
**An Exploration of Designated Teachers'
Perceptions of the Role of Educational
Psychologists in Supporting Looked After
Children**

Coleen Whitehouse

**A thesis submitted to the University of East London, School of
Psychology in partial fulfilment towards the Doctorate in
Educational and Child Psychology**

May 2014

Abstract

The present study aims to explore Designated Teachers' (DTs) perceptions of the contribution that Educational Psychologists (EPs) make towards supporting Looked After Children (LAC). The aim of this research is to gain insight into how teachers consider EPs can best support LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level. The present study explores this topic by adopting a critical realist perspective and employing a two phase, sequential mixed methods design. A preliminary quantitative data collection phase was employed followed by a principal qualitative data collection phase. In phase one data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire, designed for the purpose of the current study. The quantitative data was analysed via descriptive statistics (using percentages). In phase two, data was collected using semi-structured interviews and analysed using thematic analysis. The findings demonstrate that DTs recognised the knowledge of EPs and placed some value in their practice and the way in which they work. DTs highlighted several limitations when working with EPs to support LAC. Their comments indicated a misunderstanding or differing expectations between schools and EPs in relation to how EPs work and the work DTs require. DTs explained that they generally call on EPs when they have concerns regarding children's learning and they tend to think of other services in order to address concerns surrounding children's wider social, emotional and behavioural needs. In the future, DTs would like to see greater access to EPs, including regular input for LAC over time, having a link EP to their school and greater input on a face to face basis as well as on an informal basis. DTs also perceived EPs to be well placed to help them address some of the challenges they encounter when working with LAC: having a greater understanding of what EPs do and how they can support LAC, training on the general needs of LAC and how to work effectively with the multiple agencies involved with LAC. The current study identifies factors which may help to improve EPs understanding of how schools perceive their role in supporting one of the most vulnerable pupil groups.

Student Declaration

University of East London
School of Psychology
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

Declaration

This work has not previously been accepted for any degree and it is not being concurrently submitted for any degree. This research is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology.

This thesis is the result of my own work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references in the text. A full reference list is appended.

I hereby give my permission for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loans, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Name (please print) ...Coleen Whitehouse.....

Signature: Date:

Acknowledgements

First and most importantly, I would like to thank the teachers who participated in this study – without them this research would not have been possible. I would also like to thank colleagues at the Local Authority in which the research took place for their support and encouragement.

Thank you to my research supervisor, Dr Mary Robinson, for her continued, advice and enthusiasm, and for reading and rereading this thesis...

I am extremely grateful to my lovely friends and family for their help, reassurance and allowing me to become a recluse over the last few months. Thank you to my fellow TEPs for keeping me on track and always being there to talk things through. A special mention to the 'study club', Becky Hills and Lauren Thackeray, I'm sure Starbucks are going to miss us. Last but not least, thank you to Joseph Washington for his IT assistance and wholehearted support throughout this process!

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Student Declaration	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	1
Tables	4
Figures.....	5
Table of Abbreviations Used.....	6
Chapter 1: Introduction	7
1.1 Overview of Chapter	7
1.2 Definition of Looked After Children	7
1.3 Definition of Designated Teacher for Looked After Children	8
1.4 Definition of Educational Psychologist	8
1.5 National Context	9
1.6 Local Context.....	11
1.7 Introducing the Needs of LAC.....	11
1.8 Guidance and Legislation	13
1.9 The Researcher’s position	15
1.10 The Research Rationale	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
2.1 Existing Literature	17
2.1.1 The Needs of LAC.....	18
2.1.2 EPs role in supporting LAC	23
2.2 Systematic Review	26
2.3 Evaluation and Critique of the Reviewed Papers.....	30
2.4 Weight of evidence	33
2.5 Summary of the Findings.....	34
2.6 Theoretical Perspective	40
2.7 Rationale for the present study	44
2.8 Research Aims	45
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	46
3.1 Overview of the Chapter	46
3.2 Ontological and Epistemological Position	46
3.3 Purpose of the research.....	48
3.4 Research design	48

3.5	Research Procedure	49
3.6.1	Participants	49
3.6.2	Data Collection	51
3.6.3	Data Analysis	56
3.6	Research Quality	60
3.7	Reflexivity	62
3.8	Ethical Considerations	63
Chapter 4: Findings.....		66
4.1	Quantitative Analysis	66
4.2	Qualitative Analysis	76
4.2.1	Findings from the Analysis	77
	Final Thematic Map.....	78
	Core Theme 1: Experience and Knowledge.....	79
	Core Theme 2: Limitations of EP Work.....	93
	Core Theme 3: DT Wishes for the Future	100
4.3	Chapter 4 Summary.....	108
Chapter 5: Discussion.....		110
5.1	Commentary on Findings.....	110
5.1.1	Research Question One	110
5.1.2	Research Question Two	113
5.1.3	Research Question Three	120
5.1.4	Research Question Four	124
5.2	Review of Research Aims.....	125
5.3	Implications of the findings.....	126
5.4	Implications of the findings for EPs.....	128
5.5	Critique of approach and limitations of the findings	129
5.5.1	Methodological considerations	130
5.5.2	Generalizability.....	132
5.5.3	Sampling	133
5.6	Implications for future research.....	134
5.7	Feedback to stakeholders and participants.....	136
5.8	Reflexivity	136
5.9	Conclusions	138
References.....		140
Appendices		155
	Appendix 1.....	155
	Appendix 2.....	157

Appendix 3.....	161
Appendix 4.....	162
Appendix 5.....	169
Appendix 6.....	171
Appendix 7.....	175
Appendix 8.....	177
Appendix 9.....	179
Appendix 10.....	181
Appendix 11.....	183
Appendix 12.....	187
Appendix 13.....	189
Appendix 14.....	198
Appendix 15.....	199
Appendix 16.....	201

Tables

Table 1 Summary of the ways in which EPs are working to support LAC (Walker, 2012).	26
Table 2 Systematic Search terms	28
Table 3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria	29
Table 4 Weighting of Evidence of Reviewed Papers	34
Table 5. Inclusion Criteria for Participants in Phase One (Quantitative)	49
Table 6. Table of Participants within Phase One (Quantitative)	50
Table 7. Inclusion Criteria for Participants in Phase Two (Qualitative).....	50
Table 8. Participants within Phase Two	51
Table 9 Six Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006 p95)	59
Table 10 Qualitative comments by DTs within phase one.	75

Figures

Figure 1 Visual representation of the research contexts within which the current study is situated	18
Figure 2 Model of the role which schools play for LAC (Sugden, 2013, p. 375)	23
Figure 3 Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Model	41
Figure 4 Adapted from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1970).....	42
Figure 5 Adapted from Sprince's (2005) hierarchy of needs for practitioners working with LAC	43
Figure 6 Number of LAC on roll in schools within the Borough.....	67
Figure 7 Number of DT within each school phase.	67
Figure 8 Number of Years Experience as DT.	68
Figure 9 Number of DTs who know their school EP.....	68
Figure 10 Number of times an EP has been contacted by and worked directly with DTs and LAC in the past year.....	69
Figure 11 Number of times in the past year an EP has worked at an organisational level to meet the needs of LAC.....	70
Figure 12 Number of times in the past year an EP has worked at a multi-agency level to meet the needs of LAC.....	71
Figure 13 Number of times in the past year an EP has signposted a DT to other support services to meet the needs of LAC.	71
Figure 14 Activities DTs reported that EPs have engaged in regarding a LAC in the past year.	72
Figure 15 Number of DTs who believe EPs have specialist knowledge.....	73
Figure 16 Number of DTs who believe EPs are able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective.	73
Figure 17 A Psychological Approach to Developing a Service for LAC at Whole School Level (Boorn, 2008).	118

Table of Abbreviations Used

BPS	British Psychological Society
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CIC	Children in Care
DT	Designated Teacher
EP	Educational Psychologist
EPS	Educational Psychology Service
LAC	Looked After Children
NICE	National Institute for Clinical Excellence
OfSTED	Office for Standards in Education
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SIS	School Improvement Service
SSI	Semi-Structured Interviews
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Overview of Chapter

The research presented in this thesis explores Designated Teachers (DTs) perceptions of Educational Psychologist (EP) support for Looked After Children (LAC). Therefore this chapter will introduce and define the key stakeholders within this study, including LAC, DTs and EPs. The national context is outlined in terms of the population of LAC, Government initiatives and the promotion of improved outcomes for LAC. The local context is also discussed in terms of population and local Government initiatives. The researcher's position is explored before concluding the chapter with a rationale for the current study.

1.2 Definition of Looked After Children

The term 'Looked after children' was introduced in the Children Act (HM Government, 1989, section 22). The Act defines a child who is looked after as;

“A child who is – (a) in their (local authority) care; or (b) provided with accommodation by the authority in the exercise of any functions (in particular those under this Act)” (p. 17)

That is a child or young person, up to 18 years of age, who no longer lives with their birth parents. They may be in the care of or provided with accommodation by a Local Authority (LA). LAs offer a variety of placements for LAC under different care orders. For example, kinship care - where LAC are placed with members of their extended family, and foster care - where LAC live with a foster carer on a long or short term basis. In 2006, the Government introduced the term Children in Care (CiC) within the document 'Care Matters: Transforming lives of Children and Young People in Care' (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2006). The terms CiC and LAC are often used interchangeably. The term LAC is still widely used within Government guidance and legislation and therefore will be used to refer to this group of children throughout this paper.

1.3 Definition of Designated Teacher for Looked After Children

The role of a Designated Teacher (DT) was introduced by the Government in the legislation and guidance document 'The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children' (Department for Children Schools and Families (DfCSF), 2009). A DT is defined by the DfCSF (2009) as an individual who holds the responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of LAC. Statutory guidance states that DTs for LAC must be qualified teachers who work at the school in which they hold accountability. DTs are afforded a leadership role within schools and are expected to promote the educational achievement of every LAC on the school's roll. The role should make a positive difference by promoting a whole school culture prioritising the personalised learning needs of every LAC. This includes personal, emotional, social and academic needs.

DTs should have lead responsibility for helping school staff to understand the factors which can affect how LAC learn. They should be viewed as a source of information and advice for staff about individual pupils and differentiated teaching strategies known to help LAC. DTs also have a responsibility to develop and implement LACs personal education plans. These should capture and encourage everyone involved with LAC to;

- Hold high expectations
- Ensure LAC have a voice
- Promote an individualised and personalised learning experience
- Make sure that LAC are prioritised for additional 1:1 tuition
- Support carers to understand the importance of encouraging learning at home.

Brodie (2010) and Berridge (2012) claim that the role of the DT has had a positive effect on the experiences of LAC.

1.4 Definition of Educational Psychologist

An Educational psychologist (EP) refers to an individual who supports children and young people aged 0-19. EPs offer help to children and young people who

are predominantly experiencing difficulties within an educational setting. Challenges may include behavioural, social, emotional or learning difficulties. EPs work with individuals or groups to support teachers, parents/carers, social workers and other professionals. EPs aim to apply psychological knowledge to comprehend complex problems and support individuals who work with children and young people to meet their needs.

The Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP, 2010) identifies EPs as key personnel within LAs who are able to work with other professionals to ensure that provision meets the particular welfare, well-being and educational needs of LAC. Similarly the AEP suggest that EPs can provide specialist advice and support to fostering and adoption panels. Within some LAs EPs hold specialist positions, where their main responsibility is to provide support for LAC and the key stakeholders involved with their care, i.e. social workers, foster carers and schools.

1.5 National Context

Each year the Government produces information on the number of LAC in England, known as the Statistical First Release (SFR) (Department for Education (DfE, SFR 36, 2013a). The document collates information from LAs in England to provide an overview of trends for LAC. The SFR (DfE, SFR 36, 2013a) offers explanations as to why a child is looked after, their legal status and type of placement. As of 31 March 2013, there were 68,110 LAC in England. This is an increase of 2% compared to 31 March 2012, and an increase of 12% compared to 31 March 2009. The number of LAC has increased steadily each year and is now higher than at any point since 1985, (DfE, SFR 36, 2013a).

The report states that the majority of LAC (62%) are in care due to abuse or neglect. This factor (i.e. the main reason why children become looked after) has remained relatively stable since 2009. The second most common factor as to why children become looked after is due to family dysfunction (15%). Other explanations include families in acute distress (9%), absent parenting (5%), parental illness or disability (4%), child disability (3%), socially unacceptable behaviour (2%) and low income (1%) (DfE, SFR 36, 2013a).

Last year 28,830 children became looked after (year ending 31 March 2013), an increase of 2% from the previous year's figure of 28,390. The SFR explains that much of the increase is due to a rise in the number of children who became looked after at aged 16 and over (DfE, SFR 36, 2013a). 3,690 children in this age group became looked after last year (year ending 31 March 2013), this represents an increase of 8% from 2012. For the younger age groups smaller increases, or decreases, are shown in the numbers of children who became 'looked after' between 2012 and 2013:

- 6,150 children aged under 1, an increase of 4%.
- 5,760 children aged between 1 and 4, a decrease of 1%.
- 4,880 children aged between 5 and 9 an increase of 2%.
- 8,350 children aged between 10 and 15 a decrease of 2%.

The education of LAC continues to be of particular interest to researchers (Berridge, 2007; Harker, Dobel-Ober, Berridge and Sinclair, 2004; Kellet-Boyle, 2010; Sugden, 2013; Walker, 2012). The SFR/50: Outcomes for LAC (2013b), illustrates that LAC continue to have poorer educational outcomes than non-LAC. 68% are identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) and their emotional and behavioural health is often a cause for concern. However, despite poor outcomes, the SFR/50 (DfE, 2013b) highlights;

- 15.3% of LAC achieved 5 or more A* to C GCSEs in 2013, compared with 58.0% of non-looked-after children. This has increased from 11.0% in 2009.
- 67.8% of LAC have SEN, of whom 28.5% are statemented.
- The most common type of SEN for LAC, is 'behavioural, emotional and social difficulties'.

The SFR/50 (DfE, 2013b) also considers wider outcomes for LAC;

- 6.2% of LAC aged 10 to 17 had been convicted, subject to a final warning or reprimanded.
- 3.5% of all LAC had difficulties with substance misuse.
- LAC are twice as likely to be permanently excluded from school and nearly three times more likely to have a fixed term exclusion.

- Around half of all LAC aged 5 to 16 were considered to be 'borderline' or 'cause for concern' in relation to their emotional and behavioural well-being.

The picture nationally highlights the high level of need and vulnerability of LAC, particularly regarding educational attainment, and social and emotional well-being.

1.6 Local Context

As of December, 2013 there were 262 LAC by the LA in which the present study took place (Children's Services, Business Support Report (BSR), December 2013). The Children's Services, BSR (2013) highlights that locally;

- LAC continue to have poorer educational outcomes than non-looked-after children, 14.3% achieved 5 or more A* to C GCSEs, this is 1% below the national average for LAC.
- 41.6% of LAC have a statement of SEN.
- 33.3% of care leavers aged 19-21 are engaged in education, employment or training.

When taking into account the wider outcomes of LAC in the LA in which the research took place, 11.3% of LAC aged 10 or over have been given a final warning, reprimand or convicted of an offence whilst they were looked after. When taking into account LACs emotional and behavioural health, placement stability plays a key role; 51.9% of LAC were in a stable placement as of December 2013. However, 7.6% of LAC had had 3 or more placements within a year.

1.7 Introducing the Needs of LAC

The national and local context regarding LAC highlights their vulnerability as a group of young people, the significance of their needs and the importance of ensuring effective support. The current study fits with the LAs priorities for developing support and early intervention and the Educational Psychology

Service's (EPS) need to continue to develop practice in order to provide effective support for this group of children.

The impact of the Coalition Government's aim to reduce public spending has led to structural changes within LAs. There are increasing concerns amongst educational professionals regarding the implications of these structural changes on the outcomes for LAC and how their progress will be monitored. Consequently, it is important for education services to consider how they can work most effectively with a reduced service to continue to strive to improve outcomes for LAC. Farrell, Woods, Lewis, Rooney, Squires and O'Connor (2006), and Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 2000) suggest EPs play a vital role in this process.

In 2010, the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidelines for professionals working to support LAC. They advocate the following principles;

- Ensure the voice of the child and their family is taken into account when designing and delivering services.
- Tailor services to the individual and diverse needs of LAC by ensuring joint commissioning and integrated working.
- Provide services that meet health and wellbeing needs and promote high-quality care.
- Foster warm and caring relationships between children and carers that nurture attachment and create a sense of belonging ensuring young people feel safe, valued and protected.
- Support young people to develop a strong sense of personal identity and maintain their chosen cultural and religious beliefs.
- Prepare and support young people during their transition to adulthood.
- Support young people to develop a wide network of peers and participate in school and community activities to help build resilience and a sense of belonging.
- Ensure young people have a stable experience of education that encourages high aspiration and supports them to achieve their potential.

The NICE guidelines for LAC (2010), highlight several pertinent issues that LAC often present with; complex family networks, poor emotional well-being, lack of

personal identity, limited sense of belonging, disordered attachment, poor social skills, resilience, and slow educational progress. These factors are often the focus of support and intervention for LAC, the aim being to address these issues and develop skills in these areas. Research and theory associated with the needs described above will be covered in more detail within the next chapter.

1.8 Guidance and Legislation

Over the past ten years, there has been an increase in professional, political and public awareness regarding the vulnerability of LAC. The over representation of LAC in mainstream schools with low levels of attainment, high levels of truancy and exclusion has put pressure on the Government to improve outcomes for LAC through the implementation of guidance and legislation (DfES, 2004, 2006; DfCSF, 2009; Social Exclusion Unit (SEU), 2003).

The Utting Report 'People Like Us' (The Department of Health (DoH), 1997) was the first report to highlight the poor educational outcomes for LAC and make recommendations for LAs to focus on improving educational and health needs. In 1998, HM Government passed a significant legislative act within education, 'The School Standards and Framework Act', which introduced protected funding to put in place educational initiatives for LAC.

In 2000, the DfES produced non-statutory guidance - 'Education of Children and Young People in Public Care' (DfES, 2000). It offered guidance for LAs on how to improve the attainment of LAC, highlighting the need to place a higher priority on the individual needs of LAC. However, despite efforts to raise awareness and improve the outcomes for LAC, educational achievements remained below national expectations. In 2004, The Children Act was revised (National Archives) to take into consideration section 52 of the Act. Section 52 introduced a statutory responsibility on LAs to improve and promote the educational attainment of LAC. At the same time the introduction of the 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children' (DfES, 2004) agenda put forward a number of recommendations to improve outcomes for LAC.

The implementation of The Leaving Care Act in 2000 (DOH), outlined that all

young people leaving care or remaining in care at post-16 have a statutory right to be supported in education, training and employment. Further guidance was issued in 2010 - 'Planning Transitions to Adulthood for Care Leavers; Statutory Guidance on the Care Leavers' (DfE, 2010) to assist LAs to improve their role as corporate parents. Corporate parents are LA elected members and officers responsible for providing a standard of care deemed 'good enough' for their own children.

Following this, in 2003 the document 'A Better Education for Children in Care' (SEU, 2003) was introduced. A team was commissioned by the Government to solely focus on identifying the barriers to educational attainment for LAC and suggest possible ways to improve educational outcomes. The report highlights factors that contribute to the underachievement for LAC:

- "Instability"
- "Time out of school"
- Lack of "stability"
- LAC not "receiving enough support with their education if they fall behind"
- Carers sometimes lacking the skills to "provide support and encouragement for home learning"
- Greater support with their "emotional, mental or physical health and well-being"

(SEU, 2003, p.1)

The Office for Standards in Education (OfSTED, 2008) evaluated practice in 26 LAs. They subsequently produced a report which detailed the good practice as observed by OfSTED and proposed new ways forward to improve outcomes for LAC;

- Effective use of the Education Development Plan to set achievable targets.
- Improve outcomes for LAC through creative projects.
- Improve the databases in order to effectively monitor and review LACs progress.
- Create posts that focus on monitoring and raising the awareness of LAC.

In 2009, further guidance was produced by the government - 'Improving the Educational Attainment of Children in Care' (DfE, 2009). This document made it mandatory for all LAs to appoint a 'Virtual School Head' (VSH). The role of the VSH is to promote educational stability and monitor progress of every LAC. It also emphasised the role of the DT. Further statutory guidance was introduced in 2010, 'Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children' (DfCSF, 2010a), which placed a duty of care on LAs to show how they are carefully monitoring and reviewing outcomes for LAC.

In 2010, the Coalition Government came into power and since this time many LAs have been or are going through considerable changes. This includes restructuring of services by cutting members of staff in order to reduce public expenditure. Despite the changes taking place the Government continue to place a high priority on improving the outcomes for LAC. The Children and Families Bill (2013) aims to reform the systems in place for adoption, LAC, family justice and SEN. The bill reiterates the Government's commitment to improving the life chances of all LAC and acknowledges the positive impact of the VSH role on striving for educational progress for LAC. Thus it continues to place a statutory responsibility on every LA to have a VSH to champion the education of LAC.

Despite Government and policy changes LAC remain a priority, particularly with regards to ensuring positive outcomes and a positive transition out of care. Therefore there is an ongoing need for research to promote our understanding in this area. If policy is going to continue to change, such changes should have an evidence-based foundation. Small scale research projects add to our understanding and ensure that any changes made are necessary and have a positive outcome.

1.9 The Researcher's position

The researcher's interest in LAC has been influenced by her previous role working for a Virtual School (VS). As previously discussed, this was a team assigned by the former Government to monitor and support the education of LAC. This experience provided the researcher with a deeper understanding of the emotional turmoil some pupils were experiencing and the difficulties they faced

with the learning process. The researcher's involvement within the Personal Education Plan process raised questions regarding what else can be done to support these young people achieve within school.

The researcher's experience as an assistant EP working in a large rural county provided opportunities to work with LAC at an individual level. However, it was the researcher's experience as a trainee EP (TEP) in a LA undergoing significant changes to children's services that highlighted the complexities involved in working to secure positive outcomes for this group. The service provided by the VS had been dissolved and this led the researcher to wonder what EPs are doing to support LAC.

1.10 The Research Rationale

Information surrounding LAC has been subject to many changes, and psychologists working in this area are required to familiarise themselves with new research evidence and changes to guidance and legislation to inform their practice (MacKay and Greig 2007). Given the current changes in Government at a national and local level, the picture of support for LAC has shifted. Therefore it is necessary for EPs to keep up to date with what schools now need in order to effectively support LAC.

To date there has been little research that focuses on teachers' perceptions of the contribution that EPs make towards supporting LAC. The aim of this research is to gain insight into how teachers think EPs can best support LAC at the individual, school and multi-agency level. The main purpose is to improve EPs understanding of how schools perceive their role in supporting one of the most vulnerable pupil groups and consider what the implications might be for EP practice in the future. It is hoped that this research will provide EPs with a picture of what existing practice is valued by teachers and whether or not there are any gaps where teachers feel EPs can contribute towards improving outcomes for LAC.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter aims to provide an overview of the existing literature pertaining to the needs of LAC and the role of EPs in supporting this group of young people. As the present study covers several research contexts, this chapter will aim to explore the existing literature with regards to EPs, LAC and DTs and schools. This will be followed by a critical review of recent research concerning teachers' perceptions and experiences of working with LAC. A detailed description of the review process will be provided so that the search can be replicated if necessary. The findings of the review will be considered within the context of the 'review question' and the aims of the current research. Finally, theoretical underpinnings will be considered, and a rationale provided for the present study.

2.1 Existing Literature

The current study crosses over various research contexts (see figure 1). There is a range of literature that relates to the different contexts being explored. For example, there is a body of literature, authored predominantly from a social work perspective, concerning the experiences of being brought up in care and the needs of LAC (Berridge, 2007; Golding, Dent, and Stott, 2006; Ward, Skuse and Munro 2005; Winter, 2006). Empirical evidence and discussion papers also offer a picture regarding the EP role in supporting LAC (Boorn, 2008; Walker, 2012). This section aims to provide an overview of the existing literature relating to the needs of LAC and explore what is known about the support that EPs provide for these young people.

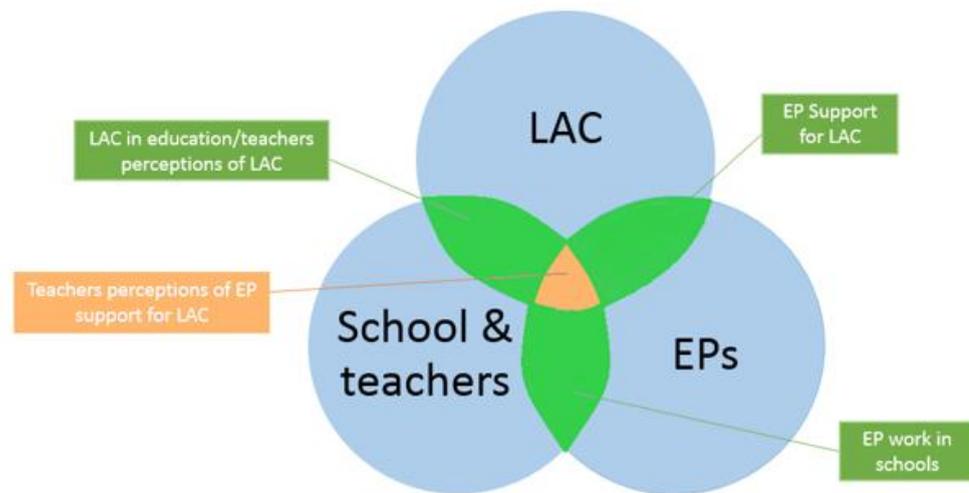


Figure 1 Visual representation of the research contexts within which the current study is situated

2.1.1 The Needs of LAC

When thinking about how EPs can support LAC, it is important to consider the needs that these children present with. The various reasons children are taken into care were discussed in the introduction (section 1.5 National Context). It is well-referenced that LAC are described as one of the most vulnerable groups in society in terms of education, physical health and development, mental health and lifestyle factors. This is supported by research comparing LAC with children from the general population (Honey, Reese and Griffey, 2011; Jackson, 1994; Jackson, Whitehead and Wingford, 2010).

LAC are vulnerable due to their disrupted childhood and the impact of going into care. Research claims that this impacts on their self-esteem, capacity to make and sustain relationships, social and emotional well-being, SEN and the extent to which they can respond appropriately in various situations (Heath, Colton and Aldgate, 1994; Peak, 2011). Consequently, LAC are over-represented in poverty, mental health and prison population statistics (Peak, 2011). However, McClung and Gayle (2010) highlight the importance of not considering LAC as a homogenous group. They stress that individual differences play a key role in how LAC experience and respond to opportunities, particularly with regard to education and school. It is therefore important to consider the individual needs and personal circumstances of LAC.

As previously discussed within section 1.7 'Introducing the Needs of LAC', many of the research papers concerning LAC make reference to resilience (risk and protective factors), attachment and academic achievement;

Resilience

Dent and Cameron (2003) describe resilience as coping with life's adversities and bouncing back from negative experiences and major difficulties. Honey et al., (2011) proposed that factors which predict resilience fall within three categories; within-child factors (high levels of cognitive ability), within-home factors (high parental socio-economic status and education) and outside-home factors (high levels of support and high teacher expectations). Much of the research in this area refers to risk factors and protective factors (Dent and Cameron, 2003; Fonagy, Steele, Steele, Higgitt, and Target, 1994; Garmezy, 1993; Newman, 2002; Rutter, 1993).

Risk factors can be internal (e.g. early traumatic experiences) and external (e.g. the care system and schools) (Berridge, 2007). Risk factors include genetic influences, environmental factors (such as poverty and homelessness), parental conflict, family breakdown, parental substance abuse, domestic violence, inadequate parenting (such as abuse or neglect), physical or learning disabilities and parents experiencing physical or mental health problems resulting in children having to act as carers (Berridge, 2007). Dent and Cameron (2003) proposed that being 'looked after' also presents additional risk factors which contribute to a cycle of disadvantage. In a review of the factors and outcomes impacting upon LAC, Jones et al., (2011) found links between various risk factors. For example, Pardeck (1983) identified how challenging behaviour may impact on the number of placements LAC have. However, Newton, Litrownik and Landsverk, (2000) suggested that the number of placements may influence behaviour. Cantos, Gries, and Slis (1996) identified associations between behavioural difficulties and the number of referrals made for therapy for LAC. Honey et al., (2011) found that a high incidence of risk factors in LAC is associated with negative self-perceptions, where-as a high incidence of protective factors is associated with positive self-perceptions.

Protective factors can also be internal (e.g. cognitive ability or positive sense of self) and external (e.g. care system/schools) (Berridge, 2007). Jones et al., (2011) found positive associations between stable mental health and well-being, beneficial contact with family members and length of time in placement as key protective factors for LAC. Placement stability is widely reported as a key protective factor (James 2004; James, Landsverk and Slymen 2004; Sallnas, Vinnerljung, and Westermarck, 2004; Chamberlain et al., 2006; Oosterman 2007). In support of McClung and Gayle (2010), Honey et al., (2011) acknowledge the individual differences between LAC. They found LAC differed in terms of the identified number of risk and protective factors between each child. They also found girls had fewer risk and more protective factors than boys.

There is a body of literature linked to resilience (risk and protective factors) that supports professionals working with LAC to understand their needs, with the aim being to reduce the number of risk factors and increase the number of protective factors, in order to break the cycle of disadvantage (Dent and Cameron, 2003). This suggests that professionals working with LAC should be aware of these factors, work to eliminate or overcome risk factors and develop skills to increase the number of protective factors a child may have.

Attachment

A disrupted childhood leaves children vulnerable to attachment difficulties caused by absent, rejecting or multiple carers, institutional care, and experiences of abuse or neglect. Such experiences can challenge children's sense of self and the capacity to trust others in relationships (Cairns, 2001; Howe, 2006). How children react to being separated from their primary care-giver has been researched for many years (Ainsworth 1982; Bowlby, 1988). In the 1980's John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth presented the first ideas on attachment theory. Bowlby introduced the concept of separation anxiety or grief following the loss of an attachment figure and considered what might be a normal or adaptive response. Ainsworth, reinforced Bowlby's ideas by introducing the concept of a 'secure base' and various attachment patterns; secure, avoidant, anxious and disorganized attachment.

Hughes (2004) identifies 15 characteristics which are often evident in LAC with 'attachment difficulties'. A few include; "a compulsive need to control others, intense lying (even when caught), wanting too much or too little physical contact, poor response to discipline (aggressive or oppositional-defiant), a lack of empathy and only seeing extremes (all good or all bad in situations)" Hughes, 2004, pp. 30–31). However, Dann (2011) points out that individually these qualities may be seen in any child, thus emphasizing the need to also consider the bigger picture.

Ranson and Urichuk (2008) considered the predictive nature of attachment behaviour in relation to social and emotional development in later life. They found a relationship between secure attachment and positive self-esteem, and reported being able to predict levels of social and emotional competence in children (at 24 months, 3 years, and 8-9 years old). However, an earlier meta-analysis by Schneider, Atkinson and Tardif (2001) identified challenges regarding the ability to predict the relationship between attachment and social and emotional development in later life. This is one example of contradictory evidence highlighting the complexity of researching this area.

Others suggest that insecurely attached children are more likely to experience depression and anxiety disorders in adult life (Mickelson, Kessler and Shaver, 1997; Millward, Kennedy and Towlson, 2006). Hughes (2004), suggests that children with attachment difficulties are more likely to have difficulty forming relationships with peers and teachers in school. Dann (2011) highlights the importance of teachers being familiar with issues related to attachment and trauma which are influential in shaping children's learning and behaviour.

