hard Reading Relaxed Practical learning
Challenges	Too much repetition Forgets things	Fixed mindset	Can be distracted	Don't like reading
Feelings Positives	Calm Positivity Happy	Respect Confidence Supported	Self-esteem Coping mechanism Happy	Enjoyment Safe
Challenges	Anger Regret Powerless Uncertainty Stress Disrespected	Frustration Humiliation Anxiety Unconfident Unsafe	Stuck Self regulation Helpless Low self esteem Unsupported	Excluded Lack of enjoyment Demotivation Fear (of future) Annoyed
Strengths and interests	Work experience Knowledge of fish Travelling/exploring Garden design Carving Prioritising Curious Reading Art	Fishing Bushcraft Keeping bonsai trees Creativity Organised Technology Designer clothes	Customer service Camping Wood tech Bilingual Dogs Objectivity Computer games Kind/caring	Cooking Outdoor pursuits Trees/plants Music (inc. playing) Sports/physical activity School subjects Designing – clothes, interiors
Motivation Positives	Favourite subject Being told off (fear of) Future dreams Enjoyment Getting a job Studying	Changing interests Good grades/reports Important subjects Subjects I am good at Positive attitude Having fun	Feeling positive about school Working hard Making a plan Favourite teachers Doesn't like being in trouble Autonomy	Clear instructions/expectations Levels matter Changing interests in subject Wants to learn Prior knowledge Prioritising
Challenges	Exclusion Anxiety Dislike reading Fear of future Repetition – demotivation	Isolation More study strategies Detention Lack of enjoyment	Moved down sets Boring/disliked subjects Fixed mindset Not interested in school	Gendered subjects Attending numerous schools Hates school Lack of revision skills

Theme 3: Thinking about the future			
Subthemes	**Codes**		
Aspirations for learning Positives Challenges	More practical subjects Learning relevant to career More fun Ignore conflict Write things down Working hard Less strict Importance of school Stay at school Creativity Solitary learning Keep making progress Friends	Different subjects Flexibility (able to change teacher) Tell another teacher Work harder Levels matter Age appropriate Feel safe in school School more relaxed Websites Learn more Access to computer/ internet Fair teachers Small classes	Get good GCSEs College 6th form More contemporary subjects Important subjects Increase levels Successful role models Nice school environment Extra/more support Behave well Don't get into trouble Teachers/parents/family can help Enough staff Interesting teachers	Autonomy More respect (from teachers) Stay in class University More organised Avoid instilling fear Different pedagogies Working at own pace More class support Nice/good teachers Enjoyment Sack boring teachers No detention
	Uncertainty	Gendered subjects	Lack of support	
Aspirations for jobs Positives Challenges	Tree surgeon Sport Fashion designer Multiple businesses Maths teacher	Garden design Architect Good job Police officer	Have own business Important subjects Games developer Lead the country	Find out requirements Designer Website designer Dog handler
	More careers advice	No dreams for the future	Lack of careers advice	Unclear about career pathway
Aspirations for personal life	Move away Caring Nice looking Popular	Have a family A nice home	More confidence Kind person Have a car	Independent Stay near family
Theme 4: Families, communities, and role models			
Learning/ homework Positives Challenges	Uses the internet Learns from TV Sibling support	Designs things Solitary learning Uses library	Homework manageable Good homework reports Studies at home	Homework important Parental support Learns best at home
	Too much homework/doesn't do	No computer/internet at home	Detention (for non-completion)	Homework too hard
Family, role models, adult relationships Positives Challenges	Parents Learning with family Large family Parental health issues Family not local Lack of sibling support	Sibling support Shared interests Honest communication Parental unemployment Parents sometimes dishonest Family health issues	Adult support Family support Familiarity Embarassed about family Looks after sibling/s Student health issues	Adult role models Family role models Parental pressure Lack of parental support Overcrowded home
Peer group	Friends (outside school)	Conflict (outside school)	Fear of violence Play outdoors	Play games online with friends

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NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants

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

SUPERVISOR: Laura Cockburn   **REVIEWER:** Elizabeth Attree

STUDENT: Anna Griffiths

Title of proposed study: Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Learning at School

Course: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

DECISION *(Delete as necessary)***:**

APPROVED

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.

APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is <u>not</u> required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> 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.

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.

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

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):*
Student number:

Date:

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

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

☐ HIGH

☐ MEDIUM

☒ LOW

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

Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*:   *Elizabeth Attree*

Date: 16/02/2015

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

PLEASE NOTE:
*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, travel approval from UEL (not the School of Psychology) must be gained if a researcher intends to travel overseas to collect data, even if this involves the researcher travelling to his/her home country to conduct the research. Application details can be found here: http://www.uel.ac.uk/gradschool/ethics/fieldwork/

Appendix J: Pen portraits of participants

Name	Gender	Year Group & age	Summary
Aliyah	F	Y7 12y 2m	Aliyah spent the first years of her education in Egypt; her first language is Arabic. Aliyah moved to the borough with her family (mother, father and younger brother) at the beginning of Year 5. Her father is a businessman. Aliyah had been in 4 different schools since arriving in the UK. Academically, Aliyah is performing above age-related expectations.
Holly	F	Y7 12y 5m	Holly is from a large family, and lives with her 4 sisters, mother, and mother's partner. Her mother is unemployed. There is a history of domestic violence in the family, and Holly, her mother and sisters spent some time in a women's refuge. Academically Holly is performing below age-related expectations.
Ava	F	Y8 13y 0m	Ava lives with her mother; her older sister and father live in separate accommodation. Academically Ava is performing below age-related expectations.
Leah	F	Y8 13y 1m	Leah is from a large family (6 siblings); she lives with her mother, father, 4 of her siblings and maternal grandmother. Both of Leah's parents are unemployed. The family live in a 3 bedroom house; Leah's Nan sleeps on the sofa. Academically Leah is performing slightly below age-related expectations.
Bertie	M	Y7 12y 6m	Bertie lives with his mother and 3 older siblings; his father recently died (Jan 2015) after a long illness; he was in a care home for the last years of his life. His mother is unemployed. Bertie is affected by progressive sight loss. Bertie shares a room with 2 of his brothers. Academically Bertie is performing slightly below age-related expectations.
Dennis	M	Y7 12y 7m	Dennis lives with his mother, father and 4 siblings. Dennis' parents were reported to be long term unemployed. Dennis has diagnoses (from paediatrician) of learning difficulties, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Oppositional Defiance Disorder (ODD). The diagnoses were queried by Dennis' EP and primary school in 2012. School staff felt his needs were more in the area of social communication. Academically Dennis is performing at age-related expectations.
Freddie	M	Y8 13y 6m	Freddie lives with his mother, father, and older sister. His mother and father are both unable to work due to health issues. Academically Freddie is performing below age-related expectations.
Floyd	M	Y8 12y 10m	Floyd lives with his mother and 4 younger siblings, he does not have any contact with his biological father. Floyd has a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder (made in January 2013). Academically Floyd is performing significantly below age-related expectations.

Appendix K: Feedback for participants and school

teachers who [are]

invested in their students • have a nice personality • fun • give 1:1 support • give support without the student having to ask • approachable • energetic • good at explaining things • helpful • fair • students can talk to • trust the students • give students autonomy in class • have clear instructions and expectations •calm • give praise • supportive • help students to grow up • help students to calm down • know their students • caring • strict (in a good way) • make work fun • relaxed • make sure there is lots of repetition • committed • see students as individuals • make lessons age appropriate • understanding • patient • motivating • use different teaching methods • believe in the students

### when students can use different ways of learning

on their own • small groups • reading • listening • not having to read and write • learning through mistakes • practice • looking at other people's work e.g. art • computers • silence • moving around when learning • 1:1 with the teacher • using the internet • with friends/other people • watching TV • using a smartphone • school website • learning in 'chunks' • having fun • repetition • demonstration • being relaxed

what do young people think helps them **learn** in school?