Academic Achievement

There is a substantive literature-base which identifies the prevalence of underachievement amongst LAC and the factors which contribute to their academic attainment, yet limited literature exists focusing exclusively on the role of schools in promoting the educational experiences of LAC (Boorn, 2008; Kellet-Boyle, 2010; Sugden 2013). The school system has been recognised as being influential in enhancing educational attainment and providing opportunities for

vulnerable pupils, but still LAC continue to fall behind. It is important to acknowledge the barriers within a child's life (as discussed above) that may result in education becoming a lower priority (Coulling, 2000), although increasingly, success in school is named as an important protective factor (Boorn, 2008).

There are a number of factors known to influence academic achievement. Connelly, McKay and O'Hagan (2003) and Harker, Dobel-Ober, Lawrence, Berridge, and Sinclair (2003) report that high levels of instability increase the risk of exclusion. Jackson (1987) reported that exclusions encourage young people to leave school earlier and with fewer qualifications than their peers. Fewer changes of school and longer placements have been linked with better educational performance (Bailey, Thoburn, and Wakeham, 2002). In addition Wolfendale and Bryans (2004) found that changes of placement and schooling increased hostility towards adults, including teachers, thus reducing young people's willingness to invest in the process of learning. Pringle (1965) proposed that being emotionally insecure and having a limited vocabulary contributed to educational difficulties.

Holland and Randerson (2005) acknowledge the daily challenges some LAC face, including the limited resources that schools have to provide appropriate support and meet educational targets. Harker et al., (2003) established that LAC wish to have a designated person who shows an interest in their education, and that teachers were referred to by LAC as providers of support. Borland, Pearson, Hill, Tisdall, and Bloomfield (1998) argued that few attempts have been made to seek the views of teachers. Gilligan (1997) also suggests the inclusion of teachers' views is rare within research. Research continues to recognise the variations in the availability of support for LAC (Harker et al., 2003). Sugden (2013), explored the views of LAC in relation to what and whom they viewed as supporting their learning. He found that LAC perceive school to be the main support for learning, and represented a place where they belong, a place where they can make choices and a place which personalises learning. He also outlines a positive model for schools when supporting LAC (see figure 2.): placing the child at the centre, support being delivered from teachers and peers and an underlying ethos of belonging.

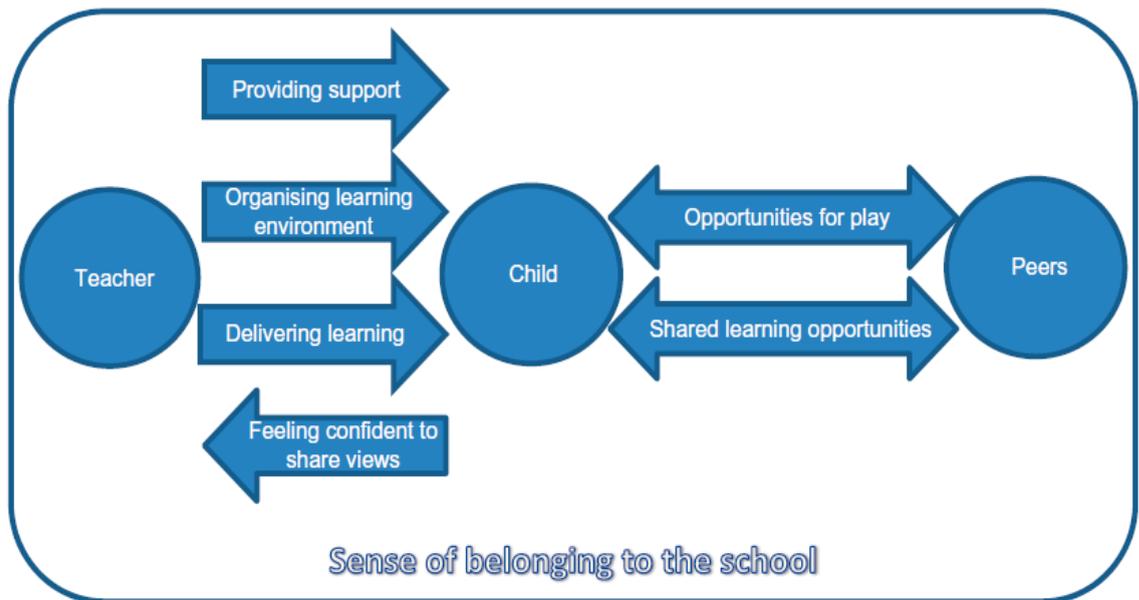


Figure 2 Model of the role which schools play for LAC (Sugden, 2013, p. 375)

2.1.2 EPs role in supporting LAC

In 2012, Walker carried out a systematic review to explore what is known about how EPs provide support for LAC as part of her doctoral thesis – ‘An Exploration of Educational Psychologists’ Perceptions of the Experiences of Supporting Children in Care’. Prior to this date, no such review exploring explicitly how EPs can offer support to this group of children had taken place. Walker (2012) considered six papers as part of the review which highlighted the limited research that has been carried out in this area. Also evident is a lack of experimental research, evidenced by ‘discussion’ papers being used as part of the review. Where research has taken place much of it has been small scale. Despite this, Walker’s review of the literature does provide a picture regarding what is known about how EPs can offer support to LAC, working at the individual, school and multi-agency level;

Working at an Individual level

McParlin (1996), in his discussion paper, proposes that EPs are well-placed to advocate for LAC and highlights EPs' skills in identifying LACs underlying needs. However, Norwich, Richards and Nash (2010) found that whilst 68% of EPs surveyed viewed LAC as a priority, they rely on schools to raise children as

a concern. Walker (2012) reiterated this finding within her own study, demonstrating a reliance on schools to raise LAC with EPs.

On the other hand, once made aware of LAC, Walker (2012) highlighted the emphasis that EPs place on advocating for LAC and including the child's voice as part of their practice. This is supported by existing literature, particularly with regards to involving LAC in decision-making processes (Golding et al., 2006; Harker et al., 2003; SEU, 2003).

Bradbury (2006) reported that EPs working within specialist roles were involved in complex individual case work, e.g. supporting LAC with significant attachment issues. EPs viewed this work as time consuming. All EPs with specialist roles reported that they were called on to provide advice and support regarding LAC to EPs who worked with a group of schools.

Working at an Organisational Level

Existing literature suggests EPs are well-positioned to disseminate their psychological knowledge to help those involved with LAC to further understand their needs (schools, carers and other professionals) (Bradbury, 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010). Thus, EPs' psychological knowledge (e.g. knowledge of Attachment Theory) can provide support for LAC at a systemic level by working closely with school staff who support them (Golding et al., 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010; Peake, 2011).

EPs hold the view that it is important to address LACs social and emotional development as well as meeting learning needs (McParlin, 1996). Despite this, Walker (2012) suggested that organisations, such as schools, may hold a variety of views regarding LACs needs and the role of the EP. For example, schools may hold the view that LAC can only be brought to the attention of an EP when they experience learning difficulties. These opposing views could create tensions, prevent the development of formal and informal processes and impede support. However, Peake (2011) demonstrates how organisations can develop their own systems for identifying and meeting the needs of LAC. She describes how the EPS in Oxfordshire developed a systemic way of working to support LAC when

their school placements were considered at risk. This approach appeared to meet the needs of LAC within the area, improved relationships among professionals and created opportunities for EPs to show how they can support LAC at an organisational level.

Norwich et al., (2010) reported that consultation was the main way in which EPs worked with DTs. They also indicated that they supported other professionals working with LAC using consultation. Cameron and Maginn (2011) advocate the use of consultation as a way of working at an organisational level with schools, residential workers and foster carers - explicitly applying psychological knowledge to challenging situations and offering evidenced based solutions to move forward (Cameron & Maginn, 2011). Others reported that EPs are able to provide training and INSET to schools. Disseminating their knowledge of the explicit links between theory and practice allows EPs to make a unique contribution (Walker, 2012).

Working at a Multi-Agency Level

EPs in Walker's (2012) study felt that it was essential to work collaboratively with other agencies in order to support LAC. Norwich et al., (2010) found that EPs who held specialist positions tended to participate in multi-agency work, panel work, and chair local practitioner groups. Bradbury (2006) highlighted that EPs felt attending multi-agency meetings were an important part of their role in supporting LAC. EPs in Bradbury's study felt that other professionals valued their psychological contribution as part of the process. Thomson (2007) also reported that EPs generally work jointly with other agencies and professionals to support LAC. However, concerns were raised regarding the lack of communication between professionals, and EPs felt they were trying to coordinate support rather than use their psychological skills to identify LAC needs and consider the most appropriate intervention. Others also acknowledge the difficulties experienced by professionals when working jointly (Dennison, McBay and Shaldon, 2006; Hughes, 2006). Despite this, McParlin (1996) argues that EPs are well placed to mediate when additional pressures are created by working alongside other professionals.

Walker (2012) summarised the ways EPs were working to support LAC based on critically reviewed literature and her own findings (see table 1.). She notes that the activities vary according to the grade of the EP (e.g. main grade EP or specialist EPs working in designated LAC posts).

Table 1 Summary of the ways in which EPs are working to support LAC (Walker, 2012).

Activity	
Work at an Individual Level	Participating in complex casework with individual LAC.
	Attending Annual, PEP and care review meetings to ensure LACs psychological needs are being met.
Work at an Organisational Level	Delivering training and INSET to professionals to raise awareness of LACs needs.
	Consultations with schools staff (especially DTs), foster carers and other professionals to help them meet the needs of this vulnerable group.
	Working jointly with other professionals to meet the needs of LAC.

2.2 Systematic Review

The very recent review into EP support for LAC by Walker (2012) identifies that EPs do have a key role in supporting LAC by;

- Identifying needs
- Acting as an advocate

- Disseminating psychological skills and knowledge to those working closely with LAC (particularly in relation to attachment and the impact of early trauma)
- Developing formal and informal systems to monitor and support LAC
- Working alongside other professionals and contributing to multi-agency meetings and panels.

The focus of the current study is on teachers' perceptions of EP support for LAC. Since much of the literature in the area is written by EPs or seeks the views of EPs on their own work, the current literature review will focus on exploring what is already known with regards to how teachers perceive and work to support LAC.

Petticrew and Roberts (2006) recommend a systematic approach to conducting literature reviews and outline a seven stage approach:

- Clarify the review question
- Identify the studies that will enable you to answer the review question
- Identify these studies by rigorously searching through the literature
- Apply clear inclusion/exclusion criteria
- Identify studies and critically review them to identify their 'Weight of Evidence'
- Synthesise the findings
- Define the outcomes identified by the review.

Review Question

The purpose of this systematic literature review will focus on exploring how teachers work with and perceive LAC, hence the review question:

What is known about how teachers perceive and work to support LAC in school?

A comprehensive literature search was conducted in August 2013 and reviewed in March 2014. EBSCO Host was used as the search engine to explore the following databases; PsychInfo, Education Research Complete and Academic Search Complete. To refine the search to the articles that were most relevant to

the review question, the following search terms were applied; 'Looked After Children*' OR 'Children in Care*' OR 'Foster Care*' OR 'Public care*' AND 'Teachers*' OR 'School staff*' OR 'School*' OR 'Education*' OR 'Classroom*' AND 'Perceptions*' or 'Views*' (see Table 2. Systematic Search terms).

Table 2 Systematic Search terms

Search Terms		
OR	OR	OR
'Looked After Children*'	'Teachers*'	'Perceptions*'
'Children in Care*'	AND 'School staff*'	AND 'Views*'
'Foster Care*'	'School*'	
'Public care*'	'Education*'	
	'Classroom*'	

However, three separate searches using the terminology above yielded only one article (see Appendix 1 Systematic Searches 1, 2 and 3). Subsequently, the terms 'Perceptions*' OR 'Views*' were removed as it was felt these terms were narrowing the number of articles being identified. Further searches continued using the terminology 'Looked After Children*' OR 'Children in Care*' OR 'Foster Care*' OR 'Public care*' AND 'Teachers*' OR 'School staff*' OR 'School*' OR 'Education*' OR 'Classroom*' (see Appendix 2).

The searches were initially limited so that they only included articles published in peer-reviewed journals published after 2003, written in English and related to children and young people aged 0-18 years. See Table 3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria.

Table 3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Published in peer reviewed journals	Not published in peer reviewed journals
Published after 2003	Published prior to 2003
Full text available and written in English	Articles not written in English
Articles written in the context of the English education system	Articles written in the context of another country's education system
Articles focused on LAC or CIC aged between 0-18	Articles that do not make reference to LAC or CIC
Articles focused on teachers support for LAC	Articles that are not written by, do not make reference to, or consider the role of teachers and their perspective
Articles considering teachers perceptions of LAC	
Articles written by teachers about LAC	

After a systematic search of databases had been undertaken, seven journal articles met the inclusion criteria for the review. Further information-retrieval tasks included a hand search of relevant journals, inspecting reference lists of relevant papers, computer searches and expanding inclusion criteria to enable contacting authors who had written relevant but unpublished theses in this area. A further three papers were sourced following this search.

Following an initial analysis of the ten papers, three articles were excluded as the papers did not place enough emphasis on teacher's perceptions of LAC or how they support LAC in school (see Appendix 3, Excluded papers). Thus, a total of seven papers were included as part of this literature review (see Appendix 4, Summary table of the reviewed papers).

First the articles were evaluated and critiqued with regard to theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses (see appendix 5, Example of a critically reviewed paper). Following this the evidence offered by each paper was weighted based on Gough's (2007) Weight of Evidence Framework. The theoretical perspectives outlined within the reviewed papers were outlined followed by a summary of the findings presented within each paper and a discussion regarding their connection with the current study.

2.3 Evaluation and Critique of the Reviewed Papers

This section provides an overview of each paper included within the systematic review and provides a critique of the theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses. The papers are presented in chronological order.

Harker et al., (2004) discuss a project taking place in three LAs in England. The project promotes inter-agency working, in order to support the education of LAC. It is not clear whether the paper is a research paper detailing a write-up of the study taking place or simply a discussion on the project. One of the authors is noted as having an input into the project, although the role of the other authors is not made clear. Some detail is provided on the methodology (e.g. qualitative interviews) and the participants involved in the study, but there is no mention of how participants were sourced, ethics or methods of analysis to understand the interviews. The paper was deemed to be trustworthy. It takes place across three local authorities and the findings and claims within the paper are supported by previous research or legislation. The theoretical basis/perspective is not made clear within this paper. From the point of view of considering what is known about teachers' perspectives of LAC, this paper considers teachers as 'key personnel' and places an emphasis on their views.

Boorn (2008) explores how LAC are perceived by school staff, taking into account the difficulties that LAC are reported to experience within school. The study also considers what teachers feel able to do in terms of supporting resilience in school. A mixed methods approach is used, questionnaires and semi structured interviews are the main data collection methods. This paper is a doctoral thesis

and therefore contains a detailed rationale for the chosen methodology, theory and methods of analysis. Quantitative and Qualitative analysis processes are both clearly described. The study uses well established questionnaires within the first phase of the study, increasing trustworthiness of the data collected. The study takes place across three LAs, increasing generalisability of the results. The role of the EP is acknowledged and a psychological framework for intervention in schools is provided. However, it is important to keep in mind that this paper is unpublished and so has not been peer reviewed.

Woodier (2010) describes the practice of a teacher working to support LAC. The author draws on his own practice and general principles that in his view, can guide teachers in supporting LAC. This paper describes in detail a qualitative, longitudinal study using a case study design, including observations, a reflective journal and records of work, all written by and from the perspective of a teacher working with LAC. The paper was easy to follow and make sense of. Woodier, acknowledges limitations of subjectivity and bias early on in the paper, he also provides a clear rationale for using a case study methodology. This paper emphasizes teachers' roles in supporting LAC to develop positive views of themselves through identifying inner strengths and fostering resilience. From his own experience, Woodier highlights positive outcomes following intensive work with two young people over 3 years. The paper offers the reader an insight into one way of working to support LAC by clearly describing practice; efforts are also made to link practice to theory and previous research. Woodier acknowledges the importance of evidence-based practice and draws on past research and legislation - specifically Cairns (2008) on resilience, Amodeo and Collins (2007) and Sagor (1996) on asset building principles, and Hughes (2007) and Geddes (2006) on attachment. Despite these strengths, this paper also has its limitations. The rationale provided for using a case study methodology was supposed to offer a "step into action" (p. 1) for the reader, however next steps for teachers are not clearly summarised at the end. It is also not clear whether the author is a mainstream teacher based in the school or a specialist teacher bought in specifically to work with LAC. Thus, it is not transparent how a classroom teacher could implement a similar level of support. How the different types of data were analysed in order to produce the descriptive findings is also unclear.

Kellet-Boyle (2010) explores LAC and DTs perceptions on what they perceive to be effective support for LAC in school. This study is particularly relevant to the present research project as it explores DTs perceptions of effective support for LAC. This paper is a doctoral thesis, and therefore as with Boorn's (2008) study the qualitative methodological approaches (i.e. interviews and focus groups) are described in detail, as is the thematic analysis approach used to analyse the data. Kettel-Boyle applied the findings to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory and identifies where findings are supported by other previous research. Reference is made to EPs and their role in providing support for LAC. However, generalisability is limited due to the small localised sample size and it is important to bear in mind that this paper is unpublished and has therefore not been peer reviewed.

In a discussion paper, Dann (2011), an ex-primary school teacher and senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University, explores the effects of early life trauma and insecure attachments on brain development. She provides a brief description of research and theory linked to trauma, brain development, attachment and resilience (Archer and Burnell, 2003; Cairns, 2002; Wilson 2002). This paper is clearly written and raises some key issues for teachers supporting LAC in school. The issues raised are linked to suggestions of ways forward, however, not all claims and statements are linked to research evidence and theory nor are justifications provided as to their importance or usefulness (in terms of strategies). The process by which conclusions are made is not made clear.

Honey et al., (2011) set out to explore LAC and DTs perceptions of resilience. This paper highlights key risk factors that schools can work to eliminate and raises important protective factors that can be fostered within schools. A mixed-methods approach was used, but this is not made clear within the paper; this assumption was based on the methods of analysis used. Pre-existing questionnaires were used to collect data. The study included a group of LAC and non-LAC, although double the number of participants were used within the non-LAC comparison group. The authors placed greater emphasis on the views of young people within the study, including a higher number of LAC and non-LAC participants than DTs. The author provides a rationale and detailed description of the quantitative

analysis process, yet little information is provided regarding the qualitative analysis process. No explicit link is made to theory and previous research. However, the author does reference previous research regarding risk and protective factors to support some findings (Dent and Cameron, 2003; Harker et al., 2003; Ward and Thurston, 2006). Ethical considerations are also not mentioned. Overall the paper is difficult to follow and interpret.

Brewin and Statham (2011) explore key factors that support LAC during transition from primary to secondary school, from the perspective of 'key stakeholders', including teachers. They adopted a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews. This research paper was clearly written and easy to follow. The authors included a rationale for their chosen methodology, a pilot interview and clearly stated who the participants were and explained the sampling process. The authors acknowledge limitations in their own study, for example, the small sample size. However, the views of all available stakeholders were sought within the scope of the research. The analysis process was clearly described, linked to a theoretical framework and a rationale provided for using Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model. Reference is made to ethics and confidentiality procedures. The authors note a high number of 'don't know' responses from teachers, and they briefly discuss the impact this has on statistics. However, there is no discussion regarding the implications of the 'don't know' responses for future practice. For instance, teachers 'knowing' LAC on an individual basis is highlighted as a key factor in supporting LAC in other studies (Harker et al., 2004; Woodier, 2011), so this could have been considered within the discussion.

2.4 Weight of evidence

Based on the information above, considering the quality of the reviewed papers, each was then systematically coded using Gough's (2007) weight of evidence framework. This allowed each paper to be measured against the level of contribution (low, medium or high) it offers to the review question in four main areas. A) Research design (coherence and integrity) B) methodological relevance C) relevance to the review question and D) overall weight of evidence (calculated by averaging the previous three ratings). Table 4 presents the weightings given to each paper.

Table 4 Weighting of Evidence of Reviewed Papers

Study	Research Design	Methodological Relevance	Relevance to the review question	Overall Weight of Evidence
Harker, Dobel-Ober, Berridge and Sinclair (2004)	Low	Low	High	Medium
Boorn (2008)	High	High	High	High
Woodier (2010)	High	Low	High	Medium/high
Kellet-Boyle (2010)	High	High	High	High
Dann (2011)	Low	Low	Medium	Low/Medium
Honey, Reese and Griffey (2011)	Low	Medium	High	Medium
Brewin and Statham (2011)	High	High	High	High

2.5 Summary of the Findings

Following the critical review of the quality of and weight of evidence of the seven papers, this section presents the findings in relation to what is known regarding how teachers perceive and work to support LAC. The findings have been synthesised and summarised under the headings below.

Factors perceived as important for LAC to experience success in school

Brewin and Statham (2011) reported that no single factor was thought to be most important when considering support for LAC in school, particularly in relation to

transition from primary to secondary school. However, several studies acknowledge the importance of developing positive relationships in school, both with peers and teachers (Boorn, 2008; Dann, 2011; Honey et al., 2011; Kellet-Boyle, 2010; Woodier, 2011). Honey et al., (2011) identified having the ability to establish and maintain friendships and having supportive and caring teachers as significant protective factors for LAC that contribute towards success. Having open channels of communication was also identified as a key factor in working towards success of LAC, both between professionals (Harker et al., 2004; Kellet-Boyle, 2010) and between school staff and young people (Woodier, 2011).

Boorn (2008) and Kellet-Boyle (2010) highlighted how important it is for teachers to have the necessary skill and knowledge in order to support LAC. In addition, many studies emphasized how important it is for teachers to know and understand the individual pupils they are working with (Dann, 2011; Honey et al., 2011; Kellet-Boyle 2010; Woodier, 2011). This includes understanding the child's background, and the implications such experiences might have, keeping up to date with what is currently going on in their life, things they are enjoying and things that may be causing difficulties (Dann, 2011; Woodier, 2011).

Resilience

Resilience was raised within most papers as a factor that might contribute towards and foster success for LAC. Woodier (2011) describes in detail how teachers (with a specific knowledge base) can work with LAC to develop resilience (over time). Woodier (2011), Brewin and Statham (2011) and Honey et al., (2011), all refer to resilience in terms of risk and protective factors. Honey et al., (2011) highlighted that teachers have a key role to play in fostering protective factors for LAC. The protective factors identified were; positive relationships with peers and teachers, a supportive family network, appropriate guidance and participation in clubs and activities, identifying inner strengths and reinforcing positive values (Brewin and Statham, 2011; Honey et al., 2011; Woodier, 2011). Risk factors were identified as; poor attendance, a high number of school or placement changes, poor behaviour at school and at home, a lack of appropriate guidance and poor relationships with others (Brewin and Statham 2011; Honey et al., 2011).

Teachers' Views

Boorn (2008) and Kellet-Boyle (2010) were the only authors who set out to explore teachers' views in relation to LAC, hence the change in search terms when seeking relevant articles to answer the review question. Boorn (2008) found that teachers perceived LAC to have more problem behaviours than non LAC due to poor social skills and additional learning needs. She also reported that teachers undervalued their own skill and ability to support LAC, in relation to fostering resilience and a limited knowledge of successful interventions. This may have an impact on the support that teachers provide LAC and the services they call on for support and advice.

Other studies such as Brewin and Statham (2011), Honey et al., (2011), and Harker et al., (2004) view teachers as key 'stakeholders' in supporting LAC and have sought their perspectives along-side others, such as carers, social workers and LAC themselves. While teachers are viewed as having a key part to play in supporting and striving for the best for LAC (Boorn, 2008; Kellet-Boyle, 2010), not enough research has taken place to explore how they feel about this role and how they put expectations into practice.

Kellet-Boyle (2010), Dann (2011) and Woodier (2011) highlight that for some teachers supporting LAC can be frightening (Dann, 2011) and overwhelming, particularly if they feel that they do not possess enough knowledge to be able to provide the most appropriate support (Kellet-Boyle, 2010). Dann (2011) indicated that some teachers held the view that once children entered into the care system, they are no longer subject to the abuse or trauma which led to them being taken into care, and therefore they no longer experience challenges or difficulties. Kellet-Boyle (2010) also reported that few teachers viewed LAC as traumatised or presenting with attachment difficulties. Despite the evidence (Boorn, 2008) that suggests teachers and schools are well placed to offer a nurturing and stable environment, Dann (2011) proposed that some teachers continue to view this as the role of adopters or carers.

Where teachers' views were sought, (Harker et al., 2004; Kellet-Boyle 2010) they found that working with other agencies to support LAC was challenging. In particular teachers felt that social workers did not view education as a priority, and that this subsequently impacted on multi-agency working. Brewin and Statham (2011) found that teachers reported making a conscious effort not to view LAC as a homogenous group and tried to treat them the same as any other pupil. They felt that this provided them with a sense of normality in school, when everything else in their life may appear very different to what others are experiencing.

Teachers' Role

The review highlights that there is a clear rationale for teachers to support LAC and suggests a variety of ways in which teachers can or are currently working to support LAC. The DT role is referred to within each of the seven papers that were reviewed. Honey, et al., (2011), Dan (2011), Woodier (2011), Kellet-Boyle (2010) and Boorn (2008), all highlight the importance of teachers who work with LAC having a deeper and enhanced understanding of their needs. Dann (2011) reports; *"It is difficult, if not impossible, to fully meet the needs of these children unless there is some fundamental appreciation of the underlying reasons for their responses and learning patterns"* (p. 456). This highlights the need for DTs to ensure they regularly seek outside support and training in order to carry out their role successfully (Boorn, 2008; Kellet-Boyle, 2010). As mentioned previously, all seven papers discuss the importance of building and maintaining positive relationships between pupils and school staff, this includes modelling pro-social behaviour and providing a consistent and secure base for LAC (Dan, 2011; Woodier, 2011). Woodier (2011) views teachers as key in identifying needs and seeking appropriate opportunities to support LAC. Dann (2011) also views schools as being well placed to raise self-esteem, offer motivation and positively reframe difficult situations as they arise. Brewin and Stratham (2011) encourage school staff not to ignore and be afraid of addressing social and emotional needs and engage with young people in therapeutic interventions, for example developing emotional literacy programmes (Honey et al., 2011) or building resilience (increasing protective factors) (Woodier, 2011).

Strategies

Boorn (2008), Brewin and Statham (2011), Dann (2011), Kellet-Boyle (2010), and Woodier (2011) set out to offer 'guidance' or 'suggestions' in relation to how teachers may support LAC in practice. Boorn (2008) advocates the use of 'meaningful resources' when working with LAC. Kellet-Boyle (2010), recommends a sensitive, attuned, flexible and caring approach. Woodier (2011) suggests introducing tasks enables pupils to feel less 'threatened' or 'overwhelmed'. He proposed using activities, such as reading, with LAC to act as a bridge between the pupil, teacher and the topic of discussion.

Woodier (2011) and Dan (2011) both recommend ensuring that LACs learning environments are highly differentiated and attuned to their needs. Specifically, Woodier (2011) emphasises the need for structure and consistency and Dann (2011) stresses the importance of recognising and appreciating the individual differences in LAC, being mindful that each will have different starting points with regard to the support they require. Kellet-Boyle (2011) highlights that the lack of flexibility within the curriculum and the pressures on teachers to meet national targets for LAC can be unhelpful for some LAC.

Brewin and Statham (2011) recommend ensuring LAC are not singled out and where possible normalise their experience of school. Harker et al., (2004) recommend joint multi-agency training and work shadow opportunities to increase knowledge with regard to one another's roles and lead to an increase in multi-agency working to support LAC. Boorn (2008) proposed a psychological framework for intervention for schools supporting vulnerable pupils, which advocates a team of adults working preventatively.

Issues and barriers

The complexities and challenges of working with LAC are not ignored within the literature, the review presents several issues and barriers for teachers and schools working to support LAC. Dann (2011) in her paper quoted Lieberman (2003) "good enough parenting is often not good enough for an emotionally disturbed child" (p. 282). Dann (2011) proposed that 'good teaching' is not

sufficient for this group of children unless the teacher also has an underlying understanding of LAC difficulties. This raises questions in relation to whether all teaching staff need to be familiar with issues linked to attachment, trauma and how this might present in school. However, she also recognises how important it is that teachers are not unofficially diagnosing LAC, and placing labels on young people without specialist opinions. Harker et al., (2004) discuss the barriers of inter-agency working between teachers and social workers, including a lack of understanding about one another's roles, conflicting workloads and demand for resources both in schools and within social care. As previously mentioned teachers within Kellet-Boyle's (2010) study indicated that the inflexible nature and pressures of the national curriculum prevent teachers from delivering therapeutic interventions to LAC.

The role of the EP

Several papers recognise the role of specialists in supporting LAC. Woodier (2011) reported seeking 'verification' on his ideas from 'Psychologists' within Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). Dann (2011) refers to 'specialists' within LAs who are specifically appointed to support LAC and encourages teachers to establish relationships with such professionals. Others, (Brewin & Statham, 2011; Honey et al., 2011; Kellet-Boyle, 2010) refer specifically to the role of the EP and identify ways in which they can work with teachers to support LAC at an individual and systemic level.

At the individual level Brewin and Statham (2011) identify EPs as well placed to elicit the views of LAC, and describe how such work would feed into meetings, for example when planning for transition. At a systemic level they also view EPs as well placed to chair such meetings. Kellet-Boyle (2010) and Honey et al., (2011) propose EPs are an appropriate service to assist schools in supporting LAC. For example by offering training to raise awareness and develop teachers' skills, but also enhance practice within school. Honey et al., (2011) feel EPs play an important role in highlighting the therapeutic work that schools can offer, such as fostering resilience and emotional well-being. Boorn (2008) reported that EPs are well placed to support schools to develop an 'effective tool kit' to support LAC by;

- Offering consultation and training.
- Challenging assumptions and attributions.
- Reviewing the systems in place surrounding LAC.
- Supporting the evaluation of existing intervention programmes.
- Promoting and developing understanding of building resilience.
- Multi-agency liaison and review.
- Developing supervision processes within school to support adults working with LAC.

2.6 Theoretical Perspective

This section provides an overview of the theories and theoretical positions discussed within the seven reviewed papers. Most of the papers discussed as part of this review are ‘discussion’ papers as opposed to ‘research’ papers which might offer details on the process and findings from a study. It is felt that this is one possible reason why many of the papers do not make explicit links to theoretical frameworks. However, those that do, refer explicitly to theories of attachment, offer perspectives on resilience, and one paper also adopts an ecological perspective.

There are also other interrelated theories threaded throughout the literature, which include attribution theory, humanistic theory and systems theory. The researcher views these theories as most applicable to the present study; the theories/perspectives discussed above are important when considering the individual needs and development of LAC, the subsequent theories however, are perhaps more useful when considering multiple contexts, factors and roles. For example the present study is concerned with the perceptions of teachers and their experience of working in schools, with EPs who work for LAs, to support LAC. This section will aim to link the theories discussed within the literature review to the current study.

Systemic Approach

Brewin and Statham (2011) conceptualised their findings based on Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological model. Bronfenbrenner proposed that a

child's environment consists of multiple levels or systems, and as children develop they interact with these multiple systems. This perspective offers an understanding of the different influences on people, such as their individual characteristics, immediate environmental influences (including relationships with carers, peers and teachers), and the wider more distant influences such as cultural and social values. Bronfenbrenner proposed that individuals are influenced by situations which occur in different settings and behave differently depending on the context. Therefore an individual's behaviour cannot be explored in isolation (Dowling & Osborne, 2003). Figure 3. provides an example of a visual representation of the multiple influencing systems around a child.

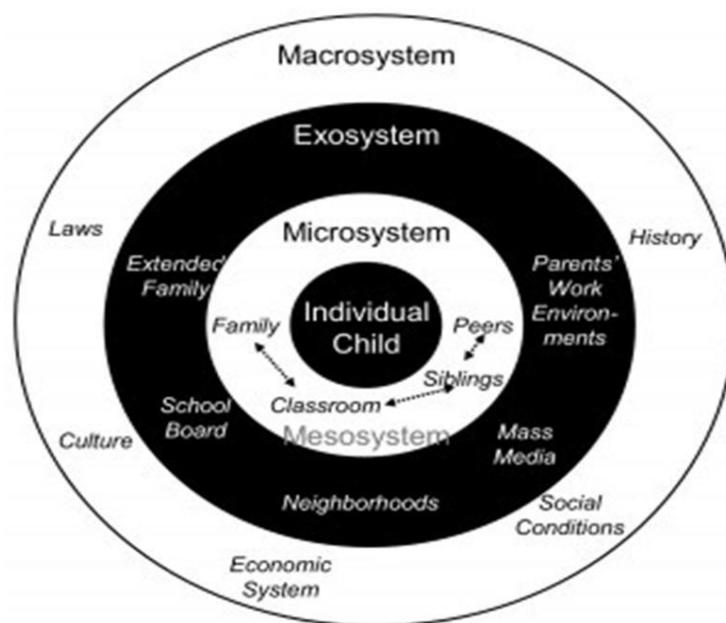


Figure 3 Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Model

A systemic theoretical approach could also be used to explore teachers' experiences of the influencing systems around them (Dowling and Osborne, 2003). Actions are not interpreted in isolation, decisions and experiences will be influenced by different contexts/systems all of which will influence understanding and beliefs (Golding et al., 2006). Exploring beliefs is thought to help develop an understanding of what works, what needs to change and what can be done differently in order to support LAC more effectively (Campbell, Draper and Huffington, 1988).

Humanistic Approach

The literature also makes reference to humanistic perspectives that suggest behaviour can be understood in terms of satisfying the most basic needs for survival before striving for 'self-actualisation', which is to learn more about oneself and one's potential (Maslow, 1962). In order for individuals to reach 'self-actualisation', Maslow proposed the 'Hierarchy of Needs' (1970) (See Figure 4 below).



Figure 4 Adapted from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1970)

The needs lower down the hierarchy are fundamental basic needs; individuals tend not to strive for the higher order needs until lower needs have been met. Dann (2011), Woodier (2011) and Brewin and Statham (2011) recognise this within their papers and describe their experiences of supporting LAC in order to meet lower order needs.

Sprince (2005) adapted Maslow's model and proposed a hierarchy of needs for professionals working with LAC (Figure 5).

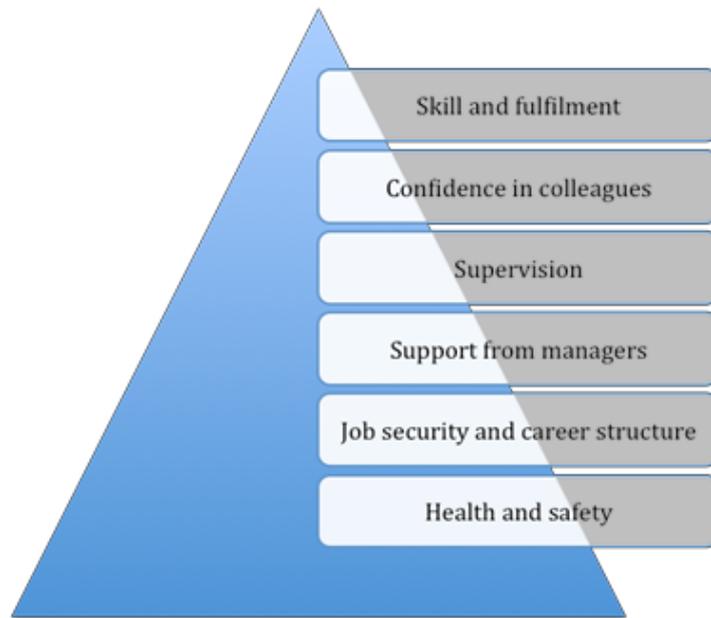


Figure 5 Adapted from Sprince's (2005) hierarchy of needs for practitioners working with LAC

This model suggests professionals also have needs that have to be met in order for them to successfully support LAC. Thus, from a humanistic perspective and in terms of the current study teachers require their own needs to be met (health and safety, Job security and support from others) in order to successfully carry out their role (teaching and supporting the needs of young people) before they experience fulfilment. The lower down the hierarchy teachers are in term of meeting their own needs, the less likely they are to be able to support LAC (Sprince, 2005). For example, if DTs feel unsupported by other professionals (e.g. other support services such as EPs) this may impact on their ability to fulfil their role.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory reflects the need to explain the world, both to ourselves and to other people, attributing cause to the events around us. Attribution theory states that individuals interpret the behaviour of others in a way that enables a positive view of one's self and that doesn't challenge ones 'self-image' (Heider, 1958). When viewing problematic behaviours/situations, people are more likely to attribute failings or weaknesses towards others rather than consider internal influencing factors.

Farrell (1995) highlights a need for teachers to keep an open mind when working with vulnerable young people, being aware of prejudices and how this can affect judgement. Hargreaves, Hestor and Mellor (1975) found that teachers developed highly detailed images of individual pupils before meeting them based on limited information. For example, teachers based their assumption on information from other staff and their knowledge of difficult siblings. Thus within the context of the present study, attribution theory refers to how we attach meaning to our own and others behaviour. Explanatory attribution (seeking reasons for an event) and interpersonal attribution (looking at causes of events involving two or more individuals) (Hewstone, Fincham, and Jaspars (1983) can be used to consider the various meanings teachers attach to the role of the EP and their experience of working with them to support LAC.

2.7 Rationale for the present study

This chapter set out to identify the significant needs of LAC and how EPs work to support them. The review highlights that although LAC are still viewed as a priority, they continue to struggle to make progress. EPs are considered as an appropriate service to offer support for LAC at an individual, organisational and multi-agency level. The critical literature review found that teachers are viewed as 'key stakeholders' in supporting LAC (Harker et al., 2004) and are considered as well-placed to offer a view as to what they feel this group of children need in order to succeed in school (Boorn, 2008; Gilligan, 1997). Despite this, limited research has been carried out that considers teachers' perspectives on support for LAC.

Thus the current study aims to seek DTs for LAC views on the role of the EP and understand DTs experiences when working with EPs to support LAC. The limited and in some cases lack of quality research in this area justifies an exploratory approach being taken. A mixed-methods design will be applied to explore in greater depth the views and experiences of DTs. A detailed account of the methodological approach will be presented within the next chapter.

2.8 Research Aims

The present study aims to explore DTs perceptions of the contribution that EPs make towards supporting LAC in schools. To date there has been little research that focuses on teacher perceptions in this area. The aim of this research is to gain insight into how teachers perceive EPs can best support LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level. The main purpose is to improve EPs understanding by considering how schools perceive their role in supporting one of the most vulnerable pupil groups and reflect on what the implications might be for EP practice in the future. It is hoped that this research will provide EPs with a picture of which aspects of existing practice are valued by DTs and whether or not there are any gaps where DTs feel EPs could contribute.

This study hopes to address the following research questions;

1. What aspects of DTs role do they consider to be important?
2. What are DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level?
3. What do DTs want EPs to offer in order to support LAC?
4. What do DTs report EPs are able to offer that is 'extra' or 'unique' when working to support LAC?

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Overview of the Chapter

This chapter will outline the aims and purpose of the current study. There will be an explanation of the researcher's epistemological and ontological position and a description of the methodological approaches used. A detailed description will be provided of the procedures used for data collection and analysis. A mixed methods approach with two phases was applied. In phase one, a quantitative approach was used to explore the context of the study and begin to consider DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC across the borough. Phase two built on this data by employing a qualitative approach, interviewing DTs to gain a more detailed insight into DT perspectives of EP support for LAC. Attention will be given to the importance of reflexivity throughout the research process, and ethical issues will be considered.

3.2 Ontological and Epistemological Position

There is much debate between social researchers who align themselves with particular research paradigms that seek to explain how knowledge is created (epistemology) based on a particular view of reality (ontology). There are four key paradigms within psychological and educational research; post-positivism, social constructionism, pragmatism and critical realism (Robson, 2002). Each offers a different way of exploring the world, based on particular theoretical assumptions that aim to guide thinking and action (Robson, 2002). Different research methods tend to lend themselves to particular world views, creating the belief that 'knowledge' is discovered in a particular way and by certain methods (Morgan, 2007).

The research paradigm for this study was chosen to fit both the research questions and the epistemological position of the researcher. In general, the nature of mixed methods research aligns itself with a critical realist or pragmatic world view (Creswell, 2009; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Robson 2002). The researcher has chosen to adopt a critical realist position for the current study. It is felt that this view of the world and how knowledge is constructed complements

the researcher's own experience and the purpose, aims and research questions of the present study. A critical realist position supports research conducted in real world contexts and practice-based professions such as the work of EPs (Robson, 2002).

Historically, quantitative research methods tend to be linked to positivist paradigms and qualitative research methods to constructivist paradigms. Critical realism can be viewed as a middle-ground between positivism and constructionism (Creswell, 2009). Critical realism offers a logical and theoretical way of thinking whilst continuing to highlight the importance of the individual within the context in which they exist (Fox, Green and Martin, 2007). In taking this ontological stance, the researcher acknowledges that each DTs experience of working with EPs to support LAC will differ and their individual experiences will inevitably influence their perception of the role of the EP. Thus, DTs are not viewed as one homogenous group whose experiences are all the same.

A critical realist position also fits well with research that is conducted on behalf of an outside agency or organisation (e.g. the LA), recognising that there is an external reality, such as the reality of EPs working for LAs to support schools in meeting the needs of LAC.

Critical realists believe that reality is formed of consistent practices and processes and so findings can be reasonably generalised to similar contexts (Creswell, 2009). Robson (2002) suggests that from a critical realist stance, human behaviour is better understood when it is considered within the social reality in which it occurs. Thus, data within the current study was collected from teachers in schools supported by the LA in which the researcher was working. Knowledge is believed to be created through an interactive link between the researcher and the participants (Robson, 2002). The researcher is seen as both involved in the process but also separate from the area being explored, impacting on understanding and inference-making, which some argue limits researcher objectivity (Robson, 2002). Researcher objectivity and the 'trustworthiness' of research, refers to the researcher's understanding, interpretation, dependability and transferability of the findings and how well the findings are supported by the

genuine data. Measures taken to enhance trustworthiness, such as reflexivity, will be described in detail in the section 3.7 'Research Quality'.

3.3 Purpose of the research

The purpose of this study is to explore teachers' perceptions of the EP role in supporting LAC. As highlighted in Chapter 2, Cameron and Maginn (2009), McParlin (1996) and Peake, (2011) acknowledge the contribution that EPs make towards improving outcomes for LAC. Boorn (2008), Kellett-Boyle (2010), Walker (2012) and Sugden (2013) recognise that there is a gap in research pertaining to teachers' views on LAC. This constitutes the basis for the present study, to understand and expand on the present knowledge base in this area. An exploratory approach was used due to its suitability when researching a relatively unknown research area. The idea within exploratory research is to provide insight by asking questions and describing what is happening within a certain context (Robson, 2002). It is intended that this research will be useful for the purpose of both practice and future research.

3.4 Research design

The current study uses a two-phase sequential explanatory mixed methods design, a preliminary quantitative data collection phase was employed followed by a principal qualitative data collection phase (Cresswell, 2009). Such a design supports the use of qualitative data to explain, complement and add breadth to initial quantitative results. Both techniques were used to address the main purpose of the study; exploring teachers' perceptions of EP support for LAC.

In phase one, quantitative data was collected using a self-administered online questionnaire, designed for the purpose of the current study to explore DTs views of EP support for LAC across the borough. The questionnaire was distributed to all DTs within the LA (n = 73). The aim of the first phase was to undertake a broad exploration of the context within which the present study sits.

In phase two, qualitative data was collected using semi-structured interviews on a sample of nine DTs from schools within the LA (n = 9) to explore in further detail

and confirm DTs views of EP support for LAC. Schools known to have higher numbers of LAC were purposefully selected to enable the teachers involved to speak about their experiences. The aim of the second phase was to provide a more in-depth exploration of teachers' perceptions and experiences when working with EPs to support LAC.

3.5 Research Procedure

3.6.1 Participants

Participants in Phase One were recruited from schools within the LA, this included schools in both urban and rural areas (n=73). DTs within these schools were identified via the School Improvement Service (SIS), who currently hold responsibility for the education of LAC within the Borough. Thus, purposeful sampling techniques were used to select easily available participants who fit particular criteria (Creswell, Plano and Clark 2007). Participants included DTs from Lower (n= 46), Primary (n=4), Middle (n=8), Upper (n=4), Academies (n=10) and Free Schools (n=1). The information in Table 5 represents the inclusion criteria for participants within phase one of the research project. Table 6 provides an overview of participants who responded within phase one.

Table 5. Inclusion Criteria for Participants in Phase One (Quantitative)

Inclusion Criteria Phase One
Participants hold the title of Designated Teacher for LAC or have recognised responsibility for supporting and monitoring the outcomes of LAC within school
Participants work in lower, middle, upper, academy and free schools within the LA in which the research is carried out

Table 6. Table of Participants within Phase One (Quantitative)

Phase	No. of participants
Lower	14
Middle	4
Upper	3
Academy	1
Free School	1

Further purposeful sampling techniques were used in phase two to recruit participants for the qualitative phase of the study. Purposeful sampling allows the researcher to select participants based on interest and the specific needs of the study (Creswell, et al., 2007). Again, data held on file within the SIS was used to identify 12 potential schools to contact. This involved looking at schools with higher numbers of LAC, the rationale for this being that these schools may have been more likely to have had contact with an EP regarding a LAC. Participants within phase two were not necessarily participants who had completed the questionnaire within phase one. It is proposed that between 4 and 10 interviews are deemed as sufficient to obtain rich qualitative data to investigate the area being explored (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). Nine DTs expressed an interest and agreed to participate. The information in Table 7 represents the inclusion criteria for participants in phase two. Table 8 provides an overview of DTs who participated within phase two.

Table 7. Inclusion Criteria for Participants in Phase Two (Qualitative)

Inclusion Criteria Phase Two
Participants hold the title of Designated Teacher for LAC or have recognised responsibility for supporting and monitoring the outcomes of LAC within school
Participants work within the LA in which the research is carried out
Participants have at least 1 years' experience in the role
Participants have LAC currently on role in their school
Participants are working with, or have in the past worked with an EP in relation to supporting LAC.

Table 8. Participants within Phase Two

School	Designated Teacher	Gender	Phase	No. of LAC in school	No. of years as a Designated Teacher
1	1 & 2	Male and female	Middle	5	3
2	3	Male	Upper	7	6
3	4	Female	Lower	7	2
4	5	Female	Lower	1	13
5	6	Female	Upper	5	5
6	7	Male	Middle	2	5
7	8	Female	Lower	1	13
8	9	Female	Middle	3	8
9	10	Female	Upper	2	10

DTs working in special schools were excluded from the research project. The nature of the LAC status for some children in special schools does not fit the 'typical' profile of LAC. For example, the researcher is aware that some children in special schools are given a LAC status based on the high level of intensive support they receive due to complex physical or medical needs, i.e. requiring 24 hour care. The researcher is aware that this can be contentious for some families and members of school staff, and therefore did not want to incorporate this level of complexity within the current research project.

3.6.2 Data Collection

Phase One – Quantitative

Data in phase one of this study was collected using a self-administered questionnaire, to explore and set the context of the present study (Appendix 6). The researcher wanted to explore the number of LAC on roll in schools within the borough and gain a picture of how DTs are working with EPs to support LAC. As part of the literature review on research within this area, a search was conducted for a pre-existing questionnaire of this nature. As a suitable pre-existing questionnaire was not available, the decision was made to develop a questionnaire for the purpose of the current study. Questions were created using overarching themes which emerged from previous research conducted in this field related to how EPs are currently working to support LAC.

A Likert response format was chosen as a suitable way to measure participants' attitudes to, and level of agreement with questions related to EP support for LAC (Clark-Carter, 1998). Likert scales offer a quantifiable way of measuring beliefs, attitudes and opinions. For example, participants were asked to read statements such as 'EPs have specialist knowledge that no other service is able to offer' – and asked to select whether they strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree. The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions.

As the questionnaire was developed for the purpose of the present study, a small pilot was carried out with six teachers from a neighbouring LA. The purpose of pre-testing the questionnaire was to determine whether the questions;

- Have been placed in an appropriate order
- Are suitably worded
- Understood by all respondents
- Additional or specifying questions are needed
- Whether questions should be eliminated
- The instructions to participants are adequate (Teijlingen, Rennie, Hundley, Graham, 2001).

Minor wording amendments were made to the questionnaire following feedback from participants within the pilot. For example, one participant noted a spelling error on question 7, 'on role' was amended to 'on roll'. Another participant noted that on question 14, there was no option for DTs to respond if they had had no prior involvement with EPs, subsequently an additional option, 'not applicable', was included. Overall, feedback from the pilot was positive, one participant reported, "It looks quite quick and clear".

A web based questionnaire was chosen as the most suitable method for collecting data at this stage. This approach was chosen as it was thought to be the most time efficient and trustworthy (Robson, 2002). Other methods of distribution were considered, e.g. via post. However, when taking into consideration the time constraints of the project and ease of access for participants, emailing web based questionnaires was chosen as the most likely method to retrieve the highest response rate and a feasible method to protect the anonymity of participants. The

anonymity of the questionnaires aimed to allow participants to freely express their thoughts and feelings without feeling inhibited by fear of their identity being connected with their responses (Creswell, 2009). The researcher is aware of some of the limitations of self-administered web based questionnaires including, issues such as low response rates, difficulties in identifying 'social desirability' in the participant's responses and difficulties in accounting for 'response bias' (Robson, 2011). Nevertheless this approach was chosen as the researcher viewed this method as most likely to be received first hand by participants, due to the questionnaires being emailed directly to the participants email addresses and therefore easy to access. Previous research suggests a 30% response rate is deemed sufficient to provide an adequate representation of the total sample (Nulty, 2008).

The aim of the web based questionnaire was to yield meaningful data enabling a greater understanding of context within which the current study is situated, specifically regarding teacher's experiences of working with EPs to support LAC. The questionnaire was developed using 'Smart Survey' and was emailed to all DTs from schools within the LA. The email informed participants on the role of the researcher and provided an overview of the study. Participants were provided with an information sheet (Appendix 7) and hyperlink that directed them to the web based questionnaire via email. The information sheet outlined the purpose of the research study and invited participants to take part. Where an interest was shown, participants were directed to complete the online questionnaire or alternatively contact the researcher if they required further information. Participants were advised that when they opt to take part, by completing and returning the questionnaire, they are consenting to the information they provide being used within this study. Participants' responses were received online and the researcher was notified via email once a participant had completed a questionnaire. Twenty-three participants (out of a possible 73) responded to the questionnaire (see table 6), providing a 31.5% response rate.

Phase Two – Qualitative

Data within phase two was collected using 'semi-structured interviews' (SSI). Drever (2004) described SSIs as "a flexible technique which is suitable for

gathering individual's opinions, exploring people's thinking and yielding rich information" (p. 8). The qualitative nature of SSIs allows for an exploration of meaning, specifically meaning that interviewees attach to their experiences and/or understanding of EP support for LAC. Participants were provided with the opportunity to share their views using their own words, thus the approach recognises the subjective and fluid nature of perspectives and views (Warren, 2001). The interview process allows the interviewer to explore participant's sometimes multiple and contradictory perspectives, which may develop throughout the interview process itself. Interviews were therefore predominantly guided by participants based on their perceptions of the EP role in supporting LAC.

The flexible nature of SSIs also provides opportunities to clarify participants' views. This allows the researcher to check their interpretation of what is shared directly with the participant during the interview. It also allows the researcher to ask further questions in order to gather rich and detailed descriptions. This prevents the researcher from using restricted lines of questioning and imposing structured topics and expectations on participants (Kvale, 2007), providing the researcher with opportunities to explore unexpected areas. The researcher had few expectations regarding the nature of the data to be collected. The flexible structure helps the interviewer to ensure that the interview yields information that is relevant and focused on answering the research questions. The approach also supports the exploratory nature of the research questions and the limited research pertaining to teachers' views in this area.

The use of SSIs allowed for 'open-ended' and 'non- directive' questions to be used to gain a rich, in-depth understanding of individual participants' perceptions (Drever, 2004). When developing the SSI schedule (see Appendix 8), advice was taken on board and a sequence developed that began with 'easy', non-threatening questions, followed by straightforward questions and comments to diffuse any tensions in the main body of the interview, finishing with closing comments (Robson, 2002). Items for the interview schedule were selected by considering themes from past research which explored the support provided to LAC by EPs, these were developed further through information that arose during phase one. The researcher's knowledge of support for LAC within the

borough also informed how some items developed. The interview was divided into sections through the use of subheadings, this helped the interviewer to stay on track during the SSI and ensure all the topics that the interviewer intended to explore were covered.

As part of the process of designing a research study it is important to take into consideration any drawbacks. This included aspects such as the time required to develop skills needed to achieve adequate performance within the interviewing process (Gillham, 2005) and a lack of standardisation between interviews which may raise issues of reliability when considering how to interpret and analyse the data (Robson, 2002). Other methods of data collection, such as focus groups were also considered. However, due to the geography of the LA and the likelihood of gathering all DTs in one place at the same time, SSIs were chosen as the most suitable method of data collection.

It was in the interest of the researcher to ensure that participants felt as relaxed as possible to make sure communication remained open and provided a true picture of their experiences (Silverman, 2001). The researcher remained sensitive to the non-verbal communicative messages from participants and adjusted her interpersonal style accordingly. For example, techniques such as 'mirroring' were used to match the participants' communication and put them at ease. The researcher also attempted to match the interviewee's tone, volume and pace of speech.

Initial contact was made with participants in phase two via telephone. The researcher felt this to be the most appropriate way to ensure participants were provided with a complete picture of the research project and what their involvement entailed. Where participants expressed an interest to take part, arrangements were made to meet with them face to face at a time and location convenient for them. This was followed up with an email containing an information sheet (Appendix 9) and consent form (Appendix 10). This provided participants with time to make an informed decision as to their involvement. The SSIs were conducted on an individual basis at a location convenient for participants. In most cases this was a meeting room on school premises. Consent forms were signed and collected prior to the interview commencing. Interviews were recorded and

transcribed verbatim following the interview. At the start of the interview the researcher ensured participants were fully informed in relation to their participation in this study. This included consideration of ethical issues, such as their right to withdraw. At the end of the interview participants were debriefed, thanked for their participation and informed of the researcher's next steps as part of the research project.

3.6.3 Data Analysis

The process of analysis in the current study could be best described as cross-over mixed analysis (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Although the data within each phase was analysed in parallel, the information was consolidated to address the main exploratory research questions. The mixed-methods design was analysed in two different ways.

Quantitative Data Analysis

The preliminary quantitative data collection phase aimed to provide an overview of the context within which the research sits. The questionnaire focused on how DTs had worked with EPs to support LAC in the past year. Data to answer these questions was gathered through direct/closed and scaling questions, producing nominal and ordinal data. Consequently, a descriptive statistical analysis was carried out (using percentages) in order to summarise the data. The process of producing descriptive statistics offers opportunities for describing, synthesising, analysing and interpreting quantitative data. This process provides the reader with a visual representation of DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC. The quantitative data is complemented by some of the rich qualitative quotes from phase two, which support and elaborate on the quantitative findings.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Through the SSIs the researcher sought to identify 'themes and patterns' across the participants and therefore thematic analysis was chosen as the most appropriate method to analyse the qualitative data.

Thematic analysis, as an approach, fits with the critical realist ontology adopted by the researcher. The critical realist viewpoint states that generalising claims can be made about complex and diverse social phenomena, such as participant's views (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). It acknowledges individuals may construct their own meanings about working with EPs to support LAC, and these may differ between participants. This method of analysis enabled themes to develop that were pertinent to this sample and therefore provided a greater understanding of the area being explored (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009).

Braun and Clarke (2006; 2013) advocate this method over other qualitative methods because it is flexible and provides contextual data which is detailed, rich and meaningful. The process involves organising a large, complex set of data by drawing attention to recurring themes or patterns and making these accessible to others (Boyatzis, 1998). The process enabled the researcher to explore the complex and dynamic perspectives that arose during interviews with participants. Each interview was conducted, recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that transcriptions are a; "thorough orthographic transcript and verbatim account of all verbal (and sometimes nonverbal e.g. coughs) utterances" (p. 88). The researcher used punctuation within the transcripts to convey meaning communicated by non-verbal communication such as intonation and pauses. A sample of an interview transcript can be found in Appendix 11.

As the present study is an exploratory investigation in an area that has not previously been researched, the analysis was 'data-driven'. It was conducted without a preconceived framework or theory in mind as it was felt that this approach was less likely to limit the analysis and restrict the themes that emerged, allowing for the data to be considered from a genuine exploratory position. This approach is known as inductive analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher focused on identifying semantic themes focusing on explicit surface meanings found within the interviews based on what participants said.

Boyatzis (1998), highlights the importance of using a systematic process for analysing the data. Braun and Clarke, (2006) propose that inductive thematic analysis is performed through a six stage process in order to establish meaningful

patterns. These 6 stages were followed by the researcher and are outlined in table 9. Braun and Clarke, (2006) also provide 'A 15-Point Checklist of Criteria for Good Thematic Analysis' (see Appendix 12). The researcher adhered to these criteria to add rigour to the analysis process. The analysis process began during the transcription phase, the researcher began to identify commonalities amongst the participants' views which offered further understanding about the shared experiences and perspectives of the participants. This is in line with a critical realist ontological position, which asserts that there is one reality (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). A detailed account of the process undertaken by the researcher at each stage of the analysis process, as described by Braun and Clarke (2006; 2013), can be found within Appendix 13.

Table 9 Six Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006 p95)

Phase	Description of Process
1. <i>Familiarising yourself with your data:</i>	<i>Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and rereading the data, noting down initial ideas.</i>
2. <i>Generating initial codes:</i>	<i>Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.</i>
3. <i>Searching for themes</i>	<i>Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.</i>
4. <i>Reviewing themes</i>	<i>Checking in 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.</i>
5. <i>Defining and naming themes</i>	<i>Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells; generating clear definitions and names for each theme.</i>
6. <i>Producing the report</i>	<i>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.</i>

The researcher spent time reviewing Braun and Clark's (2006 and 2013) approach to using thematic analysis to ensure the interviews were analysed with as much rigour as possible. There is an element of 'subjective construction' when analysing qualitative data because the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants' accounts based on their own perspectives, thus there is a possibility that misinterpretation may occur (Gillham, 2005). However, the researcher acknowledges that the findings from the analysis are the researcher's own interpretation of DTs interpretation of their experience. Giddens (1987), called this 'double hermeneutics', to describe the interaction present between the research topic and participants and the sense or meaning that the researcher attributes to the topic being explored. It is acknowledged that what is being researched, context of the study and the background of the researcher interact to inform one another as part of the research process (Giddens, 1987). For this reason, the researcher's interpretation of what was shared was not reviewed with participants and it is accepted, based on the theory described above, that what was found is based on the researcher's interpretation of the teachers' interpretation of their experience.

3.6 Research Quality

Steps were taken to ensure validity, reliability and trustworthiness across both the quantitative and qualitative data collection phases, these are discussed here;

Validity

'Validity' refers to the difference between what the researcher is exploring and the degree to which the aims of the study are achieved (Willig, 2009). The validity of the questionnaire in phase one was increased by using ideas from existing research to develop the questions. The questionnaire was piloted with six teachers and modifications were made based on the comments received.

The nature of the current study and the small sample size means what is discussed will relate specifically to practices within the LA in which the research took place and therefore the researcher aims for the findings to be meaningful for those involved. However, it will also be of interest to those planning support for LAC in other contexts.

Due to the interactive nature of the research, validity is also supported by ensuring that data, interpretations and outcomes, were able to be tracked back to their source and are not simply invented by the researcher (Lincoln & Guba, 2000; Mertens, 1998). A clear and transparent audit trail is used to describe the steps taken from the start of the research project to the development and reporting of findings (Robson, 2002).

Reliability

The questionnaire was developed for the specific purpose of this study and therefore it was not felt necessary to employ rigorous methods (i.e. testing and re testing) to strengthen the 'reliability' of the questionnaire. However, the researcher maintains that the questionnaire is fit for the purpose of the present study and could be used to explore the context in a different LA with a different group of teachers if required.

Social Desirability Bias

Social desirability bias refers to respondents altering their responses in fear of being perceived in a particular manner (Robson, 2011). To reduce social desirability bias confidentiality was emphasised to participants in relation to their responses throughout phase one and two. Questionnaires were web based to protect anonymity and participants within phase two were reminded that they do not have to share information that they feel may cause them or their school to be identifiable to others.

Rigour and Trustworthiness

The term 'rigour' has been used within educational and psychological research to describe the trustworthiness of qualitative data. That is the extent to which consistent study methods provide an accurate representation of the population studied (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011). The researcher made every effort to ensure the findings are an authentic representation of the experiences of the participants by developing rapport with participants throughout the data collection stage (Baxter & Eyles, 1997). The dependability of this study has been ensured in a number of ways. For example, the researcher's approach to data analysis was checked by another EP and Trainee EP (TEP) at various stages. In addition the findings chapter features quotes from the raw data to support interpretation of the analysis. Appendix 13 provides the reader with a detailed step-by-step description of the analysis conducted, demonstrating decisions made at each stage. This provides a transparent picture of the researcher's thought process and actions. This also ensured the findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the participants, rather than the researcher's preconceived ideas about the data. For example, the researcher found keeping reflective research journal particularly helpful during the process of conducting the SSIs. This helped the researcher to reflect on her interview style and ensure questions were not leading and that participants were given time and space to express their views.

3.7 Reflexivity

The interactive, two-way nature of SSIs results in meanings developed that are influenced and interpreted by the participant, the researcher, and the interaction of the two. This data collection method, in which the influence of the interviewer is acknowledged, requires a level of reflexivity from the researcher. The same is true of the thematic analysis process, in which the responsibility of choosing data extracts, interpreting meaning and organising this into meaningful themes, lies with the researcher. Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell, and Alexander (1990) suggest that all behaviour has endless possible interpretations. This is particularly important as the interviews were conducted by the researcher, who entered the data collection with some pre-existing views on the research topic. Kvale (2007) describes how the interviewer initiates the meeting, dictates the purpose of the interview, line of questioning and termination. Thus, the researcher reflected on the power balance within the interview situation and the possible impact this may have on the information shared by participants. For example, DTs may have been reluctant to share information which criticised other professionals' involvement. Kvale (2007) also suggests that participants may attempt to 'counter-control' the interview, through withholding information, asking questions, and diverting the subject. The process of remaining reflexive throughout the study involved the researcher meeting for weekly professional supervision and regular research supervision with her academic tutor.