support in school

counselling •
nurture base •
being on a CAF or EHA •
adequate number of staff •
small classes • intensive
support from teacher • different
pedagogies (ways of teaching)
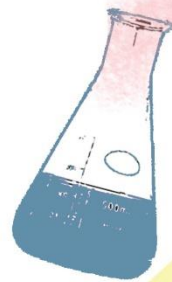
feeling

safe • confident • supported • good self esteem • happy • calm • respected • enjoyment • positive

friends/ students who

are good to talk to about things (e.g. choosing subjects) • are supportive • can learn together • protect each other

motivators/things the student does

getting good reports • favourite/preferred subjects • getting good grades • being independent • knowing a bit about a subject before learning more (prior knowledge) • able to prioritise time • enjoyment • wanting to learn and do well • doesn't like to get into trouble • working hard • doing homework • has fun and works hard • feeling positive about school • using tools for concentration e.g. tangle • studying • thinking about future job/career • planning • having a 'can do' attitude

outside school

homework: getting help from family/friends; having space to do homework; finding homework manageable • using the library • having supportive parent/s • learning from dad • less distractions at home • adult role models outside school

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unsupportive • aren't good at explaining • scary/too strict • don't help you • don't listen • disrespectful towards students • find it difficult to manage challenging behaviour • boring • waste time telling people off • humiliate students • emphasise power differences • don't care about students • pick on certain students • make lessons babyish • scare students about what may happen if they don't succeed • treat all students the same (don't acknowledge different backgrounds and learning styles) • don't understand students

teachers who (are)

finding the subject boring • thinking the subject isn't for them e.g. dance is only for girls • getting help from the teacher can be stressful • disliking reading • having anxiety about levels • not knowing how to revise • forgetting things that have been taught • too much silence • attending numerous schools

school

difficult to find classes (as the school is so big) • too many students in one class – cramped • being excluded • isolation • having three teachers for English is confusing • detention • lack of careers advice • being put down sets • lack of home-school relationship and communication

other students who

are disruptive in class • judge me for my levels • are mean • blame other students for things they have done

unsafe • helpless • like things are impossible (fixed mindset) • unconfident • unsupported • angry • frustrated • regretful • powerless • humiliated • de-motivated • stressed • low self esteem • disrespected • stuck • excluded • distracted • uncertain • anxious • fearful (about the future)

feeling >

outside school

no help with homework • no access to internet at home • health issues in the family • mum and/or dad unable to work • lack of space at home to do homework

What do young people think are

b|a|r|r|i|e|r|s

to learning?

what skills, interests and resources do young people think they bring to education?

bilingualism • creativity • outdoor skills e.g. bushcraft • cooking • gardening • being objective • designing e.g. clothes, interior design • music e.g. plays piano • reading • fishing inc. filleting fish • sports e.g. swimming, tennis, throws, basketball, rugby, sprints, long jump • computer games • customer service • socialising • animals e.g. dogs • exercising • camping • carving • organised • biology/the body • caring • kind • work experience • travelling/exploring • curiosity

what additional skills do young people think they need?

confidence • independence • revision skills

academic skills e.g. in English, maths, science, art

skills in more contemporary subjects e.g. games development

future hopes

good GCSEs • 6th form college • interior designer • garden design business • join the police • dog handler • tree surgeon • games developer • maths teacher • fashion designer • run multiple businesses • study art at university • kind person • caring person • gain in confidence • have a nice home • have children • move to a different place/country • stay near family • have a car

what needs to be done?

thinking about what to do after leaving school • making a plan/list • researching requirements for chosen career/college subject • studying important subjects for later life e.g. English, maths, science, art • working hard at school • gaining qualifications to get a job • trying not to be excluded from class • talking to friends about choosing subjects • accessing homework club • having more/different subjects at school: more practical and more contemporary e.g. games development • giving students more freedom/autonomy

how do young people think they could be supported in planning for the future?

what support is needed?

advice for choosing subjects • careers advice in school • someone to talk to about the future – it's scary to think about • advice for how to pursue chosen career/interests e.g. what subjects/grades are needed • developing more confidence • reassurance • help to get good grades • developing independence • role models /examples of people who have succeeded

who could help?

school • teachers • parents • students themselves • other family

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Appendix L: Feedback and implications for school and/or EPs

Anna Griffiths (Trainee Educational Psychologist): Research Project

Closing the Gap: Young People's Views on Learning at School

This handout summarises the main points made by participants in the study. In addition it recommends some interventions that have been shown to be effective by previous research.