As mentioned previously, the researcher kept a 'research journal' throughout the study. This helped the researcher to reflect on a number of stages within the process, including; the researcher's aims and hopes for the study, the interview process, influencing factors on participants' responses, and the meanings interpreted in the analysis. For example, a fellow TEP was asked to check whether the researcher's coding reflected the interviews and the researcher's academic supervisor reviewed the development and revision of themes. The feedback from these professionals supported the researcher's reflection on the consistency of the analysis.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Finally, throughout the study, the researcher was continually mindful of ethical practice, and the impact of the research on the participants was constantly monitored. This ensured the researcher's practice adhered to the commitments and measures which the researcher agreed to take in order to gain ethical approval. An application for ethical approval was made to the University of East London School of Psychology's Ethics Committee. Notice that approval was granted can be found in Appendix 14.

The British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (British Psychological Society (BPS), 2010) was adhered to, ensuring the correct ethical procedures were in place. When undertaking research with 'human participants' (e.g. teachers) the BPS guidance asserts that "respect for autonomy and dignity of persons" (BPS, 2010, p. 8) is imperative.

In order to gain ethical approval the following factors were taken into consideration;

Gaining Consent from Stakeholders

Permission was sought from all the relevant stakeholders within the LA, including the Head of Children's Services, Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP), and School Improvement Officer responsible for LAC.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from participants by sharing with them what the study would involve and highlighting that there was no obligation to take part.

Anonymity and Confidentiality

Participants were assured that their anonymity was protected; all names and any other identifiable information was removed or changed (i.e. all names were removed (or changed to retain the meaning) in the transcriptions). Each participant was allocated a coded file name and their data was saved in this way.

Participants were informed that their data would be stored on locked premises and destroyed on completion of the project. No identifying features were used within the write up of this study.

Debriefing

Kvale (2007) highlights the importance of debriefing participants at the end of their interview, acknowledging that information discussed within the interview can leave participants feeling anxious. At the end of each interview time was allocated to debrief participants, giving them the opportunity to ask questions or discuss anything further. At this stage participants were also informed of the researcher's next steps within the process.

Withdrawal

Participants in phase two were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any point prior to the data analysis phase and their data would not be used. They were informed that questions would not be asked and their data would be destroyed accordingly.

Risk

The BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2010) states that the researcher "should consider and avoid... all potential risks to psychological well-being, mental health, personal values, or dignity of the participants" (BPS, 2010, p11). All participants were interviewed by the researcher who has relevant experience working with teachers. All efforts were made to ensure participants felt safe and comfortable sharing their views. All interviews were conducted in the school setting, an environment familiar to the participants. This aimed to support participants to feel at ease during the interview and was thought to be a 'safe' location both for the participant and the researcher.

There was deemed to be potentially a very small risk that teachers may find face-to-face interviewing difficult and that the process may raise complex issues encountered in their work with LAC. A risk assessment was carried out prior to

commencing the research study (Appendix 15). Procedures were in place to address these issues if a situation arose;

- Terminate the interview
- Provide support to the participant
- Offer the option to withdraw or continue (if appropriate)
- Reflect on the situation and seek supervision
- Follow up with the participant to ensure they feel their needs were addressed.

Difficulties of this nature did not arise at any point during the study and it was not necessary to put this procedure into practice.

Chapter 4: Findings

This chapter will outline the quantitative and qualitative findings from the first and second phase of the research. The quantitative data, collected during phase one, represents the preliminary data within the study and is presented within the first part of this chapter using descriptive statistics. The primary, dominant data within the research project was the qualitative data, this is presented in the second part of this chapter using thematic analysis.

4.1 Quantitative Analysis

The preliminary quantitative data was gathered via a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent out to 74 schools, 23 DTs responded to the questionnaire, providing a response rate of 31%. The aim of the questionnaire was to explore and establish an overview of the context in which the research took place. Thus, it was pertinent to consider the following;

The researcher sought to explore the number of LAC on roll to schools within the borough. This question was thought to be relevant in order to consider the population of LAC who may require support and whether or not EPs have the capacity to support this group of young people. The number of EPs within the team, at the time the research took place, varied from the start of the project to the end. However, there were 7 EPs including the researcher by the time data collection had finished. Of the 23 DTs who participated within the first phase of the study, 8 reported to have 0 LAC on roll, 4 reported to have 2 LAC on roll, 3 reported to have 1 LAC on roll and 3 reported to have 7 or more LAC on roll (figure 6). This indicated that there are LAC on roll in schools within the borough who may require EP support.

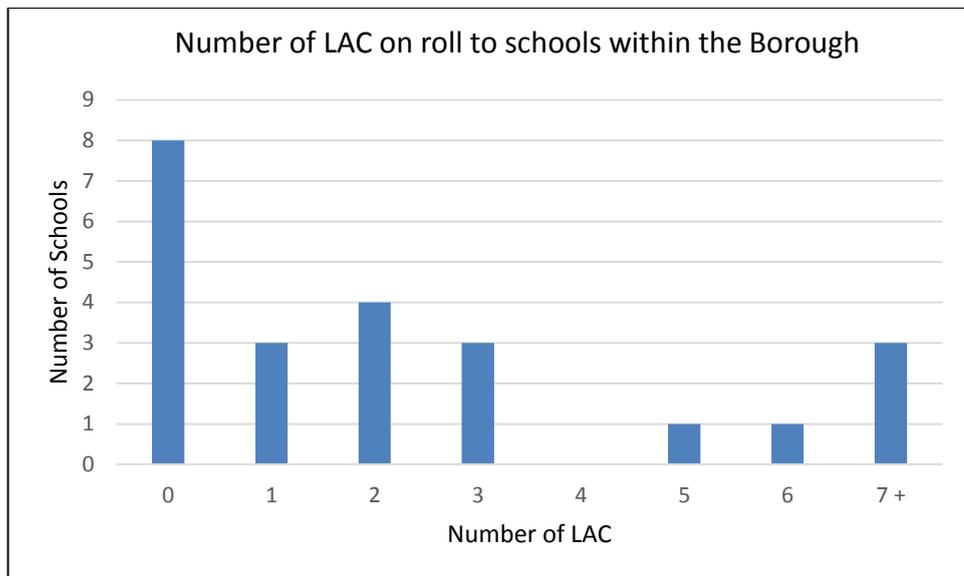


Figure 6 Number of LAC on roll in schools within the Borough.

In order to gain a sense of the ages of the LAC within schools across the borough and consider how they are distributed between schools, participants were asked what phase they are working in as a DT for LAC. Of the 23 DTs who responded 14 were based in lower schools, 4 in middle schools, 2 in upper schools, 2 in academies and 1 in a free school (Figure 7). There were no respondents from primary schools, however this is reflective of the 3 tier model still prominent within the LA. For example there are 46 lower schools, 4 primary schools, 8 middle schools, 4 upper schools, 10 academies and 1 free school.

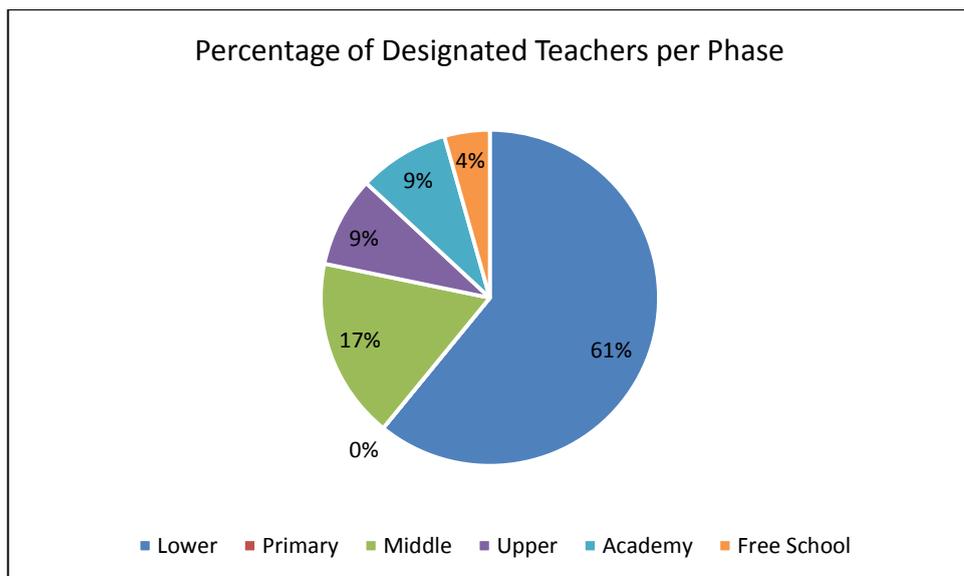


Figure 7 Number of DT within each school phase.

The experience of DTs was also explored. Between the 23 DTs who participated within the study, they have an average of 2.3 years experience as DTs for LAC. 2 DTs had 10 or more years experience, 5 DTs had 5 years experience and 5 DTs had 2 years experience (Figure 8).

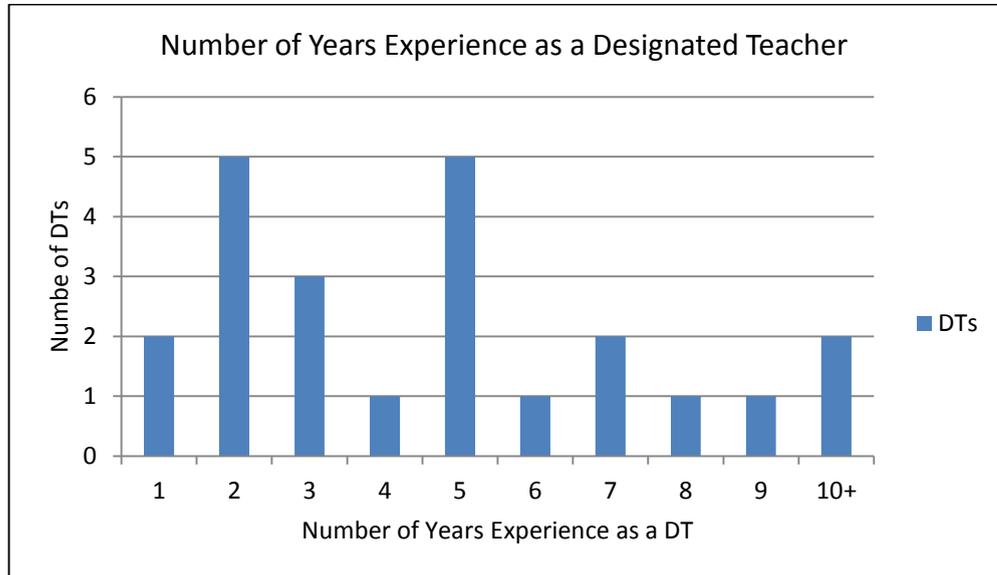


Figure 8 Number of Years Experience as DT.

Whether or not DTs knew who their school EP was, was also believed to be important in order to consider whether DTs would be able to contact their EP if they needed to. The majority of DTs (74%) reported that they knew who their school EP was (Figure 9).

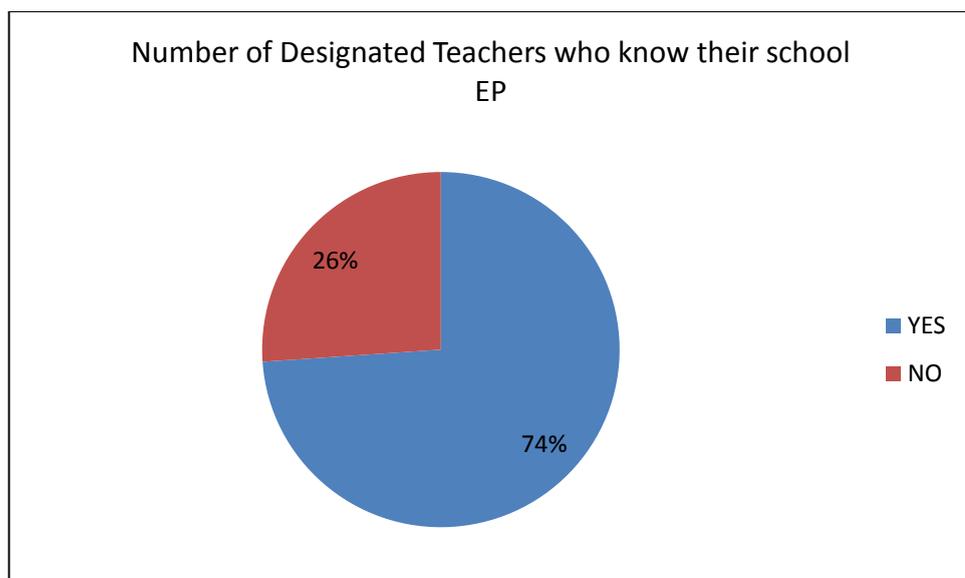


Figure 9 Number of DTs who know their school EP.

The way in which EPs have been working with schools to support LAC in the past year was also taken into account. Despite the majority of DTs reporting that they know who their school EP is, most (61%) reported that they had not contacted an EP in the past year regarding a LAC. Seven DTs reported that they had contacted an EP once, 1 DT reported that they had contacted an EP twice and 1 DT reported that they had contacted an EP three times in the past year regarding a LAC. This also resulted in most DTs (70%) reporting that they had not worked directly with an EP to provide support for a LAC in the past year. Five DTs reported that they had worked directly with an EP once, 1 DT reported that they had worked directly with an EP twice and 1 DT reported that they had worked directly with an EP three times in the past year. The majority (70%) also reported that an EP had not worked directly with a LAC on roll in their school in the past year. Six DTs reported that an EP had worked directly with a LAC once and 1 DT reported that an EP had worked directly with a LAC three times in the past year (Figure 10).

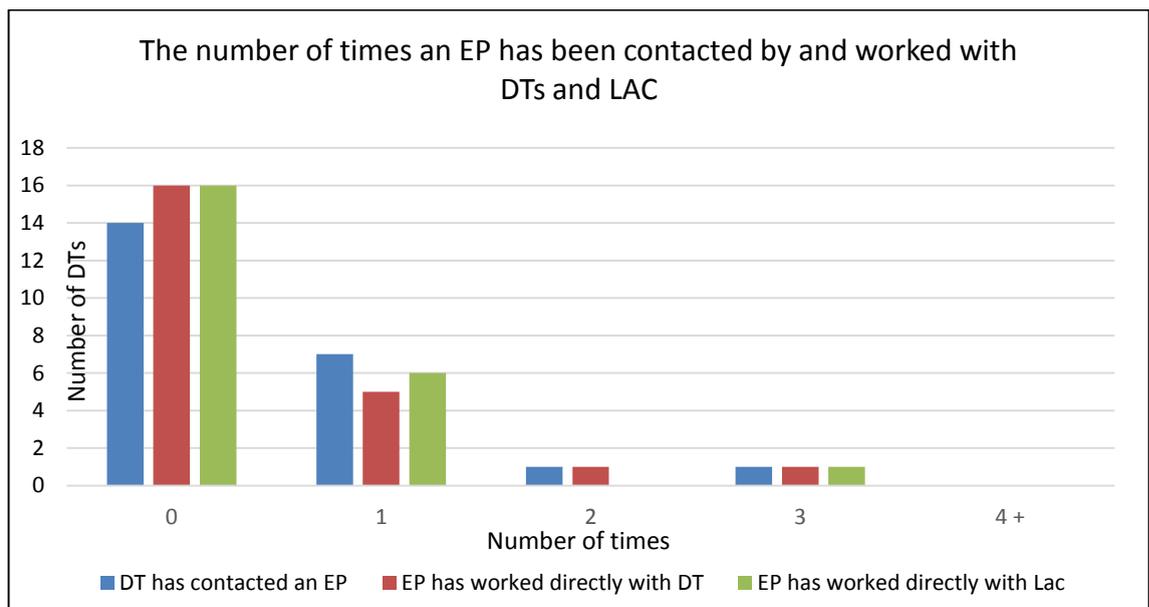


Figure 10 Number of times an EP has been contacted by and worked directly with DTs and LAC in the past year.

Other ways in which EPs may have worked to support LAC in school were also considered, e.g. working at an organisational level, multi-agency work, and signposting to other services. Most (74%) reported that an EP had not worked at an organisational level to provide support and training in relation to meeting the needs of LAC in the past year. Five participants reported that an EP had worked

at an organisational level once and 1 participant reported that an EP had worked at an organisational level twice in the past year (Figure 11).

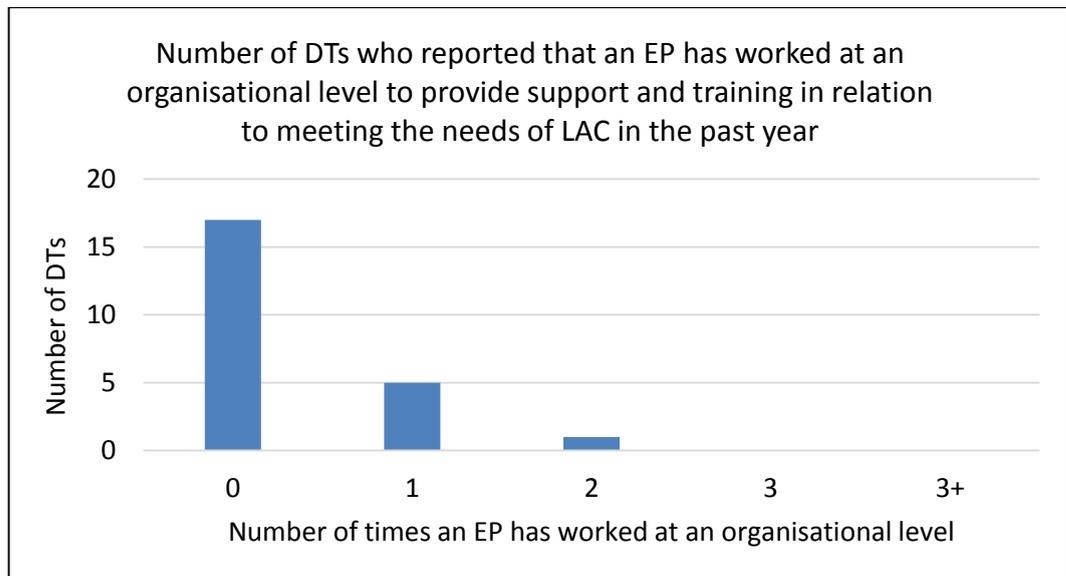


Figure 11 Number of times in the past year an EP has worked at an organisational level to meet the needs of LAC.

The majority of DTs (82%) reported that they had not worked with an EP to ensure multi-agency collaboration for a LAC in the past year. Two DTs reported that they had worked with an EP to ensure multi-agency collaboration once, 1 DT reported that they had worked with an EP to ensure multi-agency collaboration twice and 1 DT reported that they had worked with an EP to ensure multi-agency collaboration for a LAC three times in the past year (Figure 12).

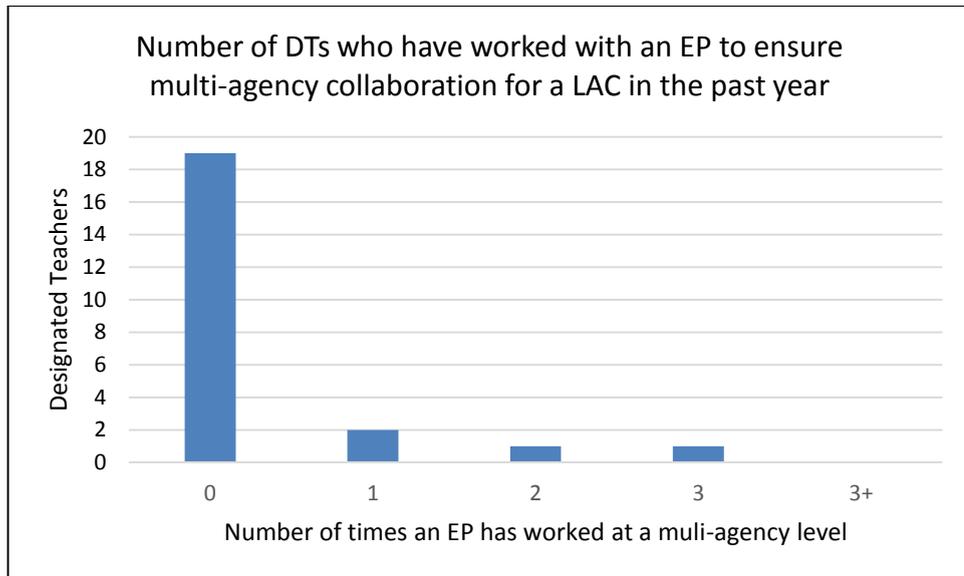


Figure 12 Number of times in the past year an EP has worked at a multi-agency level to meet the needs of LAC.

Most DTs (87%) reported that they had not been signposted to other support services by an EP in relation to a LAC in the past year. One participant reported that they had been signposted to other support services once, 1 participant reported that they have been signposted to other support services twice and 1 participant reported that they have been signposted to other support services by an EP, three times in the past year in relation to a LAC (Figure 13).

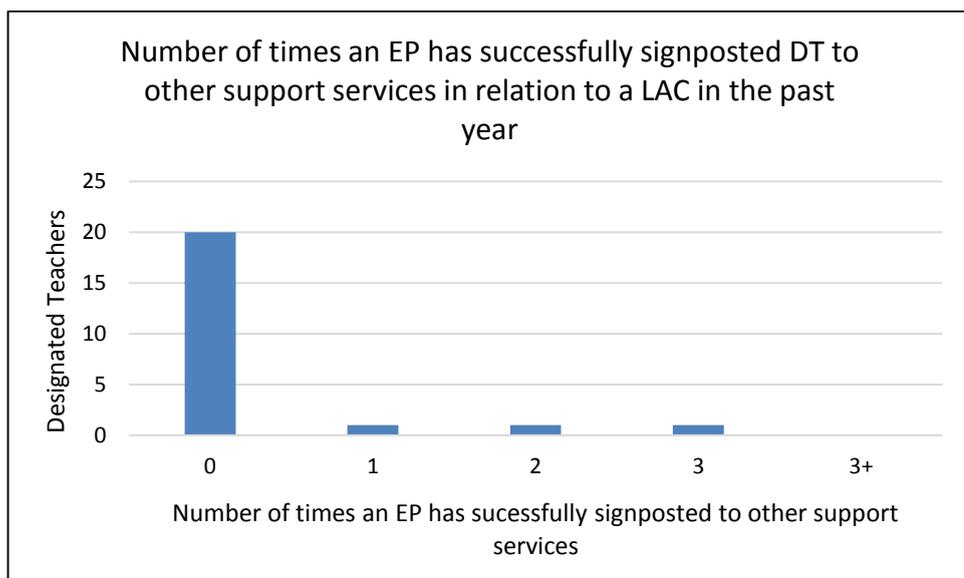


Figure 13 Number of times in the past year an EP has signposted a DT to other support services to meet the needs of LAC.

DTs were also asked to reflect on the ways in which they had worked with an EP to support LAC in the past year by indicating which activities they have engaged with. 26% reported that an EP had used consultation, 17% reported that an EP had undertaken an assessment, 9% reported that an EP had implemented an intervention, 4% reported that an EP had delivered training and 4% reported that an EP had engaged in research or project work. 39% of DTs indicated that this question was not applicable to them, suggesting that they have not had contact with an EP to support a LAC in the past year (Figure 14).

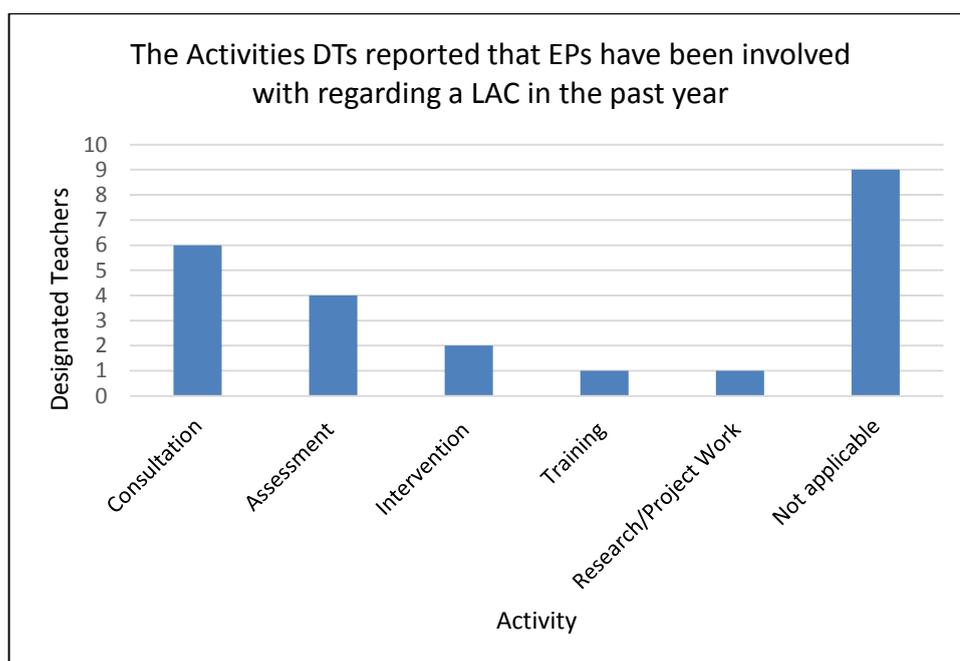


Figure 14 Activities DTs reported that EPs have engaged in regarding a LAC in the past year.

The researcher also wanted to consider whether or not the EP role is perceived by DTs as unique or specialist. The majority, 60%, reported that they ‘somewhat agree’ that EPs have specialist knowledge that no other service is able to offer. 35% reported that they ‘strongly agree’ that EPs have specialist knowledge that no other service is able to offer. 1 participant (4%) reported that they ‘somewhat disagree’ that EPs have specialist knowledge that no other service is able to offer (Figure 15).

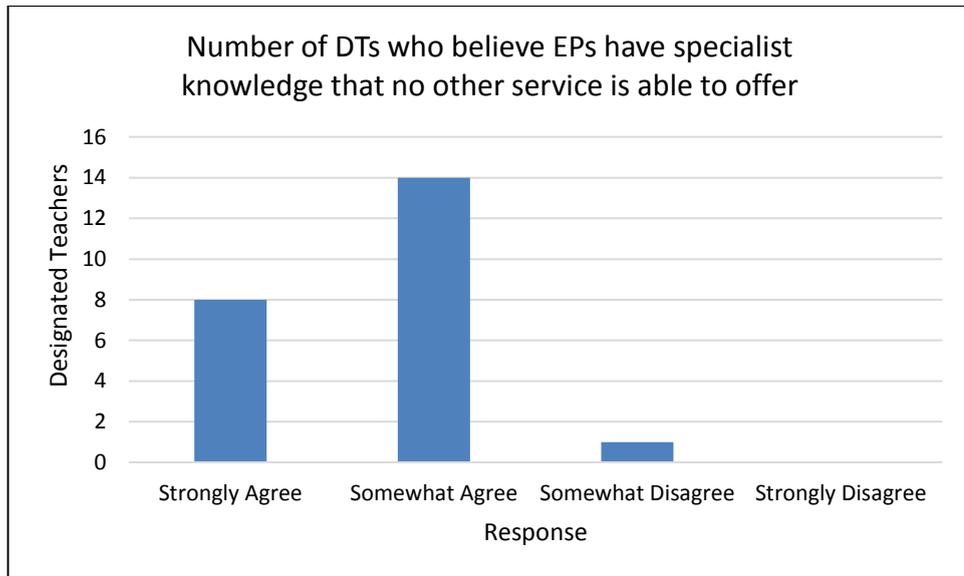


Figure 15 Number of DTs who believe EPs have specialist knowledge.

A key part of an EPs role is supporting others to see situations or problems from a different perspective. Whether or not DTs perceive or have experienced this in practice was explored. 57% reported that they 'somewhat agree' and 43% reported that they 'strongly agree' that EPs are able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective. Thus, 100% of participants believe EPs are, to some extent, able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective (Figure 16).

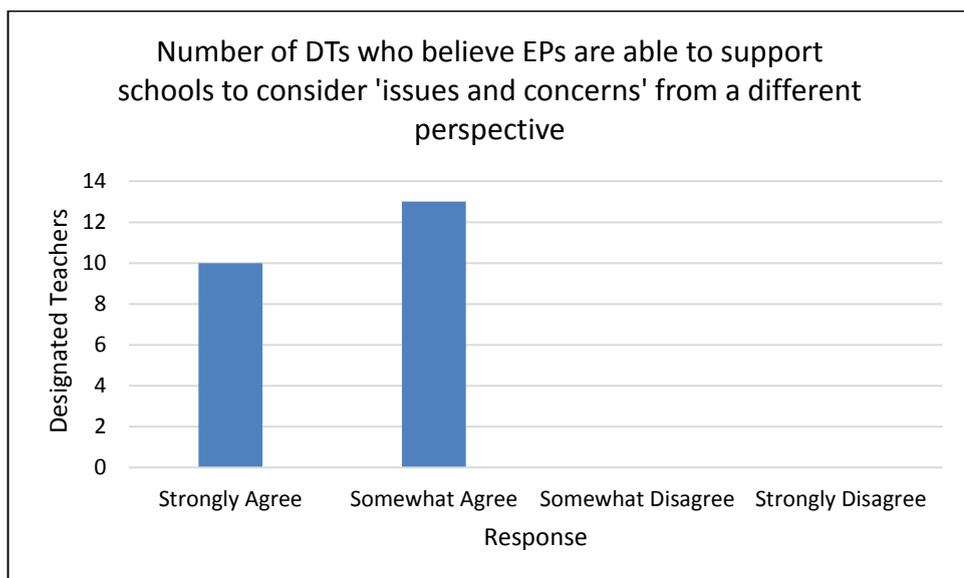


Figure 16 Number of DTs who believe EPs are able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective.

Participants were also offered the opportunity to leave additional comments at the end of the questionnaire if they wished (Table 10). The comments generally reflect participants' experiences of working with EPs. Many of these are positive, however others also reflect some of the challenges some schools experienced when working with EPs.

Table 10 Qualitative comments by DTs within phase one.

Participant	Comment
DT1	<i>EPs have provided the school with a very useful service. One LAC received intervention from the EPS but moved placement before the benefits of the support were observed. As a school we have found the EPs used very supportive but recognise their limited capacity at times.</i>
DT2	<i>X worked very closely with our school to support a LAC child who transferred to our school from another school. She also provided strategies and training for our staff, the strength of this work was that she had a prior knowledge of the child and his difficulties as she had worked with him from a very young age.</i>
DT3	<i>Whilst we do not currently have a LAC, I would feel very happy to contact our EP and seek support from them as required and I would feel very satisfied that it would be a beneficial and helpful service.</i>
DT4	<i>In more recent years our EPs have shown a reluctance to work with students directly. The service prefers to advise us on what to do. In more recent months it has been impossible to access the service of an EP for a student. We have resorted to finding other external agency support!</i>
DT5	<i>In the past EPs were very helpful in working with LAC children who have very many needs. EPs were able to help me access additional funding and make contacts at County level to support the children. EPs had a helpful and wide knowledge base to support me as a LAC designated teacher and also other staff and professionals working in school.</i>
DT6	<i>I do not know who our EP is as there is long term illness and we are using agency.</i>

The data from the questionnaire presents a picture of the population of LAC within the borough and the views of DTs in relation to how EPs have been working in the past year. The data suggests that the majority of DTs have not worked with an EP to support a LAC in the past year. The qualitative comments left at the end of the questionnaire raise issues linked to EP capacity, providing a possible explanation as to why schools have not worked with EPs to support LAC. How this picture fits with the data collected from the SSIs and overall aims of the research will be discussed within the next section and reflected on further in the discussion chapter.

4.2 Qualitative Analysis

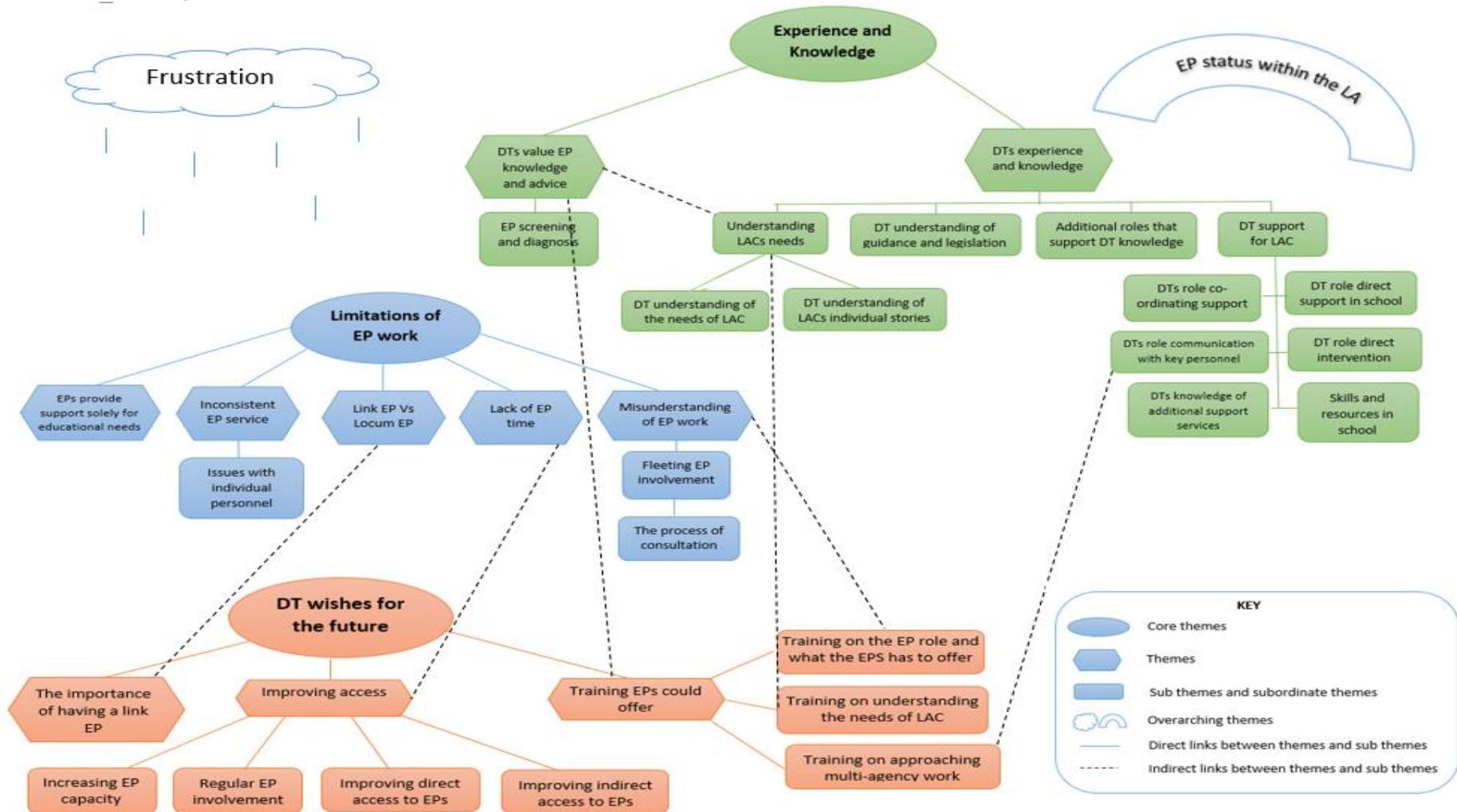
The primary qualitative data was gathered via SSIs with 10 DTs from 9 schools (1 school invited 2 members of staff along who share the responsibility). The purpose of the SSIs was to explore in greater depth DTs perceptions and experiences of working with EPs to support LAC. In order to analyse the interviews the researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2006 and 2013) model of thematic analysis as described within Chapter 3. The analysis was conducted manually as opposed to using a computer programme. This was a conscious decision, as coding by hand ensured greater familiarity with the data set. In addition, Ryan and Bernard (2000) suggest that when researchers analyse small samples in an inductive manner, greater scrutiny-based techniques are employed when searching manually. This approach also enabled the researcher to view the codes together and move them physically into potential groups and themes.

Recording the analysis under the six phase model as described by Braun and Clarke (2006) highlights the decisions made at each stage of the process, for example from coding to grouping extracts and producing themes and sub-themes to producing the final report in phase six. See Appendix 13 for a thorough description of the decisions made at each stage of the six phase model, including examples of transcription (Appendix 11), coding (Appendix 13) and formulation of initial themes (Appendix 16).

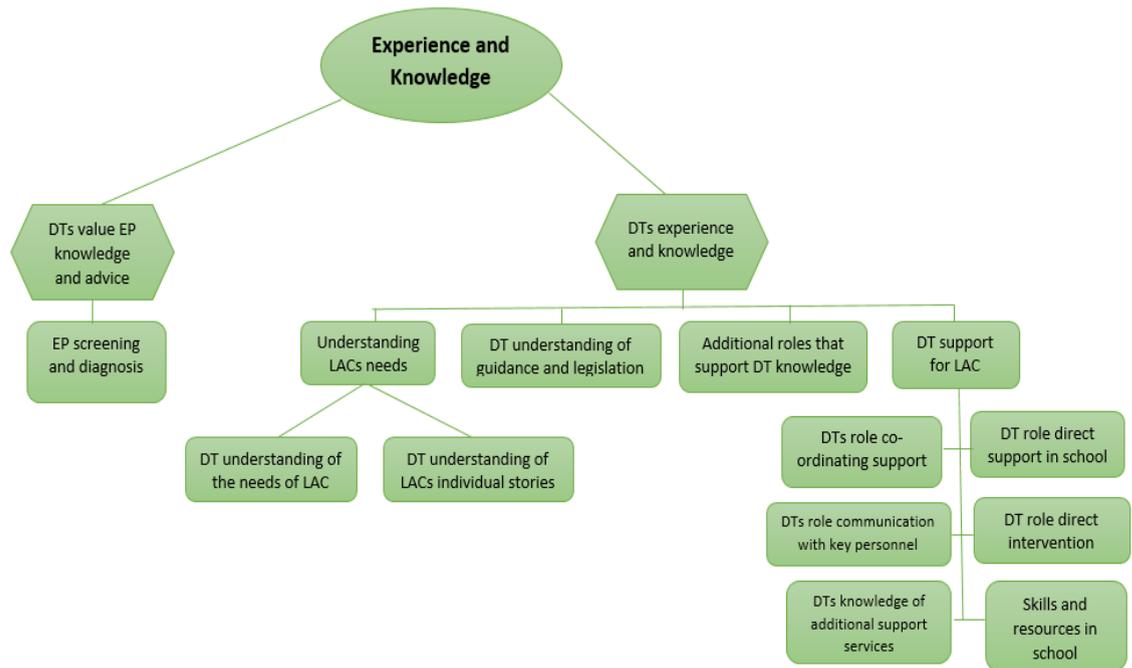
4.2.1 Findings from the Analysis

The following section reports the findings of the thematic analysis. A total of 2 overarching themes, 3 core themes, 10 themes, 15 sub themes and 8 subordinate themes were found. A revised, final thematic map can be found below, illustrating relationships between themes. Direct extracts from the data are used to illustrate interpretation and highlight the narrative of each theme. Each core theme is depicted using a mind map.

Final Thematic Map

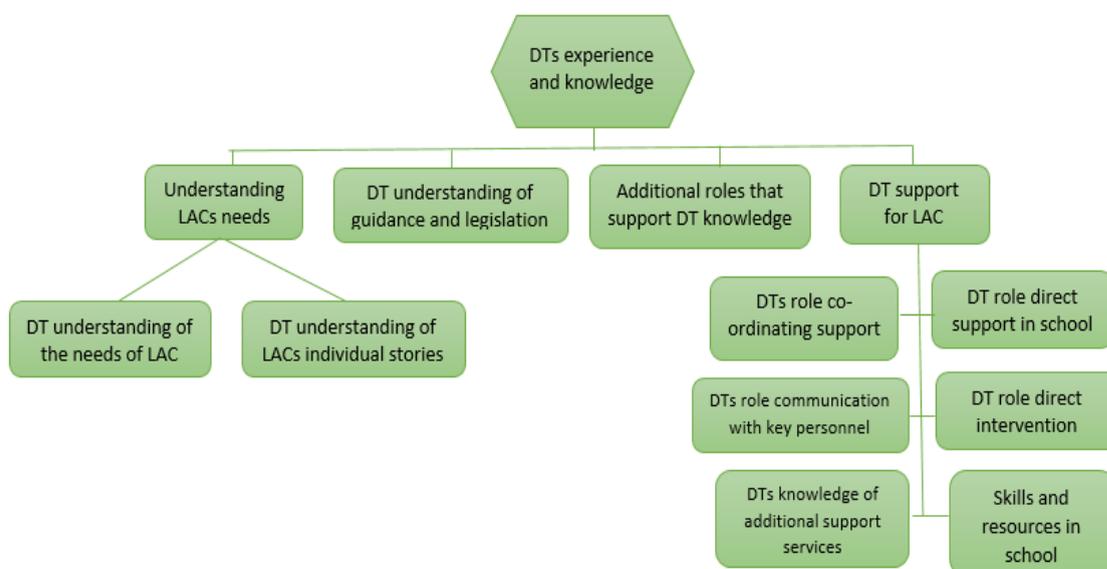


Core Theme 1: Experience and Knowledge



This core theme relates to experience and knowledge, the experience and knowledge of DTs but also the perceived experience and knowledge of EPs. DTs were keen to emphasise their own experience, knowledge and training and regularly drew on this within the interview, even when the focus of the questions posed by the researcher were in relation to the role of EPs. As a result a significant proportion of the data within the first theme relates to the experience and knowledge of DTs as opposed to EPs. Possible reasons for this will be reflected on within the discussion. However, DTs did recognise EPs knowledge and experience and were able to highlight some of the key functions of their role from DTs perspective.

Theme 1: DT Experience and Knowledge



DTs were keen to talk about their role and those who had held the role for longer spoke about their experience in other schools as well.

Sub Theme 1.1: DT Understanding of Guidance and Legislation

DTs demonstrated their knowledge and adherence to legislation linked to their role. For example, all participants mentioned that they either share their role with another member of staff in school or that the role is part of their duties as another key member of staff in school. Most reported that their role was shared due to the requirement that the DT for LAC must be a qualified teacher. Thus pastoral staff who weren't necessarily qualified teachers undertook the day to day role of the DT, but another member of school staff held the official title. Others explained how their role as DT for LAC is part of their responsibility as Child Protection Officer, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) or Head Teacher within school.

School 1: Okay, so well I am the designated teacher... erm and Claire erm is also fully trained as... as a child protection officer. Really, she has the same training as I do but I have to be named with regards to the teacher role. (3-6)

Sub Theme 1.2: Additional Roles that Support DTs Knowledge

Almost all DTs discussed their experience as a DT in a way that emphasised their knowledge. DTs shared their experience specifically linked to their role as DT but also experience and knowledge they had gained through other/additional roles and activities that they undertake, in and outside of school. DTs felt that these wider experiences broadened their knowledge base and supported them to undertake their role as DT for LAC more effectively.

School 2: ... I attend things like the fair access panel and behaviour and attendance strategy groups so you can feed off other people about what other people are doing. (222-223)

School 4: erm and also... we'd... as a family, we'd fostered. (174)

Sub Theme 1.3: DT Support for LAC

A prominent theme that arose was the way in which DTs are supporting LAC in their schools. They referenced the many ways in which they felt that they were providing support to LAC; co-ordinating support by having knowledge of and liaising with outside agencies, having skills and resources available within school and working directly with LAC to deliver interventions.

Subordinate Theme 1.3.1: DTs Role Co-ordinating Support

All participants reported that a key part of their role involves co-ordinating the many streams of support that LAC require. They acknowledged that there are often a multitude of professionals working to support LAC, either directly or indirectly. DTs highlighted that in order to provide effective support for LAC all professionals need to work together. DTs perceived having knowledge of the additional support services available was key in enabling them to co-ordinate support for LAC. They perceived this to be important in order to signpost to, and work effectively with other services.

School 4: it's quite tricky. Erm... So I think you know mostly in just about every instance my role stays the same. It's kind of you know sifting what needs to go in further, what doesn't need to go in further what we need to act on, what we don't need to act on, which of the team is going to be the person that I'm going to allocate that to... (113-116)

Subordinate Theme 1.3.2: DTs Role Communication with Key Personnel

Information sharing was perceived to be a key aspect of the DTs role. They felt that communication between all involved with LAC was necessary to ensure all were fully informed of their needs. DTs described holding meetings, working collaboratively with others and maintaining positive relationships as a way of doing this. DTs made sure that all were aware of what the young person's needs were and made decisions about what the most appropriate intervention might be. For many, an essential source of information and aid in decision making was the young person's social worker.

School 1: It is about primarily making sure of their welfare and their wellbeing... but making sure that everybody communicates because sometimes we [school] get lost. (52-54)

One participant, described how they visited another school to ensure that they were fully informed of a child's needs before they joined them. They highlighted how key information is lost when schools rely on reading a child's file in order to get a picture of them.

School 1: For one pupil Claire actually travelled to... to the other school because you know we don't want to just rely on a folder being sent in the, the mail box. Erm... so you've quite often gone to the other school and erm talked through everything. Because there's always little bits that are lost if you just get a pack on the child... (194-199)

DTs recognised the importance of working collaboratively with social care in order to support LAC. DTs reported that it was helpful to have social workers that would take the lead in meetings that they perceived as challenging.

School 1: well, we would try, I mean I find that if we don't, if we're not communicating effectively with the social care team we tend to be going off at slight tangents really. So we would normally do that in agreement with social care. (409-412)

School 1: but I think, nutting it down to our looked after children, I suppose because social care take the lead... yeah...they are the driving force (555-558)

Subordinate Theme 1.3.3: DTs Knowledge of additional Support Services

Through working collaboratively, DTs acknowledged the relationships that they had built with a variety of professionals, they referenced that there are often a team of professionals in place to support LAC. DTs perceived liaising with and building relationships with a variety of support services as building a bank of resources that they could call on for support and advice.

School 2: So we do quite a lot within school to try and erm ... shape the young person and keep them on track erm... and if we're struggling with the young person in here then we would refer them onto other professionals. So we've built up a bank of professionals that we can turn to. (217-219)

School 1: To say where do we go from... erm we've got quite a good network of people that we can phone at the LA to say... (331-332)

DTs referred to having knowledge of what support services are out there and what support is available as a valuable expertise they bring to their role. They perceived that this helped them to access greater support and target and implement the most appropriate intervention.

School 1: yes, yeah they would and it does help if you know what... what you want as well... so if you go to the panel and you are just asking for

some support you can get some slightly vague responses. Whereas, if you know that you want something in particular it helps. (375-380)

When talking about their knowledge of support services, some participants referenced a hierarchy or tier of services linked to levels of need. DTs mentioned that EPs were often seen as a step in the process towards accessing other support services and meeting thresholds.

School 1: Most of our children that are looked after are with CAMHS... And so they... they've sort of missed out the EP level and gone straight into CAMHS (240-245).

School 1: That might have been many years ago but because now their criteria has changed and their now in CAMHS they supersede you (talking about EPs)... on a sort of pegging level. (270-274)

CAMHS and CHUMS, (Child Bereavement, Trauma and emotional well-being Service), were mentioned by all participants as support services that DTs regularly turn to for advice and direct work with LAC. DTs recognised that these services have relatively high thresholds in order to access support, but most felt that their LAC met these thresholds and that their needs are best met by services such as CHUMS or CAMHS. Thus, they perceived their LAC to be presenting with relatively complex needs.

School 3: ... some of our looked after children at the moment are going to CAMHS, so they have specific days when they go for their play therapy. So it's just about making sure everybody knows what days they are so that a).... they are not going to be in school like first thing and then when they come in just to be a little bit more careful that, you know, be aware that they might obviously have talked about difficult issues at CAMHS so when they come in they might be a little bit disruptive. (24-28)

Subordinate Theme 1.3.4: DTs Role Direct Support in School

As well as co-ordinating the various streams of support LAC receive from outside agencies, such as CAMHS, CHUMS and play therapists as mentioned above. DTs also evidenced their role in supporting LAC within school. For example they perceived a fundamental aspect of their role involved working 1:1 with LAC. This may have been over a longer period of time as a mentor or in the short term during a period of transition. DTs were also keen to share the resources and skills of staff within school and their ability to deliver interventions without calling on outside agencies.

Subordinate Theme 1.3.5: DTs Role Direct Intervention

Where DTs indicated that they held more of a pastoral role in school, as opposed to being the head teacher or SENCO, they suggested that one way in which they work to support LAC involved working with them directly on a 1:1 basis. Some staff pointed out that the reason they were able to do this was because they weren't teachers. The type of support that the DTs described delivering included mentoring or being the key person in school that a young person might turn to.

School 9: sometimes she just touches base to tell you... last week she was in respite so I walked her out to her taxi and all those sorts of things. So it's literally anything and everything really, and because we are not teachers, so we're doing the role but our boss, Sue is the one that holds the official teacher title. (39-42)

School 1: Well they'll nearly all, they'll nearly all get some individual/1:1 input and erm... (144-145)

School 1: So erm... So for her, more that side of things. Erm Claire did some mentoring with her, so some social skills work didn't you - and about making good friendships bonds and things. (103-105)

Subordinate Theme 1.3.6: Skills and Resources in School

As well as evidencing their own individual knowledge and experience, DTs were also keen to emphasise the skills and knowledge of staff and the resources already available in schools to support LAC.

School 4: ... Like I said we've got play therapists we've got behaviour support team, we've got safeguarding officer, we've got pre-schools and children's centres on site. But all that we've got missing really is a social worker and an EP. (662-665)

School 3: ...So Julie has been trained in life story work so she can deliver that to two of our looked after children, which will be really good. Erm, she also does dinosaur schools which is a social and emotional intervention for key stage one children, so the younger ones ... and that's a 12 week programme... they go twice a week for an hour and they learn social and emotional skills. Erm... Like sharing, turn taking, anger management... all that and it's through dinosaurs... (316-321)

Sub Theme 1.4: Understanding LACs Needs

This sub theme highlights the importance of understanding the needs of LAC. All of the DTs who participated within the study had LAC on roll within their school. Numbers ranged from 1-7. In relation to sub theme 1.1: DTs understanding of guidance and legislation, legislation highlights that a key aspect of the role of a DT is to ensure that they have a solid understanding of the LAC in their school. This theme indicates that all participants have a sound knowledge of both the general issues often associated with being looked after and the personal stories and complex backgrounds that individual LAC present with.

Subordinate Theme 1.4.1: DT Understanding of the Needs of LAC

DTs occasionally referred to LAC as a homogenous group, referencing issues that affect many LAC, such as their entrenched needs, vulnerability and lack of

stability. This is important to mention as it emphasises potential areas where EPs could have a possible role in supporting LAC and schools.

DTs referred to the idea that some LAC needs are often embedded. They acknowledged how they may have been subject to complex child protection plans for some time before becoming looked after.

School 1: ... particularly with the looked after child, you know there's maybe 10... well by the time they've got here 10 years of possibly embedded issues before that so... (471-472)

School 1: ...because LAC have a whole different ream of issues and again it goes back to like Sam said – when they're in middle school they've probably had 10 years of (talking about Child Protection procedures)... Because children don't come into care very quickly. It's even less now, so they might have had four or five years... of real child protection plans rolling and rolling and rolling. (568-575)

DTs also highlighted the vulnerable position of some LAC. This included the positions that LAC may put themselves in and the ways in which schools need to support them.

School 1: So they can put themselves in quite vulnerable positions...Umm one of our children will straight away say I'm looked after... So it's not used as a weapon, but then of course that then has a whole different aspect, because then everybody knows and then, they then can't gage and monitor why everybody knows their situation. (113-121)

Consistency was perceived by DTs as an important factor in enabling LAC to function within school (i.e. being settled at home and at school). DTs described school as being the one place that stays the same for some LAC.

School 1: School tends to be the one place that's consistent with everything else going on. Erm... We've got one particular child who's had

two placements within an 18 month-2 year stretch, but here has been the solid. (40-43)

School 1: so you know trying to settle that pupil who knows that they're not staying with you is sometimes more of a challenge than ones that know they're here for a good run. (176-178)

School 7: she's very attached to her foster family. Although she still pines for her natural parents and she knows that it's temporary so is very unsettled and she worries about what's going to happen to her understandably. (44-46)

Although teachers recognised that LAC are a vulnerable group who often present with a high level of need, they also acknowledged that each child is different and acknowledged the importance of not over generalising their needs.

School 1: Ye I think most children, it's not, I don't want to generalise it, but children that are looked after don't have that erm... awareness of what safe friends are. (106-108)

School 6: ok well they're a little bit of an exception to the rule but they... but I think the role of the EP impacts on this in a slightly different way because each case is slightly different. So these particular two LAC children are high ability, which buffs the national trend. (13-15)

Subordinate Theme 1.4.2: DT Understanding of LACs Individual Stories

As mentioned above, as well as recognising the wider issues and challenges that may affect many LAC, throughout the interviews, all participants referenced individual LAC on roll within their school. They recalled details on their individual histories and backgrounds. Some described their 'story' of how they came to be looked after and the impact their background has on their needs.

School 3: I think it's just about making sure you have transition with their previous school, so discussing with the previous school how they're getting

on, getting their levels, finding out what interventions they're already on, and seeing if we can replicate that if they were appropriate. Mainly through the social worker really, just making sure that the social worker came in, met with us and gave us their broad history of their backgrounds so that we knew where they'd come from, why they were taken into care and what issues they might have. (68-73)

School 6: The family have been split up and are fostered in separate parts, with the two girls that we have being fostered very successfully, so the family aren't together as a unit. From past experience of that, that devastates some families. In my previous role I saw a family absolutely decimated through the death of their mother, the incapacity of the father to look after them and four really really close kids in the family unit went in four different foster homes. Which was just devastating on their psyche. In this case it's actually a benefit because one of the children in the family unit as it was – mums a heroin addict etc. etc... Extremely violent, very disturbed, controlled the family, and was violent towards the two girls. (15-22)

Others highlighted the importance of knowing and keeping up to date with the ever changing stories and personal circumstances of LAC in order to make appropriate adjustments for them within school.

School 5: ... I think what takes far more, what's time consuming is keeping on top of the day to day kind of erm... state of play really, but you know one of them is particularly vulnerable. I think depending on what's happened the night before or that morning, depends on how they are in school.

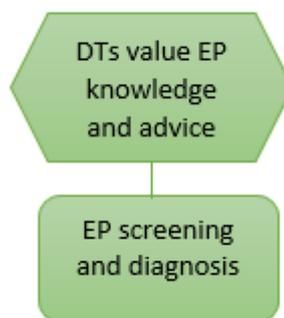
R: Okay, so keeping up with the changes.

School 5: so that... keeping up with that, keeping on top of that and informing those that need to know and making them aware that in certain lessons this is going to perhaps impact ... on their lesson. Looking at the

time table and... sort of adjusting, making the adjustments as and when is needed. (43-50)

In summary, DTs demonstrated significant knowledge of their role and the factors they feel enable them to undertake their role successfully. These include knowledge of legislation, LAC needs, additional support services and the ability to provide direct 1:1 support and intervention.

Theme 2: DTs Value EP Knowledge and Advice



This theme relates directly to DTs understanding of the EP role and the usefulness or importance that DTs placed on the role of the EP and input from the EPS. It considers how DTs described the EP role based on their experience of working with EPs and aspects of the role that schools value most.

Participants demonstrated an awareness of some of the key features of EPs day to day role such as; consultation, observation and assessment.

School 2: Having a consultation to say... do you know a recent one was erm... a student with erm... sexual thoughts and actions, I referred to the EP to try and get some support and advice for parents and for school in how to deal with him. (78-80)

School 7: ... It's really thorough. She does an observation, she talked to parents and class teacher... (169-170)

School 3: she came in to see him and spent sort of half a day with them (pupil and teachers) and did some cognitive testing. (137-144)

As well as describing the day to day work that EPs engage in, some of the broader areas of work, such as research, were also acknowledged by DTs (even though this work didn't happen).

School 2: erm... They've offered me a researcher to come in and do a study on the student centre for the last two years but that's not happened... So that would be really interesting to see how the student centre... because it's very difficult to prove that the student centre makes a difference to the rest of the school... (459-466)

Some DTs described EPs knowledge and advice as something they value.

School 1: And to be fair our EP has a lot of knowledge (344)

School 1: the advice that we've always been given has always been good. (360-361)

Others described their role in sharing and supporting good practice, providing strategies and advice to support children's learning within the classroom.

School 7: But what we're looking for are strategies we might not have thought of... So if there's something else, because they have a few of... erm... a wider number of children who may have similar difficulties and strategies that work. Because each time it could be a new thing for us....You know, we've got a child with Prada Willy Syndrome. Well I've never had a child to deal with like that before, so she (the EP) may know other children that have strategies that work that we can use with him. (373-381)

Others referred to the style and the ways in which EPs practice as something they find helpful.

School 1: and the young person that you were talking about had very much, she (the EP) was involved in meetings, and she was very clear and decisive about what was going on with that child. (735-738)

Sub Theme 2.1 EP Screening and Diagnosis

Many DTs referred to assessment as a key part of the EP role. From requiring an assessment in order to access services to requesting assessment for 'screening' purposes in order to support them to identify young people's needs (this will be discussed further in 'Theme 3: EPs Provide Support Solely for Educational Needs').

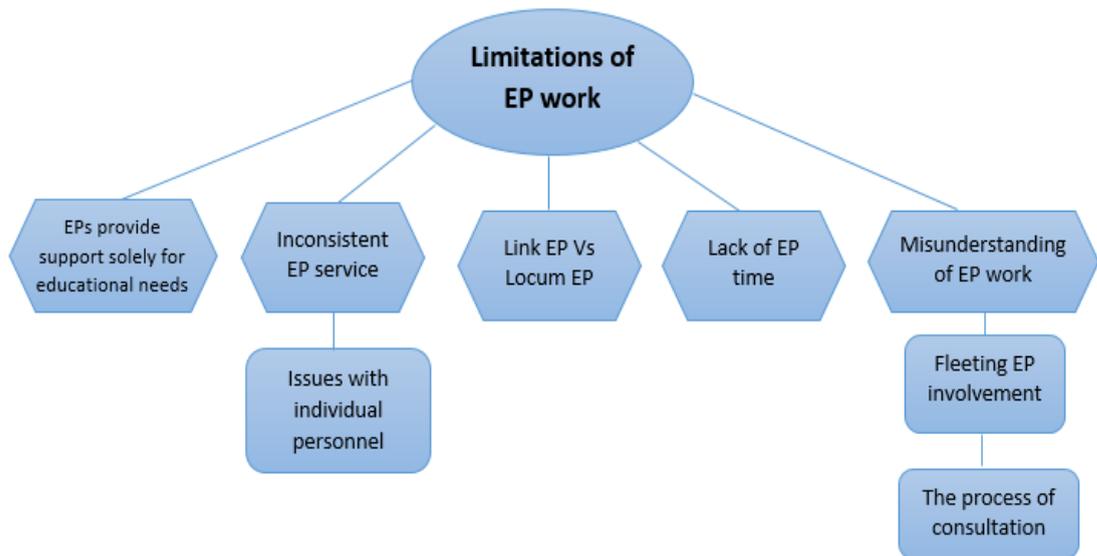
School 1: but yes, if they felt that we haven't used the EP and we should have done they will just say so. It, it might be to recommend some screening for something or an assessment so ye... (382-384)

R: Ok, so parents requested to rule out any underlying learning difficulties rather than a lack of early experiences...?

School 7: Yes, yes... because she said I tell her the same things over and over again and we go through systems every day.... And every day I say don't stand on the toilet seat to brush your teeth and every day she does it. She wanted to rule out that there was a learning or developmental difficulty. (207-209)

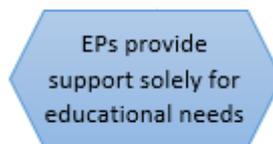
In summary, DTs are aware of some of the key functions of EPs work and value their role with regards to screening and assessment and their ability to offer strategies and advice.

Core Theme 2: Limitations of EP Work



DTs demonstrated their knowledge of the ways in which EPs work, as discussed in Theme 2: DTs Value EP Knowledge and Advice. However they also pointed out a number of challenges and limitations when working with EPs, this core theme highlights the limitations as perceived by DTs of working with EPs to support LAC. The limitations discussed also reflect some of the challenges of working with LA based services in the present context.

Theme 3: EPs Provide Support Solely for Educational Needs



A prominent theme, across all participants was the notion that EPs work is limited to supporting children who are experiencing difficulties with their learning. DTs perceived EPs to have a role in supporting them to identify or rule out learning needs, as identified within 'Sub Theme 2.1 EP Screening and Diagnosis'. They found this particularly useful if they were seeking evidence in order to contribute towards accessing further support services such as CAMHS or statutory

assessment, or if they are looking to confirm their own thoughts on a child's needs.

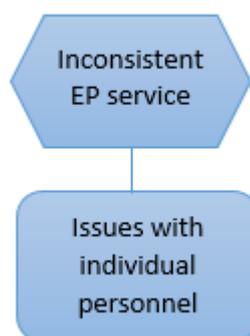
School 3: ...broadly we just go to them (EPs) for educational needs really (109)

School 8: So we could be saying... you know we want to identify these needs and everything else, but you know it needs that reassurance as well as that qualified judgement coming from somebody else as well as school. Parents need to hear that – they need to hear another professional saying, you know actually this is the need of your child, it's not just school saying this. Erm... and that really supports us then in meeting the needs of the child. (224-228)

Many schools perceived EPs as having a solely academic and learning focus. This is considered to be a limitation as EPs are also in a position to help schools consider wider factors that influence learning, such as a child's emotional well-being. EPs were described as identifying barriers to learning or sharing good practice to support children within the classroom. DTs rarely reported that EPs might consider wider social and emotional barriers and possible mental health difficulties. This links with 'Subordinate Theme 1.3.3: DTs Knowledge of additional Support Services', where DTs perceived other services such as CAMHS supporting possibly more complex, emotional and mental health needs.

School 3: so I suppose you see it sort of boxes don't you. If you've got a learning need you go to the EP, if it's a social and emotional need you go to CAMHS, if it's bereavement you go to chums, if it was like autistic you go to the autism advisory teacher - so I suppose we don't see them as working in conjunction we see them as working quite separately from each other...according to the child's need... but then there's always times when obviously if the child does have a learning need, there might be entwined in that, the social emotional needs. But I think when the EP comes in then they just concentrate on the learning rather than social and emotional. (237-244)

Theme 4: Inconsistent EP Service



A number of DTs described the variation in service they received between different personnel within the EPS. DTs also placed value on having a named EP to turn to and the importance of building positive working relationships.