Participants shared their ideas about an ideal school, where they learnt to the best of their ability. This would be a school where:

- Good relationships between teachers and students are nurtured. A central finding of the research was the impact of student-teacher relationships on learning.

- School staff are supported to understand and address challenging behaviour, including exploring how student behaviour can trigger emotional reactions in staff.

- A spirit of cooperation and support among individual peers is nurtured.

- Good home-school relationships are nurtured and encouraged, including guidance and advice for parents/guardians to help their child with homework.

- Internal and external exclusion as a punitive measure is limited. If, as a last resort, a student is excluded adequate learning materials are provided, so progress is not compromised.

- Aspects of the curriculum can be changed to be more engaging for students e.g. introducing games development as a subject choice.

- Individual student skill-sets are known to staff and capitalised on in school.

- Careers advice and coaching on how students can reach their goals is provided for all age groups to ensure that they are aware of the pathways towards their aspirations.

- Training is provided for school staff around issues affecting CYP experiencing poverty.

- There is adequate pastoral staff to provide social and emotional support to students through existing systems e.g. CAF/EHA, counselling or (re)introducing new systems e.g. nurture group.

- Focus on developing soft skills in students e.g. confidence and independence.

- There is support for (new) students to negotiate the school environment e.g. maps, extra staff to help new students find their way.

- Class sizes are small for students who may be struggling with aspects of their learning.

- Students have a voice and are consulted about issues affecting them at school.

- Students who do not have access to technology at home are supported e.g. using pupil premium funding to purchase laptops and dongles for home use.

- Staff acknowledge that individuals learn in different ways, and ensure a range of pedagogies to suit different learning styles are used in school.

- Teachers are supported to manage any stress they may experience in the job.

- New interventions are tried out, with rigorous monitoring and evaluation built in. Previous research suggests that successful interventions for closing the poverty-related attainment gap could be:

  o Mindset interventions; *Mindsets in the Classroom* by Mary Cay Ricci has lots of suggestions for classroom activities incorporating the mindset approach that could be used in whole class activities. Some useful resources and information on the growth mindset can be found on www.perts.net/ or www.mindsetworks.com/

  o Belonging mindset approaches are also an effective way of engaging students and nurturing learning. This fosters the belief that young people 'belong' in school.

  o Meta-cognitive strategies, where students are encouraged to think about how they learn, and what works best for them. Part of this could be teaching revision strategies.

  o Arranging for role models to come into school to support students reach their goals. Especially those who had to struggle to get to where they are today.

  o Interventions that focus on students' strengths and characteristics e.g. using the VIA character strengths survey: http://www.viacharacter.org/www/The-Survey or interventions such as Strengths Gym (Proctor & Eades, 2009). These can be done individually, in small groups, or at a whole class level.

  o Interventions based on students writing about their 'possible selves' and/or their personal values have been shown to nurture learning in research carried out in the USA.

Appendix M: Contents of Accompanying CD:

1. Transcripts of all interviews: Freddie, Bertie, Floyd, Dennis, Aliyah, Leah, Ava, Holly.

2. Videos used at the beginning of 4 interviews:

    a. Student Voice Curtis: a 7 minute video of a young man talking about his experiences of growing up in a 'deprived' community. Curtis shares that one teacher, Mr Boss, changed his school experience in a positive way.

    b. Spoken Word - Why I Hate School but Love Education: a 6 minute spoken word performance about education.

3. Digital photos of initial data analysis.