Sub Theme 4.1: Issues with Individual Personnel

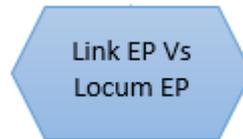
DT perceived individual personnel to have an impact on how schools worked with services and the impact they had on improving outcomes for young people. Thus highlighting the importance of having positive working relationships (as discussed within Subordinate Theme 1.3.2: DTs Role Communication with Key Personnel). This was not isolated to the work of EPs, schools also highlighted that personnel within social work and VS teams also had an impact on outcomes for LAC. DTs indicated that where they perceived they had received a good service and experienced positive working relationships, they saw helpful outcomes for LAC. They recognised times where their experiences had not been as positive and linked this to the individual staff they were working with.

School 4: generally our work with psychology? I think.... Mixed. And it's really hard to answer that question without picking out the individual experiences with individual psychologists. I think we've had some very productive relationships with EPs that have really helped, with one family in particular I can think of when the EP was absolutely crucial. (357-361)

School 2: So the individual child – when we've had the individual child, depending on who the EP is you will get anything from worthless to

*excellent. So there's a massive range depending on the person you get.
Erm... (415-417)*

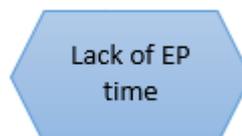
Theme 5: Link EP Vs Locum EP



Despite perceived challenges with individual personnel, DTs shared that they value having a link EP, a designated named person that they can call on when they need support. This supports the information in phase 1 where 74% of DTs reported that they know who their schools EP is. However, challenges also arose for DTs where the LA had made attempts to compensate for the limited capacity by employing locum EPs (as also raised in the qualitative comments within phase 1).

School 3: so, erm, but it's been quite patchy in the past. Because they didn't really have the capacity to be able to give us a dedicated educational psychologist and the one that we had before our current one was the locum so she erm... worked on certain days and it was quite difficult to get hold of her. (104-107)

Theme 6: Lack of EP time



DTs were keen to raise the limited capacity of EPs within the team. General issues of capacity and limited access with regard to the team's model of service delivery (time allocation) were discussed.

School 8: I think time was the biggest issue..., because you'd have teachers on the chalk face dealing with children, parents and families. You know wanting support - yesterday! And we'd be saying well we've got this

many visits allocated from the EP during the course of the year, we've got to prioritise. The child in your class is not as much of a priority to the school... as other children across the school. But to them it's their number 1 priority and it's that understanding. So capacity of the EP was an issue as well. Although we were a school that was entitled to far more support because of our children... but... (162-168)

Reference was also made to the national and local context, with regard to reduced funding and the impact this has had on access to services and service capacity, particularly for EPs within the borough, and how this has filtered down to schools.

School 1: I suppose it's down to funding, isn't it? It's about getting... your service has been slashed so much but actually that, that has an impact on schools and the advice that we've always been given has always been good (628-631)

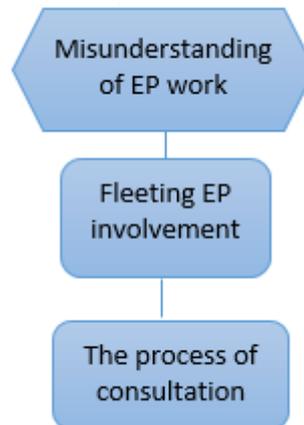
A number of DTs spoke of alternative ways to accessing EP support. Some schools indicated that they commission private EPs to supplement the shortfall they perceived from LA EPS. Others indicated that they were not accessing their allocation of LA EP support at all and all of the support they receive comes from private EPs. The implication is that many felt they had to go down this route as they felt that they weren't getting the service they required from the LA EPS. The introduction of academies and free schools has given schools the freedom to use their budgets to commission their own EP.

School 4: ...the expertise within the LA isn't there so I think schools are finding their own solutions. (270-271)

School 3: yeah because we've got a private educational psychologist that we use to supplement the service that the local authority provided... (168-169)

School 8: erm right well now... I have a much better understanding (talking about understanding of the EP role). We've erm... we actually employed an external educational psychologist... (144-145)

Theme 7: Misunderstanding of EP Work



DTs spoke about their experiences of working with EPs. Generally EPs worked with schools at the individual child level, demonstrated by DTs rarely speaking of schools involvement at an organisational or multi agency level. The way in which EPs work on a day to day basis (not necessarily linked specifically to practice with LAC) also created some tension with schools. The service model of delivery within the borough is based on a consultation approach. DTs didn't appear to value or understand this way of working. They seemed to expect EPs to observe young people, undertake assessments and engage in direct work with them. It seems likely that much of the frustration around the way in which EPs are practicing is linked to differing expectations between clients and EPs.

Sub Theme 7.1: Fleeting EP involvement

However, even in schools where a more direct approach was taking place, issues still arose. For example, where EPs were using observation as part of their practice in order to gain a better understanding of the child, schools felt that the way in which the child behaved on that day did not truly reflect how they behave on a regular basis. Therefore, schools experienced frustration when the EP report reflected a positive observation and the snap shot of the child they had seen on that day. Thus, DTs perceived EPs to have a limited knowledge and understanding of LAC due to only working with them for a limited period of time.

School 4: ... But I think that does kind of highlight some of the difficulties that can come up when working with psychologists. That erm... their ... they have the cold face as it were and they... you know... the big thing teachers always say is - well they don't misbehave when the EP comes in, they do as their told when the EP comes in. (400-402)

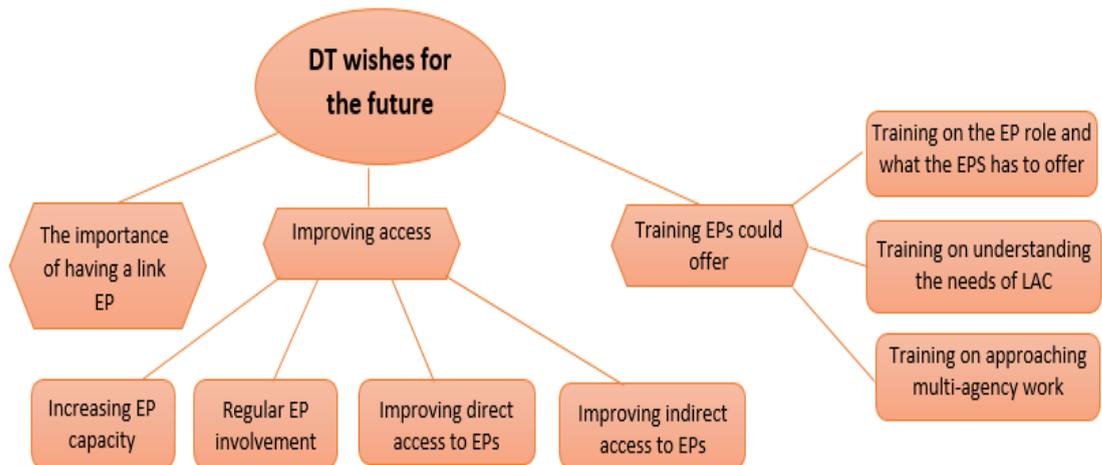
School 1: but I think really, erm, you almost want the EP to have the facility to be a fly on the wall over a more regular period to build up the assessment. Because I do worry sometimes, or I'm amazed that you can make such an informed judgement as an EP in such a short observation time really. And I know you take in a lot of history and evidence from the school... (660-665).

Sub Theme 7.2: The Process of Consultation

School appeared to view consultation as a way of working that didn't give them what they needed or wanted. One DT summarised the process as a chat, where he comes up with all the ideas and then he does all the work. Thus, presenting a level of frustration around the way in which EPs are practicing due to differing expectations between clients and EPs, this will be discussed further later in the chapter.

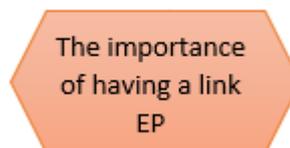
School 2: it's that consultation period that I don't... Emma tried to explain it but I don't think Some people want the EP to go in and test andgive solutions. We're not getting the solutions - in the fact that we're having to do the work. That's what I...my perception is anyway. (104-106)

Core Theme 3: DT Wishes for the Future



All DTs were able to consider how they would like to see the EPS working in the future. This core theme takes into account some of the challenges they experienced and how they would like to work with EPs and the service they hope to receive in the future. This included further training and greater access to EPs.

Theme 8: The Importance of Having a Link EP



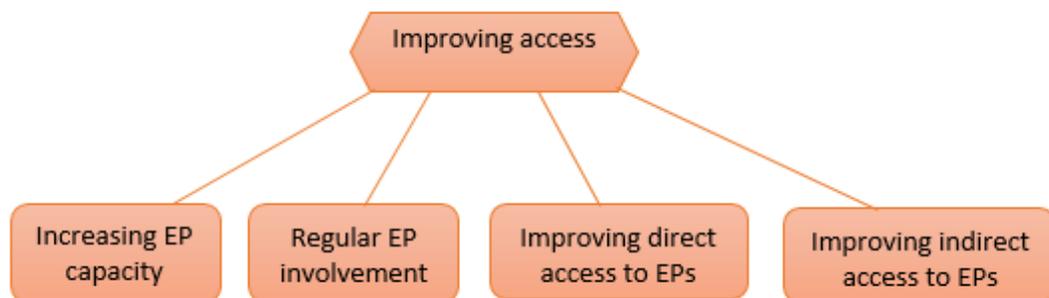
Having a link/named EP that schools can seek support from was an aspect of EP work that schools valued and became frustrated with when that service was not available (as described within Theme 5: Link EP Vs Locum EP). They described having a named person that they can call on when they get stuck as helping them to feel less anxious in their role. This fits with the idea that as part of their role they are building a bank of resources and creating a network of professionals that they can turn to (as described within Subordinate Theme 1.3.3: DTs Knowledge of additional Support Services).

School 7: It concerns me about the budgets for EPs. She (the EP) was worried that she wouldn't be able to come in for children who were non statement children on request... that was really worrying – who do we call

then when you're having a real issue with a child who do you ask to come in and just assess if the EPs can't come. So it worries me that that service might not be as good as it is now (406-409)

School 3: Now we've got our designated Ed psych so it's a bit easier to know who to go to and I can just e-mail him directly to set up meetings and stuff (361-363).

Theme 9: Improving Access



A number of DTs experienced limited EP capacity as one of the main barriers to accessing the service. This was then reflected as something they would like to improve in the future. In addition other challenges, also raised earlier, such as not having a 'link EP' or named person to turn to for advice and limited EP involvement over time were also reflected as areas DTs would like to change or improve in the future.

Sub Theme 9.1: Increasing EP Capacity

Many DTs indicated that they value EP involvement as discussed previously, their only frustration was the limited access to EPs and the limited capacity of EPs to undertake the work schools require (as described within Theme 6: Lack of EP time). Moving forward, DTs would like more time and greater access to EPs, working in a similar way as they are now.

School 1: I've got one yeah - because of the reduction in services generally it's probably going to be fairly standard answer that I will expect you will hear. Most colleagues that I talk to about EPs and so on is that they like the way generally that they work with schools but they wish that they had

more, more scope to work with more pupils because it really does feel like, we can't choose who, who walks through the door in year five. (492-498)

School 1: I'm not asking them to work harder or do something better as a group of individuals but I'm sure they must get frustrated that they don't have the time to allocate more hours to children. (513-515)

Sub Theme 9.2: Regular EP Involvement

As well as the EP being consistent, DTs also indicated that in the future they would value more regular input from EPs. This links with 'Sub Theme 7.1: Fleeting EP involvement', where DTs explained the challenges of EPs only seeing a child once. This may be delivered in the form of a monitoring role or regular follow up and contact with young people and their families. Some schools suggested that EPs should be involved with all LAC regardless of need and concerns at the time. They suggested that EPs would be well placed to hold that overview of the child's needs and then step in if need be.

School 3: because I think that's what we find quite difficult, is that EPs come in and they do their report and then that's there. But it would be nice to know that you have a bit of follow-up work just to see you know whether those recommendations were implemented correctly. (213-215)

School 9: ummm... well I actually think potentially for all LAC there should be ed psych involvement in some way.

R: as a matter of instance?

School 9: Yes, ye I do.

R: ok that's useful

School 9: even if it's just that their on their radar and have knowledge of them in case we hit problems. Or if indeed it's a young person that they need to start working with straight away. (267-273)

School 9: ...but I almost feel they should just be allocated an ed psych and that ed psych is someone that knows of them and just steps in if they're needed to look at things further. It may be some of them are absolutely fine and as long as they're aware of them and tracking them and how their doing... (278-281)

Sub Theme 9.3: Improving Direct Access to EPs

Linked to 'Theme 6: Lack of EP time' and 'Sub Theme 7.1: Fleeting EP involvement', DTs would like greater access to EPs and regular input over time. However, they also requested that this be direct, face to face input with LAC, school staff and families. As opposed to an indirect approach such as consultation or a drop in.

School 2: erm... and I'm, I'm no psychologist so I don't understand the background and everything else but that, I want them to meet the child and meet the parents and then meet the staff and then obviously we fill in the forms so they've got our concerns already there and you know... and give us something meaty – give us something that we can move forward as a change. (130-133)

Sub Theme 9.4: Improving Indirect Access to EPs

As well as emphasising a need for more EP time within their day to day role, many of the DTs highlighted the need for greater access to EPs on a more ad hoc/informal basis. Several participants suggested that one way of doing this may be through an email or telephone access line to EPs.

School 2: erm.... It was always helpful erm... emailing Emma. So having a link person that you could email and get a response, and then talk about the response. Like with Bob you get a response that doesn't eat into your time. But you could get advice without having to put in a referral. I could email him or speak to him on the phone and say look, we've got this problem what shall we do. Which is a bit like the drop in...

School 2: It's quicker and instant and even if it's you know, somebody in the office, it doesn't have to be the, the same person. It could be the same person for all the schools, but just an advice line as it were for schools. (487- 496)

Theme 10: Training EPs Could Offer



Sub Theme 10.1: Training on the EP Role and what the EPS has to offer

The interview process prompted DTs to reflect on their knowledge and understanding of EPs and the service the team offers. As described within 'Theme 7: Misunderstanding of EP Work', there was a level of misunderstanding and/or differing expectations in relation to what EPs do. Thus, in the future, DTs requested greater clarity and knowledge on what EPs do and training on what the EPS has to offer in order to improve outcomes for LAC and ensure that schools are making the most of the service. Given the significant changes within the team and within the LA, schools would benefit from a clear picture of the service available to them.

School 2: I don't know.... Training on, on how to use an EP I think would be effective. But that's a training need. (540-541)

School 2: I think the new SENCO training course when people do that there should be a module on the EP service in there. Because if SENCO's are to use an EP properly and effectively then you should know more about it and we probably don't. (165-167)

Sub Theme 10.2: Training on Understanding the Needs of LAC

DTs not only identified a need for training on the role of the EP and the service the team offers, but also on other areas that may help to improve outcomes for LAC. DTs demonstrated their understanding of the wider needs of LAC as well as their individual needs (as described in 'Sub Theme 1.4: Understanding LACs Needs'). Despite this DTs still suggested that EPs would be well placed to offer further training on the needs of LAC, such as the common challenges they face and the best ways to support LAC in school.

School 3: yeah maybe, they could do like in staff training just to raise staff awareness of looked after children. I mean I obviously do it on an individual basis to raise awareness for our specific looked after children but it might be nice if they could come in and go into detail about the difficulties that looked after children might have and how you can cater for them. I mean I do that but I'm not an expert... or a LAC EP, it might be nice to have sort of outside professionals to come in and deliver training: you know what it is to be looked after children and the difficulties that they can encounter. (271-277)

Sub Theme 10.3: Training on Approaching Multi-Agency Work

DTs recognised the need to work closely with teams such as social care and the importance of information sharing (as described in 'Subordinate Theme 1.3.1: DTs Role Co-ordinating Support and Subordinate Theme 1.3.2: DTs Role Communication with Key Personnel'). DTs also recognised the value of being aware of the personal stories of how young people came to be 'looked after'. Furthermore, one DT suggested that EPs would be well placed to train and support staff in schools in relation to the best way to approach complex multi-agency meetings. Thinking about how to approach and prepare for such meetings, how to cope with being party to sensitive and uncomfortable information and how to deal with conflicts that may arise within school following tense meetings with parents and social care.

School 4: and managing that in terms of picking out from those meetings what exactly we need to do, what part we need to play, what I need to take on board and what I actually need to walk out of the room and forget. (109-111)

School 4: and I think that, that whole thing in terms of multiagency working is not really picked up on and I think you know again you're doing all of that kind of being in and... I think it does apply to... particularly where we've taken children who've been part of the process that has happened (talking about child protection). Where children have actually been removed, when your there and you're in it and those parents are coming to you and then suddenly.... Because it usually happens that... the time someone can actually remove – where do they actually remove from, they usually remove them from school. (201-206)

Overarching Theme 1: EP Status within the LA



Also discussed, by DTs was the idea that EPs are influenced by the LA. Thus, in addition to considering what DTs value about EP work (as highlighted in Theme 2: DTs Value EP Knowledge and Advice), DTs also perceived that EPs were valued by others, the LA in particular. They discussed the requirement for EP involvement when applying for a statement, the weight the LA place on EP evidence and reports and the idea that schools are often signposted to EPs by various panels, chaired by LA staff. The requirement for EP involvement within the statutory assessment process wasn't necessarily viewed positively by schools, but they recognised that EPs are part of that process and that it generally takes up a considerable proportion of their time.

School 1: and occasionally they (the panel) have gone back and said right have you used your EP yet (346)

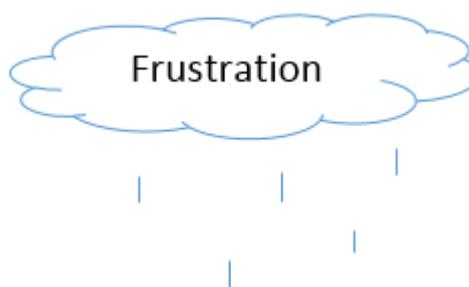
School 4: When we're calling on educational psychologists in the normal everydayness of the school, 99% of the time it will be for children we need statements for (430-432)

School 7: And also, with children that we do need to request statutory assessment for, if it (the report) backs up what we're saying that's really helpful. Because the panel tend to put a lot of store by the EP reports. (399-400)

Contrary to the idea that EPs are valued as part of the LA, there was also a sense that they are becoming less valued within the LA. This idea stems from the current picture both nationally and locally, that the EP service has been reduced and there isn't enough capacity to meet demand within the service (as previously discussed) which links with Theme 6: Lack of EP time. This also links in with the next overarching theme, 'Overarching Theme 2: Frustration.

School 4: The service that we've had has been far less than we would have liked it to have been... but is that an EPs problem, I'm not convinced that it is. I think it's a more global, political problem... (368-371)

Overarching Theme 2: Frustration



Throughout all the interviews and previous themes there were feelings of frustration expressed by DTs. Generally tension and frustration was linked to the issues discussed above; limited access to the EPS and EP capacity, limitations of the day to day work of EPs (i.e. consultation, observation and assessment, the referral process and reports etc.) and the advice and strategies provided by EPs. As previously mentioned, in my view, many of the tensions and frustrations expressed by DTs regarding the EP role stem from a misunderstanding of the way in which EPs work. Some DTs (on self-reflection) came to the conclusion

that a lack of information on what the EPS offers has impacted on their perception of EPs and the way in which they access the service. However, this is also linked to differing expectations between clients and EPs.

School 4: and you have that planning meeting and again you know that's part of the frustration. You get 15 hours and the first 2 are a planning meeting. Ye that's helpful – thanks – because we'll have another one next year with another psychologist to go through the same things. We don't actually need a planning meeting, we already have a plan, we know what our plan is (laughing). (703-706)

Many of the tensions and frustrations expressed by DTs regarding the EP role arose from confusion or a lack of information regarding the way in which EPs work. DTs perception of EPs and the way in which they access the service depended on their understanding and experience of working with EPs. However, this is also linked to differing expectations between DTs and EPs.

School 2: The one thing I was going to say, was erm... the services available for LAC through the EP service erm... is never broadcast. So if we're going to refer... the last three of four years in BB, the EP service in BB...was more about discussion and meeting... (47-50)

School 2: It's not clear. I don't think it's ever been made clear. You know, a leaflet you can read, I don't think you can get the full... (162-163)

4.3 Chapter 4 Summary

The aim of the research was to explore how EPs are working at the individual, school and multi-agency level and consider how DTs would like to work with EPs in the future. It was noted that despite the researcher's focus on the role of the EP, DTs were keen to talk about their own role, responsibilities and the skills and resources within school. Thus a significant proportion of the findings focus on the role of the DT in relation to LAC, reasons for this will be reflected on within the next chapter.

In summary, it can be said that DTs demonstrated a sound understanding of their role and the ways in which they are working to supporting LAC. DTs demonstrated that they are working at different levels to provide support for LAC by providing individual support and working with multiple agencies to co-ordinate support. DTs demonstrated their understanding of the wider needs affecting LAC, but also the individual and personal circumstances surrounding the LAC within their school.

DTs recognised the knowledge of EPs and placed some value in their practice and the way in which they work. However, they also highlighted several limitations when working with EPs. Their comments suggest a misunderstanding around the way in which EPs work, or differing expectations between schools and EPs regarding how EPs work and the work schools require. DTs explained that they tend to call on EPs when they have concerns regarding children's learning and they are inclined to think of other services in order to address children's wider social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Some of the challenges they faced when working with EPs included the limited capacity of the team and receiving an inconsistent service. DTs were able to reflect on these challenges and come up with useful ways to overcome them in the future. They would like to see greater access to EPs including having a named/link EP to their school, regular input over time and input on a direct/face to face basis, as well as on an ad hoc informal basis. DTs also perceived EPs to be well placed to help them address some of the challenges they encounter when working with LAC; having a greater understanding of what EPs do and how they can support LAC, training on the general needs of LAC and how to work effectively with the multiple agencies involved with LAC.

Further reflection on the findings and how they link with the overall research aims and questions will be discussed within the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This chapter will discuss the findings presented in Chapter 4 in more depth and in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter 3. The findings will be considered in relation to how they complement, differ from or contribute towards the current knowledge base as presented within Chapter 2. The researcher will reflect on the relevance of these findings within the context in which the research took place, nationally, and in relation to the profession of Educational Psychology. This chapter will also evaluate the methods used, taking into account any limitations and the impact on the validity of the findings, followed by implications for future research. As discussed within the methodology and findings chapters, the chosen methods of data collection and analysis require a level of reflexivity on the part of the researcher. Self-reflection throughout the study will be outlined, along with aspects of personal learning. This chapter will conclude with a summary of what has been learnt.

5.1 Commentary on Findings

5.1.1 Research Question One

What aspects of DTs role do they consider to be important?

As briefly discussed within Chapter 4 DTs were keen to talk about their role, their responsibilities, how they carry these out within their school and the other professionals they work with in order to undertake this role. From the perspective of the researcher, this question aimed to set the context of the study and explore how DTs perceive their role: considering how they access the support of others, assessing whether or not theirs is a role they value and how they have interpreted guidelines and legislation to support LAC. Interestingly, the researcher found that even though the few questions regarding the DT role were asked at the beginning of the interviews, DTs continued to revert back to talking about their role, and in particular their knowledge and experiences of supporting LAC. Thus, a core theme that arose was linked to 'Experience and Knowledge', in particular that of DTs themselves as opposed to EPs (as highlighted in Chapter 4, Core Theme 1: Experience and Knowledge).

The findings highlight that the DT role is one that schools view as important and all DTs were keen to talk about the numerous duties they undertake towards supporting LAC. All DTs highlighted their knowledge of statutory guidance and legislation and made reference to how they were implementing this within their school. This demonstrated links between their role in practice and legislation pertaining to their role and the support LAC are entitled to (DfCSF, 2009, 2010a and 2010b). It was evident via the experiences shared that DTs are meeting the key aims of the role as set out in legislation. For example, the majority of DTs who participated in the study held key leadership roles within schools, their role as DT was either additional to their role as SENCO or head teacher, enabling them to promote a whole school culture where the educational achievement of LAC and their personalised learning needs are viewed as a priority. In addition, DTs demonstrated their understanding of the individual LAC on roll in their schools, their personal stories and individual needs. This demonstrated that they can fulfil their responsibility as a source of information and advice for staff about individual pupils and help school staff to understand the wider factors which affect LAC in school. All participants were keen to demonstrate that they hold high expectations for LAC. DTs demonstrated that they are working at different levels to support LAC by providing 1:1 intervention, ensuring LAC have a voice and working with multiple agencies to co-ordinate support. Thus, DTs view their role positively and as important in working towards supporting LAC. This is in corroboration with Brodie (2010) and Berridge (2012), who claim that the role of the DT has had a positive effect on the experiences of LAC.

Not only were DTs keen to evidence their knowledge and describe how they are supporting LAC, many also noted how they went about sourcing this knowledge. As discussed within 'Sub Theme 1.2: Additional Roles that Support DTs Knowledge', DTs highlighted the experience and knowledge they had gained through other roles and activities that they undertake, both in and outside of school. DTs felt that these wider experiences broadened their knowledge base and supported them to undertake their role as DT for LAC more effectively. When talking about sourcing additional information and knowledge, EPs weren't necessarily the first point of call for DTs, this will be reflected on later.

It is my interpretation that DTs perceive having knowledge and experience as factors that enable them to successfully carry out their role. Despite not necessarily calling on EPs as a source of information, DTs were aware of the need to continue to source further information and undertook steps to ensure they as individuals, and the staff within their school, had the necessary skills and resources available. For example, schools referenced 'building up a bank of resources' and bringing the support services they need 'in house', such as speech and language, play therapy etc. In reference to Sprince's (2005) 'hierarchy of needs for practitioners working with LAC', 'skill and fulfilment' is at the top of the hierarchy, possibly indicating DTs are content and confident in their role, enabling them to strive for more information, resources and knowledge.

On reflection, there are a number of possible reasons as to why DTs focused on their own knowledge and experience as opposed to that of EPs. As indicated within Chapter 4 (Core Theme 2: Limitations of EP work), DTs highlighted a number of challenges when working with EPs, such as limited time/capacity, competing priorities and the impact of working in a complex and challenging system. These challenges were also raised by EPs in Walker's (2012) study, when thinking about the challenges of working to support LAC. One possible reason for the limited focus by DTs on the EP role and their tendency to revert back to their own role may have been due to limited contact with EPs. This is likely to impact upon DTs knowledge and understanding of the way in which EPs work, the service they offer and DTs ability to talk at length about the role of EPs. This may have compelled DTs to explore alternative sources of information, and provides a possible explanation as to why DTs felt more comfortable discussing their own experiences and how they have worked with other services, who they have more regular contact with.

In addition, changes to funding streams have provided schools with greater control and freedom over how they spend their budgets and the range of services they turn to for support. It is felt that DTs have worked hard to build up their skills and resources so that they are less reliant on outside agencies for support. This freedom has enabled some schools to employ private psychologists, possibly impacting on their need to seek support from LA based EPs.

It could also be possible, that despite the researcher's attempts to make participants feel at ease (by fully informing them of the researchers position and the aims of the study), DTs may have viewed the researcher as an 'outsider' looking into their processes. Thus they may have felt the need to emphasise their own good practice. Attribution theory states that individuals interpret the behaviour of others in a way that enables them to view themselves in a positive light and in a way that does not challenge ones 'self-image' (Heider, 1958). It could be said that DTs were keen to emphasise their skills, knowledge and resources, and highlight the shortfall of EPs in order to protect their image as professionals working hard to support LAC.

Thus, in response to the first research question, 'what aspect of DTs role do they consider to be important?', it can be said that, DTs view their role as central to enabling them to provide support for LAC and are keen to share their good practice with others. DTs perceive themselves to be supporting LAC at a variety of different levels; providing 1:1 intervention, co-ordinating support, information sharing and co-ordinating and participating in multi-agency meetings. Most of the information shared regarding their role, came to light via deflection from questions regarding the role of the EP and their experiences of working with EPs to support LAC. Thus, DTs limited experience and frustrations of working with the EP team were evident and will be discussed within the next section.

5.1.2 Research Question Two

What are DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level?

In order to answer this question, DTs views on EP support at each level will be reflected on, taking into account some of the challenges they experienced as highlighted within Chapter 4.

Individual level

DTs within the current study demonstrated an awareness of some of the key features of an EPs day to day role, such as consultation, observation and

assessment, these examples tended to be at the individual level. When working at the individual level DTs described calling on EPs for support and advice or an individual assessment. DTs perceived EPs as having specialist knowledge and valued their role in sharing and supporting good practice by providing strategies to support individual children's learning. DTs indicated that they would turn to an EP for support and advice when a situation was stuck and they were looking for an alternative way forward for an individual child. DTs regularly referenced the process of statutory assessment when considering support at the individual level. This is reflective of the current picture nationally within EP services. The SEN Code of Practice (CoP) states that EPs are well placed to provide teachers and parents with "support and advice to identify children's individual needs and to play a key role in the assessment and intervention process" (DfES, 2001, p. 36).

Interesting comparisons can be made at this stage between the views of EPs in Walker's (2012) study and the views of DTs within the current study, working in one LA, to support LAC. EPs in Walker's (2012) study described listening to the voice of the child, keeping LAC at the heart of decision making and identifying needs as ways in which they were working to support LAC. Other researchers also recognise the role of the EP in acting as an advocate for LAC, and having the skills and knowledge in order to provide these young people with a voice (Golding et al., 2006; Harker et al., 2003; SEU, 2003 and Walker 2012). Within the current study DTs acknowledged EPs skill and knowledge, however their role in providing LAC with a voice wasn't something that DTs felt EPs were currently doing. Yet, it was raised as something that DTs perceived EPs were able to do in the future. Placing children and young people at the forefront of practice and designing and delivering support based on their views is a fundamental change within the new Children and Families Bill (2013), thus from that perspective DTs and EPs are already working to ensure intervention is tailored to the individual needs of the child and that their views are regarded as important.

Other researchers also recognise the role EPs play in identifying individual needs and providing support for individual LAC (Boorn, 2008; Bradbury 2006; Kellet-Boyle, 2010; Golding et al., 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010; Peake, 2011). Previous research (McClung & Gayle, 2010) highlights the importance of not considering LAC as a homogenous group and emphasised that their

individual differences play a key role in how LAC experience and respond to opportunities, particularly with regard to education and school. In addition, guidance and legislation pertaining to LAC (NICE, 2010) emphasises the importance of tailoring support to the individual. Therefore, it may be possible that DTs sought EPs support for individual LAC in order to personalise intervention and ensure support was targeted to meet their individual needs. It is also possible that when times are challenging within EP services, professionals, both EPs and schools, revert back to focusing on individual children causing concern, instead of working in more creative ways.

There was a mixed picture between schools regarding the amount of input they received from EPs. Walker (2012) also raised the differing practices between EPs with regard to meeting individual LACs needs and called for a review of protocol to overcome these barriers. She reported that some schools may only involve an EP to work with LAC when there is a request for statutory assessment. However, another school may request an EP to be involved with LAC regardless of whether the school have concerns about their needs. It is generally acknowledged within both research and practice that EPs are only made aware of LAC when they are raised by schools (Norwich, et al., 2010; Walker, 2012). EPs within Walker's study (2012) discussed the challenges they faced in identifying LAC needs when they are not made aware of them. Walker (2012) reported that there is no mechanism for information sharing between key professionals involved with LAC within the LA. This ties in with two factors raised by DTs within the current study:-

a) DTs placed significant value on information sharing between key professionals. Interestingly, as discussed above, EPs were not raised by DTs when considering who they would contact for information or who they might invite to meetings regarding LAC. This implies that EPs are not currently viewed by DTs as key stakeholders in supporting LAC and are therefore not immediately thought of when meeting individual LACs needs.

b) DTs also expressed their wish for EPs to have more input with LAC as a matter of course and over a sustained period of time in the future, thus enabling them to successfully identify LACs needs and act as an advocate.

Both factors would require changes at a systems level to ensure EPs were aware of LAC, had a sound understanding of their needs, and are viewed by all professionals as key stakeholders in LACs overall care and development.

DTs were forthcoming in highlighting the barriers to working with EPs and supporting LAC. It is possible that some of the overarching factors and limitations as mentioned in Chapter 4 (Overarching theme 1: EP role linked to the LA and Overarching theme 2: frustration), may have an impact on the way in which EPs are working. In highlighting the limitations of working with EPs, DTs recognised that some of the challenges they faced were due to influences at a wider political level. These factors, as described in Core Theme 2: Limitations of the EP role, are also supported by Walker (2012), who raised several factors impacting on EP practice and service delivery. EPs in Walker's study described feelings of anxiety and uncertainty surrounding the changes taking place, all of which impact on staff morale and create an absence of feeling contained (Bion, 1962). Thus, again linked to Sprince's (2005) 'hierarchy of needs for practitioners working with LAC', EPs may have been lacking a sense of job security, impacting on their sense of skill and job fulfilment and subsequently impacting on the service received by schools. This model can be extended further to DTs, the challenges they raised with regards to accessing the EP service may have left DTs feeling unsupported and lacking confidence in outside agencies to support individual pupils.

School level

As discussed, much of the work DTs reported EPs to be engaged in was at the individual child level. Very few DTs reported that an EP had delivered training, engaged in research or project work (i.e. worked at a whole school level to support LAC). As discussed above, previous research and the current study emphasise the specialist psychological knowledge of EPs, which can be applied at the individual child level as well as the wider systemic level, by working closely with school staff (Golding et al., 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010; Peake, 2011). Much of the literature reviewed as part of this study acknowledges EPs psychological knowledge as something they can offer towards supporting LAC at this level. In particular, their role in disseminating their knowledge of typical

development, attachment theory, resilience and self-esteem (Bradbury, 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010).

It is possible that differing expectations or a misunderstanding regarding the role of EPs impacts on the referrals that schools make and the type of work they are open to receiving from EPs. Many of the DTs within the current study felt that LACs needs can only be brought to the attention of an EP when they experience learning difficulties. This finding was also supported by EPs within Walker's (2012) study. Literature and EP practice highlights the importance of addressing social and emotional development as well as meeting and understanding learning needs (McParlin, 1996). These opposing views regarding the remit of EPs work needs to be addressed in order to avoid tensions and prevent the development of processes that may hinder support for LAC. As previously discussed Golding et al., (2006) recommends addressing issues such as this via a process of consultation. Cameron and Maginn (2011) advocate the use of consultation as a way of working at an organisational level with schools, residential workers and foster carers - applying psychological knowledge to challenging situations and offering evidenced based solutions to move situations forward. However, DTs within the current study expressed some confusion and frustration regarding the process of 'consultation', they described it as 'a chat' where they 'come up with all the ideas'. However, it is possible that this may also be linked to differing expectations regarding the way in which EPs work and a misunderstanding of their role.

Boorn (2008) reiterated the need for school staff to call on outside agencies such as EPs to support vulnerable pupils such as LAC. She described the various ways and levels at which support can be offered, both directly to LAC and indirectly at a systemic level via school staff. As discussed in Chapter 3, Boorn (2008) developed a framework for EPs when working to support LAC at a whole school level;

- Offering consultation and training.
- Challenging assumptions and attributions.
- Reviewing the systems in place surrounding LAC.
- Supporting the evaluation of existing intervention programmes.
- Promoting and developing understanding of building resilience.

- Multi-agency liaison and review.
- Developing supervision processes within school to support adults working with LAC (see Figure 16).

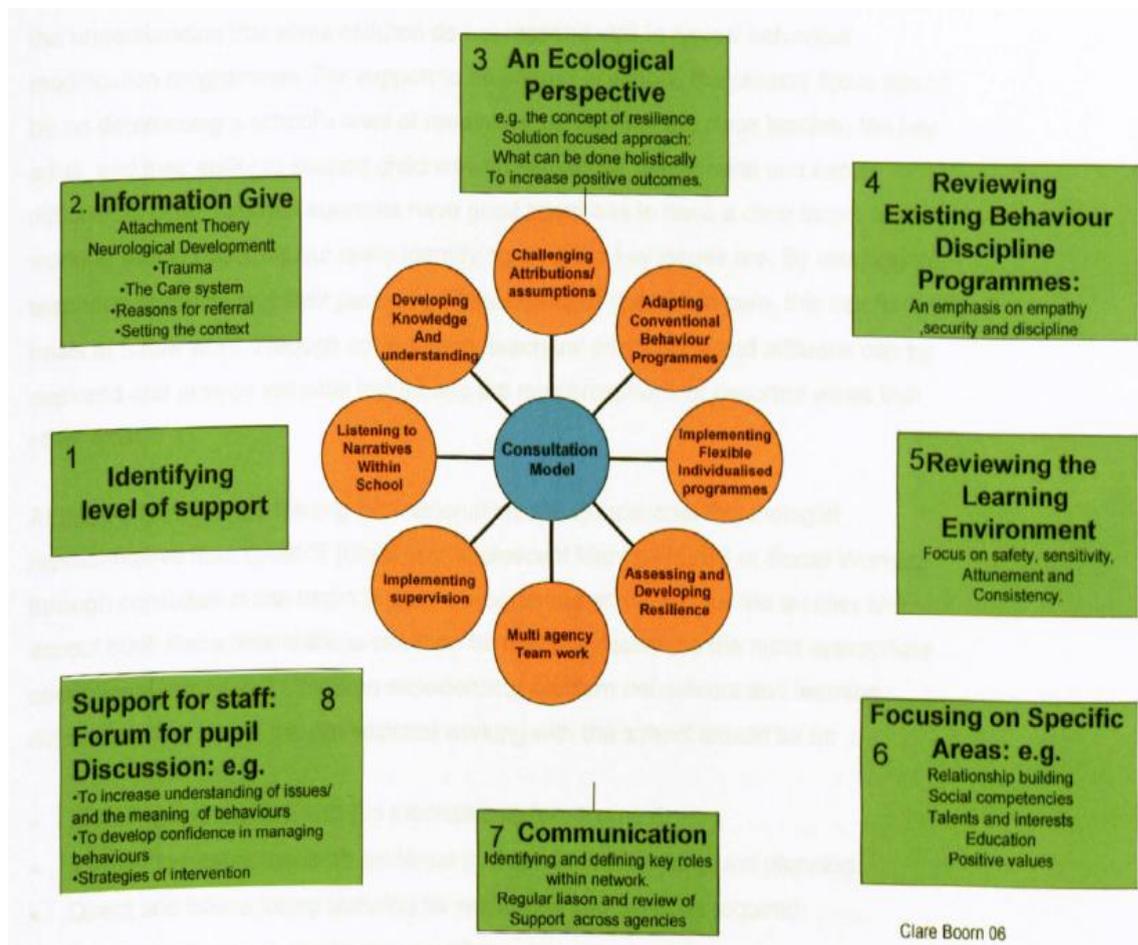


Figure 17 A Psychological Approach to Developing a Service for LAC at Whole School Level (Boorn, 2008).

As discussed above changes to funding streams have provided schools with greater control and freedom over how they spend their budgets, enabling some schools to employ private psychologists. One school described how the EP they commission was working at a systemic level in order to support the child, their family and the professionals working with the young person. This way of working is widely acknowledged within research and some DTs indicated that they were used to this practice from LA EPs in the past. Again, DTs acknowledged the various pressures EPs are under within LA services and how this may impact on their practice and the service delivered to schools (as also identified by Walker, 2012).

Multi-agency

The majority of DTs reported that they had not worked with an EP at a multi-agency level to support LAC. However, DTs referred to EPs roles on panels or working groups within the LA. They viewed EPs positions on such panels positively and perceived this as a way of gaining additional access to EP knowledge and support. This finding is supported by Norwich et al., (2010), who found that EPs who held specialist positions tended to participate in multi-agency work, panel work, and chair local practitioner groups as part of their responsibilities towards supporting LAC.

The idea that EPs are valued as part of the LA and the notion that DTs perceived EPs to be increasingly less valued by the LA was discussed in Chapter 4 (Overarching Theme1: EP status within the LA). This idea was also supported by EPs themselves within Walker's (2012) study, and stems from the current picture both nationally and locally, linked to reduced funding and capacity.

Bradbury (2006), Thomson (2007) and Walker (2012), report that it is essential for EPs to work collaboratively with other agencies in order to support LAC. However, these studies do acknowledge the challenges of multi-agency working, such as a lack of communication between professionals and EPs coordinating support rather than using their psychological knowledge (Dennison, et al., 2006; Hughes, 2006). Golding et al., (2006) recommends that processes be put in place to address the challenges of multi-agency working. They recommend the use of consultation to explore underlying processes and the challenges of systemic working.

DTs and EPs working at a multi-agency level, can be explained in relation to Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979) that proposed that a child's environment consists of multiple levels or systems. Dowling and Osborne (2003) recommend that individuals' behaviour should not be explored in isolation. It is important for professionals to engage with the multiple systems influencing LAC, in order to fully understand their needs and tailor support accordingly.

Thus, with regards to research question 2, 'What are DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level?' in summary it can be said that within the context in which the current study took place; EPs have predominantly been working at an individual level to support LAC via practices such as observation, consultation and assessment. Both EPs (Walker 2012) and DTs are aware of the current (contextual) challenges to providing an EPS, such challenges are at the forefront of DTs minds and this has had a direct impact on the way in which schools and EPs are working together. Limited knowledge regarding scope of EP work may have also limited the range of work that schools request from EPs. However, generally EPs psychological knowledge is valued by DTs and they would like greater access to the service moving forward. In particular the findings suggest that there should be a focus on developing practices to support LAC at the school and multi-agency level.

5.1.3 Research Question Three

What do DTs want EPs to offer in order to support LAC?

As discussed, above DTs experienced a number of barriers to accessing EPs. DTs were able to reflect on these challenges and consider how they would like things to improve in the future.

Many DTs indicated that they value EP involvement, their only frustration was the limited access to EPs and the limited capacity of EPs to undertake the work schools require. DTs requested more time and greater access to EPs, working in a similar way as they do now. As discussed briefly within the Chapter 4, the perceived limited capacity of EPs, was linked to the time allocation model in place and the challenges with regards to the national and local context. However, as indicated by Walker (2012) challenges regarding the capacity of additional support services within the LA was not limited to the role of EPs. Many services were also experiencing difficulties in delivering the services they had previously.

As well as emphasising a need for more EP time, DTs highlighted the need for greater access to EPs on an ad hoc/informal basis. Several participants

suggested that one way of doing this may be via email or telephone access. Previous research highlights the importance of having open channels of communication as a key factor in working towards success for LAC, both between professionals (Harker et al., 2004) and between school staff and young people (Woodier, 2011). Having a link/named EP that schools can seek support from was an aspect of EP work that schools valued. They described having a named person that they can call on when they get stuck as helping them to feel less anxious in their role. This fits with the idea that as part of their role they are building a bank of resources and creating a network of professional support. This is supported by previous research that highlights the importance of building and sustaining positive working relationships between professionals (Peak, 2011). Dann (2011) encourages teachers to establish relationships with professionals who have specialist knowledge, including EPs. Sprince (2005) in his 'hierarchy of needs for practitioners working with LAC' emphasised practitioners need to feel supported, thus it is perhaps the view of DTs that having greater access to a named/link EP on an ad hoc basis (e.g. via email) will enable them to feel supported in their role and enable them to fulfil their responsibilities.

As well as the EP being consistent, DTs also indicated that in the future they would value more regular input over time. They suggested that this may be delivered in the form of a monitoring role or regular follow up and contact with young people and their families. Some schools suggested that EPs should be involved with all LAC regardless of need and concerns at the time. They suggested that EPs would be well placed to hold an overview of LACs needs and step in if need be. The idea of EPs being involved with LAC as a matter of course is not necessarily covered within the previous research raised earlier. However, previous research does propose that EPs are well-placed to act as 'advocates' for LAC (McParlin, 1996; Walker, 2012). This would involve developing a deeper understanding of LACs needs and taking their views into consideration, possibly over a longer period of time. The idea of regular input was raised in previous literature with regards to ensuring that DTs regularly sought outside support and training in order to carry out their role successfully (Boorn, 2008; Kellet-Boyle, 2010). Therefore, the current study provides a different direction with regards to regular EP input over time for LAC.

A number of DTs highlighted a need for greater clarity and further training on what EPs do and what the EPS can offer. This was linked to a misunderstanding, differing expectations and frustration that arose regarding a lack of clarity and knowledge of the team. Therefore, to ensure that schools are making the most of the service and given the significant changes within the team and within the LA, schools felt that they would benefit from a clear picture of the service available to them. DTs also highlighted the differing practices between individual personnel within the EP team. The process of 're-launching' the service, defining for school what the role of the EP entails and sharing information on the service available to schools, will also provide EPs with an opportunity to 'consult' (as recommended by Golding et al., 2006) on the ways in which EPs within the team are practicing and come up with an agreed way forward.

DTs not only identified a need for training on the role of the EP and the service the team offers, but also on other areas that may help to improve outcomes for LAC. Despite indicating that DTs generally feel that they have a solid understanding of the individual needs of LAC within their school and perceiving EPs as providing support solely to meet educational needs, DTs suggested that EPs could offer training on the needs of LAC, the common challenges they face and the best ways to support LAC in school. Dann (2011), Kellet-Boyle (2010) and Woodier (2011) noted that for some teachers, supporting LAC can be frightening and overwhelming. Boorn (2008) and Kellet-Boyle (2010) highlighted how important it is for teachers to have the necessary skills and knowledge in order to support LAC. Boorn (2008) reported that teachers undervalue their own skill and ability, which may in turn impact on the support they provide and the services they call on for advice. DTs in the current study did not indicate specific areas where they felt EPs could offer training, however previous research highlights that EPs are well-positioned to disseminate their psychological knowledge to help all those involved with LAC to further understand their needs (Bradbury, 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010). Several studies indicate that EPs could support schools and staff in developing their understanding and delivery of interventions targeting the development of secure attachments, resilience (protective factors), motivation, social skills, self-esteem and emotional literacy skills (Brewin & Statham, 2011; Dann, 2011; Honey et al., 2011; Woodier, 2011).

Furthermore, one DT suggested that EPs would be well placed to train and support school staff in relation to the best way to approach complex multi-agency meetings: considering how to approach and prepare for such meetings, how to cope with being party to sensitive and uncomfortable information and how to deal with conflicts that may arise within school following tense meetings with parents and social care. This is an area where EPs are not widely reported to currently have an input, however it has been acknowledged in previous research that EPs are well placed to support others in understanding the difficulties experienced by some professionals when working with other agencies (Dennison, et al., 2006; Hughes, 2006). McParlin (1996) argues that EPs have the necessary skills to mediate when additional pressures are created by working alongside other professionals. Boorn (2008) reported that EPs are in a position to help develop supervisory processes within schools to support adults working with LAC. The school that raised this as a concern highlighted the support network and supervision practices in place within teams such as social care and Educational Psychology. They saw this as an important process in enabling those teams to carry out their role effectively and as such have developed a similar system within their school. A trainee social worker undertakes the day to day duties of a DT and the head teacher holds the official title and provides a supervisory role to the trainee social worker. This created a sense of shared responsibility and enabled debriefing to take place where necessary. There is a growing body of research and guidance into the practice of supervision within schools that highlights the benefits of the process to those involved (Hanko, 1990 and 1999; Hawkins and Shohet, 1989; Viera and Marques, 2002). The 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfCSF, 2010) document acknowledges the challenges professionals face when working with vulnerable pupils, it states;

“Working to ensure children are protected from harm requires sound professional judgements to be made. It is demanding work that can be distressing and stressful. All those involved should have access to advice and support from, for example, peers, managers, named and designated professionals”.(pp 122-123)

The Children's Workforce Development Council (2007), describes supervision as *"an accountable process which supports, assures and develops the knowledge, skills and values of an individual, group or team. The purpose is to improve the quality of their work to achieve agreed outcomes"* (p 4). Research pertaining to supervisory practices stems back to consultation approaches, which EPs are well trained in (Wagner, 2005), indicating that EPs may have a role in supporting schools who have perhaps not yet recognised the need for and benefits of engaging in supervision.

Thus, in response to research question 3, 'What do DTs want EPs to offer in order to support LAC?' in summary, it can be said that the request for more EP time and greater capacity within the team indicates that DTs value input from EPs. The findings highlight an important issue for the EPS and schools to address - working together to create a mutual understanding and shared expectations regarding the services available, what schools require and the ways in which they expect EPs to work. The potential steps to ensure joint understanding may also help to cement working relationships between EPs and schools and support DTs to develop the positive working relationships and links with individual personnel that they value. Finally, EPs may be well placed to offer guidance and support with regards to multi-agency working and establishing the practice of supervision within schools, an area of work that EPs within the service in which this research took place are not currently engaged in.

5.1.4 Research Question Four

What do DTs report EPs are able to offer that is 'extra' or 'unique' when working to support LAC?

In response to a direct question regarding whether or not DTs felt that EPs offer anything that is unique, that no other service is able to offer, most participants felt that some aspects of the EP role were unique. 95% of participants within phase one reported that to some extent they agree that the EP role is unique or specialist and all participants believed EPs are, to some extent, able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective. Some DTs within

phase two also described the EP role as unique because of the use of cognitive assessment, the practice of observation, having a holistic overview and their level of knowledge and understanding.

The uniqueness of the EP role is corroborated by several papers that recognise the role of specialists in supporting LAC. As discussed earlier, DTs felt that EPs supported schools to identify children's needs. Dann (2011) highlighted the dangers of teachers unofficially diagnosing LAC and placing labels on young people without seeking specialist opinions. This is supported by Woodier (2011), a teacher, who reported that he sought 'verification' on his ideas from Psychologists within CAMHS. Bradbury (2006) acknowledged that EPs hold specialist roles where they are involved in complex individual case work, e.g. supporting LAC with significant attachment issues. Bradbury (2006) described how specialist EPs for LAC were called on to provide advice to EPs who worked with a patch of schools. As Walker (2012) indicated, the activities carried out by EPs depends on their position within the service, i.e. whether they are a main grade EP or specialist working to support LAC.

In response to research question 4, 'What do DTs report EPs are able to offer that is 'extra' or 'unique' when working to support LAC?', the findings present a mixed picture. It is possible that this is a reflection of DTs experiences of working with EPs and their knowledge of what the team has to offer. Thus, those who have experienced limited EP input and are unsure of how EPs can support LAC, view the team less favourably than those who have worked directly with EPs to support LAC. However, previous research indicates that other stakeholders within this study, the LA and EPs (Walker, 2012), generally view the EP role as unique due to their specialist knowledge and the way in which they practice.

5.2 Review of Research Aims

The present study aimed to explore DTs perceptions of the contribution that EPs make towards supporting LAC at the individual, school and multiagency level. This study found that EPs are predominantly supporting LAC at the individual level through the processes of consultation, observation and assessment. Their practice is valued by DTs, however several challenges arose when working with

EPs to support LAC; in particular, the limited capacity of the team and access to the service, a misunderstanding regarding the ways in which EPs work and differing expectations between schools and EPs in relation to the work required. This research provides EPs with a picture of which aspects of existing practice are valued by DTs and where there are gaps where DTs feel EPs could contribute. Specifically, with regards to training, involvement with LAC as a matter of course and input regarding multi-agency work and supervision practices in schools. The implications of these findings will be explored within the next section.

5.3 Implications of the findings

The following section will outline the possible implications for future practice for DTs and the LA in relation to support for LAC. The findings highlight several factors that DTs perceived as important when working to support LAC;

- DTs emphasised the importance of information sharing between all those involved with LAC (specifically social workers and foster carers). It was perceived as crucial in order to support schools in understanding the individual needs of LAC, their interests and the things that enthuse them. Walker (2012) and DTs within the current study identified inadequate process for information sharing within the LA, thus highlighting the need to assess information sharing process for LAC both within and between services and schools.
- DTs demonstrated their awareness of the impact that personal, home and pre-care experiences might have on LAC. A key part of their role, as DT, involves ensuring that all teaching staff share this attitude and knowledge and are sensitive to LACs needs. They described information sharing via regular liaison with staff and staff briefings as a way of ensuring this. Thus, a key part of the DT role involves disseminating training and knowledge to staff within school, e.g. on the impact that being in care can have on behaviour, learning and well-being. This is supported by research that indicates that the school environment is the most significant context outside the family in promoting opportunities for maintaining emotional and social well-being (Brooks & Goldstein, 2004).

- DTs perceived a key part of their role involved providing direct support to LAC. They saw themselves as a key adult in school who should be available to LAC when necessary. They recognised the importance of offering LAC an empathetic, non-judgmental, trustworthy and consistent adult in their lives, thereby providing the opportunity to model positive relationships and build trust. Bomber (2007) emphasises the important role that teachers play 'as agents of possible change'. Thus, in order for DTs to be able to offer direct support and intervention to LAC they will require support and training from appropriately trained professionals.
- DTs recognised the need to build on their knowledge and update their training by receiving support from outside professionals, such as EPs, to support them to further understand the needs of LAC, address differentiation needs and challenge negative stereotypes. DTs should feel empowered, following training, to work systemically and disseminate their knowledge in relation to LAC.
- As well as providing direct support for LAC, a key part of the DT role involved co-ordinating the support that LAC receive. This involved building and maintaining working relationships with a number of professionals and keeping up to date with and having a knowledge of the various support services available. Opportunities for joint training between school staff and other support services (e.g. social care and CAMHS) may help to better relationships between services and build knowledge.
- It is felt that DTs value being consulted in relation to their role, thus highlighting the need for more opportunities to seek DTs views in relation to issues of policy and practice regarding LAC. For example, if a consultation were to take place in order to explore information sharing practices regarding LAC, DTs should be included as part of this process and their voice taken into account when considering making changes to current practice.

5.4 Implications of the findings for EPs

The findings from this study also highlight a number of implications for EPs. Interestingly a number of the implications for EP practice that resulted from this study also arose within Walker's (2012) study. The similarity between the implications for EP practice that arose across the two studies emphasises the trustworthiness of the data and indicates that the findings offer a true representation of the current picture of EP support for LAC in the context in which the research took place. However, it also suggests that the picture of EP support for LAC has not changed since Walker's study in 2012. The following implications arose across both studies and were therefore recognised by both DTs and EPs when considering EP support for LAC;

- The findings emphasise the need for a shared understanding on the role of EPs and the services available from the EPS. This may not be limited to school staff, other professionals may also benefit from further information on the role and remit of the team. Walker (2012) suggested that leaflets or workshops may be a suitable way of doing this. However, the current study would argue that school staff value face to face contact and explanations from EPs regarding the service available. Existing literature conveys a need for EPs to demonstrate how they can and are making a specific contribution towards supporting LAC (Bradbury, 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010), however the lack of clarity surrounding the EP role within the current study may detract from the psychological contribution that EPs are able to make.
- DTs indicated that they feel all LAC should receive EP involvement as a matter of course. They perceived EPs as well placed to hold an overview of LACs needs and develop a deeper understanding of the support they required in school. This is supported by previous research that suggests EPs should act as advocates for LAC and work towards ensuring that their voice is heard (McParlin, 1996; Walker, 2012). Such input would require systemic changes to provide main grade EPs with sufficient time to undertake such a role. However, this suggestion also supports the role of specialist EPs for LAC, who may be based within social care teams, have

the capacity to be made aware of young people as soon as they become looked after and liaise closely with relevant stakeholders.

- At an organisational level EPs are well placed to deliver training to school staff to support them in understanding the needs of LAC and how they can best be supported in school. Dowling and Osborne (2003) said that EPs can use their consultation skills and psychological knowledge to facilitate a joint systems approach when meeting the needs of LAC. For example, by utilising their knowledge of attachment theory to help others (teachers, foster carers and social workers) comprehend the implications of trauma on performance in school.
- It emerged that DTs find some aspects of their role challenging. Such as dealing with sensitive information regarding LAC and handling the repercussions of complex meetings that surround LAC. DTs felt that EPs were well placed to offer training, support and advice to assist them with their own professional development. Boorn (2008) and Walker (2012) highlighted that EPs could have a vital role in setting up and facilitating supervision processes within schools. EPs can use the process of consultation to help professionals think about factors which hinder multi-agency working, and consider feelings and emotions which arise when working with vulnerable pupils (Golding et al., 2006; Hinshelwood, 2009).

5.5 Critique of approach and limitations of the findings

The chosen methodological approaches suited the current study and yielded rich and meaningful data in order to adequately answer the research questions. The current study has contributed towards the limited body of existing literature that considers support for LAC from the perspective of teachers, thus highlighting several useful implications for future practice. This section will address the benefits of using the chosen methodological approaches and consider possible limitations which may impact on the findings.

5.5.1 Methodological considerations

As described in chapter 3, the researcher used a questionnaire and SSI's to collect the data, followed by descriptive statistics and thematic analysis in order to analyse the data.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed for the purpose of the current study and served its purpose to explore the context in which the research took place and establish an overview of DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC. This approach offered a practical way of collecting meaningful information in a relatively short period of time and in a cost effective way. A web based questionnaire was used in an additional effort to make the process as efficient as possible and ensure anonymity.

It could be argued that when developing the questionnaire the researcher made her own decisions as to what was important to ask, thus a question may have been missed that may have been important. For example, on reflection, the researcher could have explored with DTs, other agencies they are working with and the type of support they receive from these services.

In addition, as with any self-report questionnaire there is always the possibility that participants may read into each question differently and reply based on their own interpretation of the question. It is also difficult to judge how much thought a respondent has put in, how truthful they have been or how accurate their memory was of the situation in question. However, this is also true of face to face interviews, participants could interpret a question in a different way to what was intended or recall events inaccurately. The nature of web based questionnaires creates some distance between the researcher and the participants, there is a lack of personal contact and in this case all responses were anonymous. This may have impacted upon the response rate of the questionnaire, however, the researcher intended that the anonymity of the questionnaire would encourage participants to respond openly and honestly.

The pilot study aimed to offset some of these limitations, by asking a small group of DTs in a neighbouring LA to review the questionnaire and think about the factors outlined in Chapter 3 (section 3.6.2). The questionnaire was well received by participants within the pilot.

Semi structured interviews

The use of SSI supported the researcher's aims to adopt flexible approach in order to gather rich, in depth information. The flexibility allowed the researcher to adopt a conversational approach that encouraged communication and allowed for exploration of issues pertinent to DTs. The researcher received positive feedback from participants following the interviews, for example one participant reported that it is nice that people are interested to hear what they have to say. Another reported that the process was thought provoking for them as a practitioner.

As with any form of interview or facilitated discussion, one possible limitation relates to the skill of the interviewer and/or the ability of interviewees to articulate responses. The researcher attempted to build rapport with participants through positive non-verbal communication, such as nodding and demonstrating active listening skills as well as agreeing with comments throughout the interviews. On reflection, when transcribing the interviews this may have been viewed as the researcher unintentionally influencing the interviewees. In addition, occasionally the researcher had to clarify what was meant by a question; on reflection, there were occasions when the researcher used clarification that could be interpreted as 'leading'. Once the researcher was aware of these limitations (following transcription of the first few interviews) every effort was made to ensure that this did not occur within later interviews.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to present the data from the questionnaire in a clear, accurate and easy to access visual format. Graphs were used to provide a quick, visual interpretation of the data supported by prose to explain each graph in more detail.

Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was chosen as the most suitable method to analyse the qualitative data due to its exploratory, flexible approach. This approach provided opportunities to go beyond individual experience and explore participants' views in relation to their particular context. This was particularly useful within the current study where the context had a particular influence on DTs experiences. This approach also enabled the researcher to use quotes to support and evidence themes.

Braun and Clarke (2006) recognise that one disadvantage of thematic analysis is that the quality of the analysis varies depending on the skill of the researcher. Thus, the researcher spent sufficient time becoming familiar with Braun and Clarke's (2006 and 2013) 6 stage model in order to provide a structure to the process, their 15 point checklist was also used as a means of ensuring rigour. The researcher's academic supervisor and a fellow TEP were asked to check the codes and themes and discussion was held regarding these. The researcher also provided a clear audit trail, evidencing decisions made within each stages of the research (Appendix 13).

Alternative methods of analysis were explore, including Grounded Theory and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. However, I wanted the findings to be content led and relevant to that group rather than focusing on individual experiences, unpicking their language and thinking about why. The focus was on describing, not explaining the process. As the research was exploratory in nature and aimed to look at DTs perceptions, the researcher maintains that thematic analysis was the most appropriate tool.

5.5.2 Generalizability

The researcher is aware that each LA conducts different practices when supporting LAC, for example some LAs have specialist EPs for LAC, some have a VS and others don't, consequently it was never intended that the findings would be widely generalizable across LAs. The research was carried out in one LA,

where the researcher was employed, offering a snapshot of DTs views at that time. However the current study adds to the body of existing research and provides an insight into what teachers value when working to support LAC. The researcher feels that this study could be replicated, using the same methodological approach in another LA to explore DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC. The value of small scale research studies is also widely recognised by practitioners and the Government.

5.5.3 Sampling

The researcher used purposeful sampling techniques within phase one. It could be said that the DTs were self-selecting in the sense that they opted/volunteered to be included in the research. DTs within phase two were also selected using purposeful sampling techniques. DTs who met certain criteria (see section 3.5.3) were identified with the help of the designated officer for LAC within the borough. In hindsight, it may have been helpful to have been able to identify those participants from phase one who reported they had engaged with an EP in a range of activities to support LAC. This may have provided an even richer picture of the experiences of DTs within the borough. The researcher felt that even though all of the DTs who participated within the study had a high number of LAC on roll, not all of them had worked directly with an EP to support LAC and therefore they spoke about their experiences in the past and how this differed from the current situation, which may have impacted upon the picture provided.

The frustration expressed by some participants' raises some important points for consideration in relation to undertaking research at a particularly challenging time. The researcher reflected on the various factors that were out of her control during the study, such as the evolving context within which the research took place. For example, the change in the number of EPs as discussed within Chapter 4. This meant that the researcher had to demonstrate additional sensitivity towards the concerns raised by participants and further sensitivity will be required when feeding back to stakeholders.

In addition, some DTs reported that it would normally be the SENCO in school who has contact with EPs. In some cases DTs also held the role of SENCO,

however where the DT held a more pastoral role in school, this occasionally meant they had even less contact with EPs impacting on their experience and understanding of the ways in which EPs work, thus highlighting the complexity of school systems, particularly within secondary schools. In the majority of cases the DT was the most appropriate member of staff in school to interview regarding their experience of working with EPs to support LAC, however in a couple of cases it may have been more appropriate to interview the SENCO who may have had more experience of working with EPs.

Thus in summary, the researcher feels the most appropriate methodological approaches were chosen for the current study and the research has yielded rich and meaningful data, adding to existing literature and highlighting several implications for future practice. However, the specific context within which the research took place and the small sample size limit the generalizability of the findings. Implications for future research will be considered within the next section.

5.6 Implications for future research

Existing literature highlights the limited evidence base demonstrating how EPs can make a specific contribution towards supporting LAC (Bradbury, 2006; McParlin, 1996; Norwich et al., 2010; Walker, 2012), thus emphasising the need for further research in this area. This study attempted to contribute towards this picture.

Based on the researcher's experience of working as a TEP, the researcher is aware that practices to support LAC differ greatly between LAs. For example, within some LAs EPs hold specialist positions regarding LAC, EPs are invited to every LAC review as a matter of course and EPs have a responsibility to raise LAC at termly planning meetings and multi-agency meetings. This provides scope to broaden the research and explore the wider picture of how DTs perceive EPs to be working in LAs where different practices are taking place. The researcher believes that many of the challenges raised by DTs during the current study were related to context within the LA at the time. Thus the researcher predicts that the picture may be different if the research was to be undertaken at a different time

or within another LA. Exploring what practices are in place in order to support LAC across a number of LAs may assist with identification of and sharing of good practice and highlight lessons that can be learnt.

Within the context in which the research took place, at an organisational level, the difficulties experienced by DTs when trying to work with EPs could provide a basis for further research. The research undertaken by Walker (2012) highlights some similarities but also discrepancies in the way in which the two groups view support for LAC. Therefore, further, possibly action research, into how these separate groups view one another, how these views underpin professional practice and how this might impact on current practice may be helpful in order to provide a positive way forward towards meeting the needs of LAC.

As part of a possible piece of action research aimed at developing practices to support LAC, it would be important to also take into consideration the views of LAC and social care. The new Children and Families Bill (2013), emphasises taking into account the views and wishes of young people and their families. Thus a piece of research which aimed to improve outcomes and services for LAC on a practical level ought to consider their experiences. This might involve interviewing LAC who have had involvement from an EP and exploring what aspects they value and might consider changing.

Similarly, as pointed out by many of the DTs within the present study and within legislation, working collaboratively with social care is crucial. DTs feel that EPs should be involved with all LAC as a matter of course when they enter into the care system. Thus, future research may also consider seeking the views of social workers on their experiences of working with EPs and whether or not they perceive EPs to have greater involvement with LAC moving forward. As previously mentioned some LAs have specialist EPs for LAC, and in some LAs EPs are based within social care teams. Further exploration of how specialist EPs for LAC are working in practice may also support others to improve services.

Lastly, the findings suggest that much of the work being undertaken by EPs to support LAC is reactive to problems as they arise. Literature emphasises the need for professionals to be working in a preventative manner (Boorn, 2008). The

researcher would be interested to explore what preventative work is being undertaken by EPs in order to support LAC.

5.7 Feedback to stakeholders and participants

Feedback to stakeholders

The EPS where the researcher worked were the ultimate stakeholders in this study. It was agreed from the outset that the findings and any recommendations arising as a result of the research will be shared with and disseminated by the PEP following the final submission of the thesis. This will be in the form of a letter and one page summary, with the opportunity for further discussion via telephone.

Feedback to participants

As with the stakeholders, the DTs who participated in the research will be sent a feedback letter summarising the findings from the research following the final submission of the thesis. Once the Dictaphone was stopped, the researcher provided DTs with initial verbal feedback following their interviews, (this involved reviewing the research aims and thanking DTs for taking part). This initial feedback formed part of the research debrief following the interview and offered DTs the opportunity to reflect on questions asked.

5.8 Reflexivity

The critical realist epistemology and the methodologies chosen within this study require a highly reflexive approach. As noted in Chapter 3, the researcher kept a reflective journal which consisted of hand written notes regarding the various stages of the research process. Reflections related to thoughts on decisions made during the process, how the interviews went and prompts for consideration at a later date. Keeping a research journal provided opportunities to think objectively about the research process. This was particularly useful when the researcher began to notice differences in her interview style and language used with participants who gave brief answers as opposed to those who provided lots of information, even if it was not always relevant. Attempts were made to improve

the researcher's interview style by keeping the interviews as consistent as possible, giving participants more space to answer and avoid leading responses.

The researcher was aware of the impact of her own attitudes and beliefs, as well as the impact that simply asking questions had on the data collection and analysis process. For example feedback from participants and the researcher's own reflections suggested that the questions posed during the interviews prompted participants to reflect on their own practice. For example, one participant regularly asked questions back to the researcher;

School 2: should I be making a referral to the Educational Psychologist as well? (232-233).

It was important to consider the impact that asking questions had on participants' responses and the overall picture provided.

Participants' perceptions of the researcher may have been influenced by her role as a TEP, conducting research as part of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. However, interestingly, some participants seemed not to associate the researcher as being part of the EPS. DTs regularly referenced the work of the team as 'they' as opposed to 'your team'. This was both an advantage and disadvantage; the researcher was able to use her position as a TEP to gain access to schools and data held on file in the LA. Not interviewing any DTs from schools in which the researcher was working helped to create a boundary between her role as a researcher and her role as a TEP.

As a TEP, the researcher benefitted from regular supervision which included discussions about the research. Peer supervision, supervision with colleagues in the LA and supervision with the researchers academic tutor, all provided opportunities to share experiences and reflect on the process.

Completing doctoral research has been a process of significant development and learning, both academically and professionally. The researcher has learnt a lot about research practice through the process of choosing data collection and analysis methods. Carrying out interviews was also hugely informative and has

contributed to the researchers' development as a TEP. The process of undertaking and reflecting upon each interview has enhanced the researchers' skills in working collaboratively with school staff. Listening and adopting an open minded approach helped to build rapport and reduce barriers. The process has provided a greater understanding of what schools value, generally, when working with EPs. The researcher has learnt that not all DTs feel comfortable or confident answering questions and sharing their views on certain topics. However, this may have been reflective of their limited experience working with EPs.

The researcher has valued the opportunity to explore an area which is relevant to her work as an EP. The findings from this study have influenced the researcher's approach to working with schools to support LAC. The lessons learnt with regards to 'interviewing' have been generalised and applied to the other meetings. For example, the importance of listening to stakeholders in a meaningful way and building collaborative partnerships has been reinforced, as well as the value of recognising school staffs knowledge and valuable views on the needs of young people.

5.9 Conclusions

This study aimed to explore DTs perceptions of EP support for LAC. Three core themes and two overarching themes arose; experience and knowledge (DT and EP), limitations of EP work, DT wishes for the future, EP status within the LA and frustration. The study took place during an interesting time for the service which likely had an impact on the findings, highlighting the challenges of working within a complex system.

DTs indicated their experience of working with EPs to support LAC was predominantly focused at the individual child level. A misunderstanding or lack of awareness regarding the way in which EPs work, alongside other implicating factors, such as limited capacity impacted on how EPs worked with schools to support LAC. DTs generally perceived the EP role to be unique as a result of their specialist knowledge and the way in which they practice on a day to day basis. The limitations and frustrations that arose enable DTs to think about how they

would like to work with EPs in the future. Ideas generally reflected DTs wishes for greater EP input and more consistency.

A greater understanding of the findings was developed through application of attribution theory, attachment theory and humanistic and systemic theoretical perspectives as well as corroboration with existing literature. The findings from the current study add to the body of literature pertaining to support for LAC and the role of the EP, as well as enhancing how EPs within the current context support LAC as part of their practice. It is felt that the process of engaging in research enabled DTs to reflect on their role and how they work with EPs, their reflections may prompt them to work differently with EPs in the future.

This study set out to specifically explore the views of DTs, a group whose voice was lacking in research regarding LAC, thus providing a unique contribution to the body of research in this area. It seems pertinent therefore, to conclude with the voice of a DT;

School 9: I think possibly a new approach needs to be looked at really, especially for LAC. If it's a service that you want us to value then give it to us free, don't make it difficult for us to access it. You know come and help us support these LAC. (262-264)

References

- Ainsworth, M, D, S. (1982). Attachment Retrospect and Prospect. In Parkes, C. M. and Stevenson-Hind, J. *The Place of Attachment in Human Behaviour*. pp. 3-30, New York: Basic Books.
- Alvesson, M. and Sköldbberg, K. (2009). *Reflexive Methodology: Vistas for Qualitative Research*. (2nd ed.) London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Amodeo, M., and Collins, M, E. (2007). Using a positive youth development approach in addressing problem-oriented youth behaviour. *Families in Society*, 88 (1), 75-85.
- Archer, C., and A. Burnell. (2003). *Trauma, attachment and family permanence*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Aronson. J. (1994). A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis. *The Qualitative Report*, 2 (1). Retrieved, February 2013, from; <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/BackIssues/QR2-1/aronson.html>
- Association of Educational Psychologists. (2010). *The Contribution of Educational Psychologists to the Delivery of Local Services for Children*. Retrieved March 2014, from: http://www.aep.org.uk/system/files/The%20Contribution%20of%20Educational%20Psychologists%20to%20the%20Delivery%20of%20Local%20Services%20for%20Children_0.pdf
- Bailey, S., Thoburn, J., and Wakeham, H. (2002). Using the Looking After Children dimensions to collect aggregate data on well-being. *Child and Family Social Work*, 7, 189-201.
- Baxter, J. and Eyles J. (1997). Evaluating qualitative research in social geography: establishing `rigour' in interview analysis. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, New Series*, 22, 505 – 525.
- Berridge, D. (2007). Theory and explanation in child welfare: Education and looked after children. *Child and Family Social Work*, 12, 1-10.

- Berridge, D. (2012). Reflections on child welfare research and the policy process: Virtual school heads and the education of looked after children. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42, 26–41.
- Bion, W. (1962). *Learning from experience*. London: Heinemann. New York: Basic Books.
- Bomber, M. (2008). *Inside I'm Hurting: Practical Strategies for Supporting Children with Attachment Difficulties in Schools*. Britain: Worth Publishing.
- Boorn, C. (2008). *Teachers' Perceptions of Looked After Children: Behaviour, Attainment and Resilience*. Doctoral Thesis, University of East Anglia.
- Borland, M., Pearson, C., Hill, M., Tisdall, K. and Bloomfield, I. (1998). *Education and Care Away from Home: A Review of Research, Policy and Practice*, Edinburgh: SCRE, The Scottish Council for Research in Education.
- Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent-child Attachment and Healthy Human Development*. New York: Basic Books.
- Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic analysis and Code Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bradbury, S. (2006). Corporate parenting: A discussion of the educational psychologist's role. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 22(2), 141–158.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, 77-101.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide for Beginners*. SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Brewin, M. and Statham, J. (2011). Supporting the transition from primary school to secondary school for children who are looked after. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 27(4), 365-381.
- British Psychological Society (2010). *Code of ethics and conduct*. Leicester: BPS.

Brodie, I. (2010). *Improving educational outcomes for looked after children and young people*. London: C4EO. Retrieved, February 2014, from; http://www.c4eo.org.uk/themes/vulnerablechildren/educationaloutcomes/files/improving_educational_outcomes_research_review_1.pdf

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brooks, R., and Goldstein, S. (2004). *The Power of Resilience: Achieving Balance, Confidence, and Personal Strength in Your Life*. New York: McGraw-Hill

Children's Services Business Support Report (2013). X¹ Borough Council.

Cairns, K. (2001). *The effects of trauma on childhood learning*. In S. Jackson (Ed.), *Nobody Ever Told Us School Matters: Raising the Educational Attainments of Children in Care* (pp.191–205). London: British Agency for Adoption and Fostering.

Cairns, K. (2002). *Attachment, Trauma and Resilience*. London: British Association for Adoption and Fostering.

Cairns, K. (2008). *Transitions and resilience. Notes presented at the conference 'Promoting Resilience: Helping Traumatized Children'* by AKAMAS, Glasgow, UK.

Campbell, D., Draper, R., and Huffington, C. (1988). *Teaching systemic thinking*. London: DC Associates.

Cameron, R. J., & Maginn, C. (2009). *Achieving positive outcomes for Children in Care*. London: Sage.

Cameron, R. J., and Maginn, C. (2011). Living psychology: The emotional warmth dimension of professional childcare. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 28(3), 44-62.

¹ Identifying features linked to the LA in which the research took place have been removed from this reference.

- Cantos, A. L., Gries, L. T, and Slis, V. (1996.) Correlates of therapy referral in foster children. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 20, 921–931.
- Chamberlain, P., Price, J., Leve, L. D., Laurent, H., Landsverk, J. A. and Reid, J. B. (2008). Prevention of behaviour problems for children in foster care: outcomes and mediation effects. *Prevention Science*, 9, 17–27.
- Children and Families Bill. (2013). (DfE) Retrieved, March 2014, from <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/20132014/0171/14171.pdf>
- Children’s Work Force Development Council. (2007). *Providing Effective Supervision*. Retrieved March 2014, from; [http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Providing Effective Supervision unit.pdf](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/Providing_Effective_Supervision_unit.pdf)
- Clark-Carter, D. (1998). *Quantitative psychological research: A student handbook*. Hove: Psychology Press.
- Connelly, G., McKay, E., and O'Hagan, P. (2003). *Learning with Care: Information for Carers, Social Workers and Teachers Concerning the Education of Looked After Children and Young People*. Glasgow: University of Strathclyde.
- Coulling, N. (2000). Definitions of successful education for the 'looked after' child: A multi- agency perspective. *Support for Learning*, 15, 30- 3.
- Creswell, J. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. London: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W., and Plano Clark, V. L. (2007). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dann, R. (2011) Look out! ‘Looked After!’ Look here! Supporting ‘Looked After’ and adopted children in the primary classroom. *Education*, 39(5), 455-465
- Dennison, A., McBay, C., and Shaldon, C. (2006). Every team matters: The contribution educational psychology can make to effective teamwork. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 23(4), 80-90.

Dent, R, J. and Cameron, S. (2003). Developing Resilience in Children who are in Public Care: the educational psychology perspective. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 19(1), 3-19.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DFCSF). (2009). *The role and responsibilities of the designated teacher for looked after children: Statutory guidance for school governing bodies*. London: DFCSF Publications. Retrieved, February 2014, from; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/01046-2009BKT-EN.PDF>

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DFCSF). (2010a). *Promoting the educational achievement of looked-after children: Statutory guidance for local authorities*. Nottingham: DFCSF Publications. Retrieved, February 2014, from; https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276468/educational_achievement_of_looked_after_children.pdf

Department for Children Schools and Families (DFCSF). (2010b). Working together to safeguard children; A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Retrieved March 2014, from; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/00305-2010Dom-EN-v3.pdf>

Department for Education (DfE). (2009). Improving the attainment of Looked After Children. Retrieved, February 2014, from; https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190241/01048-2009.pdf

Department for Education (DfE). (2010). The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning Transition to Adulthood for Care Leavers. Retrieved, February 2014, from <http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/v/volume%203%20planning%20transition%20to%20adulthood%20for%20care%20leavers.pdf>

Department for Education (DfE). (2013a). *Statistical first release/36: Children Looked After by Local Authorities in England (including adoption and care leavers) - year ending 31 March 2013*. Retrieved, January 2014, from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244872/SFR36_2013.pdf

Department for Education (DfE). (2013b). *Statistical first release/50: Outcomes for Looked After by Local Authorities in England - year ending 31 March 2013*. Retrieved January 2014, from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/264385/SFR50_2013_Text.pdf

Department for Employment and Education (DfEE). (2000). *Educational Psychology Services (England): cover role, good practice and future directions. The research report*. Nottingham: DfEE Publications. Retrieved February 2014, from; <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/12356/1/epwg%20research%20report.pdf>

Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2000). *Guidance on the Education of children and young people in public care*. London: DfES. Retrieved, February 2014, from; <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/4745/1/EDGUIDEMIG1120.pdf>

Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2001). *Special educational needs code of practice*. Nottinghamshire: DfES. Retrieved, February 2014, from; Publications. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DfES%20581%20200mig2228.pdf>

Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2004) *Every Child Matters: change for children*. London: DfES Publications. Retrieved, February 2014, from; <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/DFES10812004.pdf>

Department for Education and Skills (DfES). (2006). *Care matters: Transforming the Lives*. London: DfES Publications. Retrieved, February 2014, from; <https://www.education.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/6731DfES-Care%20Matters.pdf>

Department of Health (DoH). (1997). *People like us the report of the review of the safeguards for children living away from home*. The Stationery Office.

Department of Health (DoH). (2000). *Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 regulations and guidance*. Retrieved May, 10, 2012, from: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/Publication_sLegislation/DH_4005283.

- Dowling, E., and Osborne, E. (2003). *The family and the school: A Joint Systems Approach to Problems with Children* (2nd Ed). London: Routledge.
- Drever, E. (2004). *Using Questionnaires in Small-scale Research: A beginner's guide*. London: The SCRE Centre.
- Farrell, P. (1995). *Children with Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*. Brighton and London: The Falmer Press.
- Farrell, P., Woods, K., Lewis, S., Rooney, S., Squires, S., and O'Connor, M. (2006). *A Review of the functions and contribution of educational psychologists in England and Wales in light of "Every Child Matters"*. DfES Research Publication.
- Fonagy, P., Steele, M., Steele, H., Higgitt, A. M., and Target, M. (1994). The Emanuel Miller Memorial Lecture 1992: The theory and practice of resilience. *Journal of Child psychology and Psychiatry*, 35(2), 231-257.
- Fox, M., Martin, P., Green G. (2007). *Doing Practitioner Research*. Sage, London
- Garnezy, N. (1993). Children in Poverty: Resiliency despite Risk. *Psychiatry*, 56, 127- 136.
- Geddes, H. (2006). *Attachment in the Classroom: The links between children's early experience, emotional wellbeing and performance in school*. London: Worth Publishing.
- Giddens, A. (1987). *Social Theory and Modern Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gillham, B. (2005). *Research interviewing the range of techniques: A practical guide*. London: Open University.
- Gilligan, R. (1997). Beyond permanence? - The Importance of resilience in child placement practice and planning. *Adoption and Fostering*, 21, 12-20

- Golding, H. R., Dent, R., and Stott, L. (2006). *Thinking Psychologically About Children Who are Looked After and Adopted: Space for Reflection*. West Sussex: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Gough, D. (2007). Weight of Evidence: a framework for the appraisal of the quality and relevance of evidence. *Research Papers in Education*, 22(2), 213-228.
- Hanko, G. (1990). Special Needs in Ordinary Classrooms. In C. Newton. (1995). *Circles of Adults: Reflecting and Problem Solving Around Emotional Needs and Behaviour*. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 11, 2, 8.
- Hanko, G. (1999). *Increasing competence through collaborative problem-solving: Using insight into social and emotional factors in children's learning*. London: D. Fulton Publishers.
- Hargreaves, D., Hester, S., and Mellor, F. (1975). *Deviance in Classrooms*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Harker, R. M., Dobel-Ober, D., Lawrence, J., Berridge, D., and Sinclair, R. (2003). Who takes care of education? Looked after children's perceptions of support for educational progress. *Child and Family Social Work*, 8(2), 89-100.
- Harker, R. M., Dobel-Ober, D., Berridge, D. and Sinclair, R. (2004). More than the sum of its parts? Inter-professional working in the education of Looked After Children. *Children and Society*, 18, 179-193
- Hawkins, P., and Shohet, R. (1989). *Supervision in the helping professions: An individual, group, and organizational approach*. In D. Wilson, & C. Newton. (2006). *Circles of Adults: A team approach to problem solving around challenging behaviour and emotional needs*. S.I.: Inclusive Solutions UK Ltd.
- Heath, A. F., Colton, M. J., and Aldgate, J. (1994). Failure to Escape: a longitudinal study of foster children's educational attainment. *British Journal of Social Work*, 24, 241- 260.
- Heider, F. (1958). *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. New York: Wiley.

- Hewstone, M., Fincham, F. D. and Jaspars, J. M. F. (1983). *Attribution Theory and Research: Conceptual Developmental and Social Dimensions*. London and New York: Academic Press.
- Hinshelwood, R. D. (2009). Do unconscious processes affect educational institutions? *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 14(4), 509-522.
- HM Government. (1989). *Children Act*. London: HMSO. Retrieved, August, 2013, from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/data.pdf>.
- HM Government. (1998). *School Standards and Framework Act*. Retrieved, August, 2013, from: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/31/data.pdf>.
- Holland, J., and Randerson, C. (2005). *Supporting Children in Public Care in Schools*. London. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Honey, K. L., Reese, P. and Griffey, S. (2011). Investigating Self Perceptions and Resilience in Looked After Children. *Educational Psychology in Practice* 27(1), 37-52.
- Howe, D. (2006) Developmental attachment psychotherapy with fostered and adopted children. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 11, 128-134
- Hughes, D. (2004). An attachment-based treatment of maltreated children and young people. *Attachment and Human Development*, 6(3), 263-278.
- Hughes, M. (2006). Multi-agency teams: Why should working together make everything better?. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 23(4), 60–71.
- Hughes, D. (2007). *Attachment focussed family therapy*. London: Norton and Company.
- Jackson, S. (1994) Educating children in residential and foster care. *Oxford Review of Education*, 20(3), 267-280.
- Jackson, S. (1987). Residential care and education. *Children and Society*, 2, 335-350.

- Jackson, E., Whitehead, J., and Wigford, A. (2010). In an EBD population do Looked After Children have specific needs relating to resilience, self-perception and attainment?. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 26(1), 69–77.
- James, S. (2004) Why do foster care placements disrupt? An investigation of reasons for placement change in foster care. *The Social Service Review*, 78, 601–626.
- James, S., Landsverk, J. and Slymen, D. J. (2004) Placement movement in out-of-home care: patterns and predictors. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 26, 185–206.
- Johnson, R. B., and Onwuegbuzie. (2004). Mixed methods research: a research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.
- Jones, R. E. S., Everson-Hock, E. S., Papaioannou, D., Guillaume, L., Goyder, E., Chilcott, J., Cooke, J., Payne, N., Duenas, A., Sheppard L. M. and Swann, C. (2011). Factors associated with outcomes for looked-after children and young people: a correlates review of the literature. *Child Care, Health and Development*, 37(5), 613–622.
- Kellett-Boyle, S. (2010). What constitutes effective support for looked after children; the views of young people in care and designated teachers. Doctoral Thesis, University of Bristol.
- Kvale, S. (2007). *Doing Interviews*. London: Sage Publications.
- Lieberman, A. F. (2003). The treatment of attachment disorder in infancy and early childhood: Reflections from clinical intervention with later-adopted foster care children. *Attachment and Human Development*, 5(3), 279–82.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E., G. (2000). Paradigmatic controversies, contradictions and emerging confluences. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed., pp. 163-188). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Mackay, T. and Greig, A. (2007). Editorial. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 24, 4-6.

Maslow, A. (1962). *Toward a psychology of being*. Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co.

Maslow, A. (1970). *Motivation and personality*. New York: Harper and Row.

McClung, M., and Gayle, V. (2010). Exploring the care effects of multiple factors on the educational achievement of children looked after at home and away from home: An investigation of two Scottish local authorities. *Child and Family Social Work*, 15(4), 409-431.

McParlin, P. (1996). Children 'looked after' (in care): Implications for educational psychologists. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 12, 112-117.

Mertens, D. M. (1998). *Research methods in education and Psychology: Integrating diversity with quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage.

Mickelson, K. D., Kessler, R. C., and Shaver, P. R. (1997). Adult attachment in a nationally representative sample. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 73, 1092-1106.

Millward, R., Kennedy, E. and Towlson, K. (2006). Reactive attachment disorder in looked after children. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 11, 273–279

Minichiello, V., Aroni, R., Timewell, E., and Alexander, L. (1990). *In-Depth Interviewing: Researching people*. Melbourne: Longman Cheshire.

Morgan, D. L. (2007). Paradigms Lost Pragmatism Regained. Methodological implications of combining quantitative and qualitative methods. *Journal of Mixed methods research*. 1(1), 48-76

National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE). (2010). PH28 Looked-after children and young people: full guidance. Retrieved March 2013, from; <http://www.nice.org.uk/nicemedia/live/13244/51173/51173.pdf>

Newman, T. (2002). *Promoting Resilience: A Review of Effective Strategies for Childcare Services*. Bamado's Giving Children Back Their Future.

- Newton, R. R., Litrownik, A. J., and Landsverk, J. A. (2000). Children and youth in foster care: detangling the relationship between problem behaviours and number of placements. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 24, 1363–1374.
- Norwich, B., Richards, A., and Nash, T. (2010). Educational psychologists and children in care: practices and issues. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 26(4), 375–390.
- Nulty, D. D. (2008). The adequacy of response rates to online and paper surveys: what can be done? *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 33(3), 301–314.
- OFSTED. (2008). Looked After Children: Good practice in schools. Retrieved February 2014, from; [file:///C:/Users/Coleen/Downloads/Looked%20after%20children%20-%20good%20practice%20in%20schools%20PDF%20format\).pdf](file:///C:/Users/Coleen/Downloads/Looked%20after%20children%20-%20good%20practice%20in%20schools%20PDF%20format).pdf)
- Oosterman, M. (2007) Disruptions in foster care: review and meta-analysis. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 29, 53–76.
- Pardeck, J. T. (1983). An empirical analysis of behavioural and emotional problems of foster children as related to re-placement in care. *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 7, 75–78.
- Peake, A. (2011). The needs of looked after children: A rapid response when school placement may be in jeopardy. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 28(3), 73-80.
- Petticrew, M. and Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic reviews in social sciences: A practical guide*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing
- Pringle, M. K. (1965). *Deprivation and education*. London: Longman.
- Ranson, K. E. and Urichuk, L. J. (2008). The effect of parent–child attachment relationships on child biopsychosocial outcomes: a review. *Early Child Development and Care*, 178 (2), 129-152.
- Robson, C. (2002). *Real world research*. (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

- Robson, C. (2011). *Real World research*. (3rd ed.). UK: Wiley
- Rutter, M. (1993). Resilience: some conceptual considerations, *Journal of Adolescent Health, 14*, 626-31.
- Ryan, G. W., and H. R. Bernard. 2000. Data management and analysis methods. In *Handbook of qualitative research*, (2d ed.) edited by N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln, 769–802. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sallnas, M., Vinnerljung, B. and Westermark, K. (2004). Breakdown of teenage placements in Swedish foster and residential care. *Child and Family Social Work, 9*, 141–152.
- Sagor, R. (1996). Building resiliency in students. *Educational Leadership, 54*, 38-43.
- Schneider, B. H., Atkinson, L., and Tardif, C. (2001). Child-parent attachment and children's peer relations: A quantitative review. *Developmental Psychology, 37*, 86-100.
- Silverman, D. (2001) *Interpreting qualitative data: Methods for analysing talk, text and interaction* (2nd Ed.). London: Sage
- Smith. A. J., Flowers. P., & Larkin. M. (2009). *Interpretative phenomenological analysis. Theory and research*. London: Sage
- Social Exclusion Unit. (2003). *A better education for children in care*. London: Social Exclusion Unit.
- Sprince, J. (2005). Towards an integrated network. A psychoanalytic perspective on consultation. 7th *Annual fostering and adopting conference*. Bristol: National Health Service Foundation Trust.
- Sugden, E. J. (2013). Looked After Children: What supports them? *Educational Psychology in Practice, 29*(4), 367-382.
- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (1998). *Mixed Methodology: Combining qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

- Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (2010). *Handbook of Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*. (2nd ed.) London: SAGE.
- Teijlingen Van, E., Rennie, A. M., Hundley, V., Graham, W. (2001). The importance of conducting and reporting pilot studies: the example of the Scottish births Survey. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 34, 289-295
- Thomson, A. I. (2007). Looked after children: Non-local authority placements and meeting educational needs. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 23(3), 273-282.
- Thomas E., and Magilvy J. K. (2011). Qualitative rigour or research validity in qualitative research. *Journal for Specialists in Paediatric Nursing*, 16, 151-155.
- Vieria, F. and Marques, I. (2002). Supervising reflective teacher development practices. *English Language Teacher Education and Development*, 6. 1-18. Retrieved, March 2014 from; <http://bravestar.csv.warwick.ac.uk/issues/volume-6/V6Vieira.pdf>
- Walker, L. (2012). *An Exploration of Educational Psychologists' Perceptions of the Experiences of Supporting Children in Care*. Doctoral Thesis, Tavistock and Portman, Essex University.
- Warren, C.A.B. (2001): 'Qualitative Interviewing' In: J.F. Gubrium and J.A. Holstein eds. *Handbook of Interview Research*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications: 83-102.
- Ward, F., and Thurston, M. (2006). *Understanding risk and protective factors: Findings from a sample of vulnerable children and young people in Crewe*. Chester: Centre for Public Health Research, University of Chester.
- Ward, H., Skuse, T., and Munro, E. R. (2005). 'The best of times, the worst of times', Young people's views of care and accommodation. *Adoption and Fostering*, 29(1), 8-17.
- Willig, C. (2009). *Introducing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Wilson, H. (2002). Brain science, early intervention and 'at risk' families: Implications for parents, professionals and social policy. *Social Policy and Society*, 1(3), 191–202.
- Winter, K. (2006). Widening our knowledge concerning young looked after children: the case for research using sociological models of childhood. *Child and family social work*, 11(1), 55-64.
- Wolfendale, S. and Bryans, T. (2004). Evaluation of the Looking After Literacy Project in Kent for Children in Public Care. The National Literacy Association; The Who Cares? Trust; Kent County Council; The Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust.
- Woodier, D. (2011). Building resilience in looked after young people: a moral values approach. *British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 39(3) 259-282.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Systematic Literature Search 1 - 3

Search 1	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'Looked after children*' and 'teachers*' and 'perceptions*'
Results	2
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	1
Included	Paper 1 - Investigating self-perceptions and resilience in Looked After Children.

Search 2	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'Looked after children*' and 'teachers*' and 'views*'
Results	3
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0

Search 3	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'children in care*' and 'teachers*' and 'perceptions*'
Results	598
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	68
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Academic Journals, English; Ages 0-17, references available
Results	15
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0

Appendix 2

Systematic Literature Search 4 - 10

Search 4	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'Looked after children*' and 'teachers*'
Results	71
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	8
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	3
	<p>Paper 2 - Supporting the transition from primary school to secondary school for children who are Looked After.</p> <p>Paper 3 - Building resilience in Looked After young people: a moral values approach.</p> <p>Paper 4 – Children with Disabilities in Foster Care: The role of the school social worker in the context of special education</p>

Search 5	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'children in care*' and 'school staff*'
Results	526
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	26
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	1
	<p>Paper 5 - Developing Resilience in Children Who are in Public Care: the educational psychology perspective.</p>

Search 6	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'Children In Care*' and 'Teachers*'
Results	10,192
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References Available; 2003-2013
Results	1058
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Academic Journals, English; Ages 0-17, references available
Results	261
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Subject; Teachers
Results	22
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0

Search 7	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'looked after children*' and 'school staff*'
Results	4
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0

Search 8	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'looked after children*' and 'school*'
Results	492
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	45
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	1
	Paper 6 - More than the sum of its parts? Inter-professional working in the education of looked after children.

Search 9	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'looked after children*' and 'education*'
Results	323
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	15
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0
	Duplicates from previous searches

Search 10	
Search Date	14/8/2013
Databases searched	PsychINFO, Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete
Key Words used	'children in care*' and 'school*' and 'teachers*'
Results	8266
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Full text; Peer reviewed; References available; 2003-2013
Results	908
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Academic Journals, English; Ages 0-17, references available
Results	218
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Subject; teachers
Results	15
Advanced Search Inclusion Criteria	Titles and Abstracts reviewed and selected for suitability
Results	0
	Duplicates from previous searches

Appendix 3

Excluded Papers

Name of Paper	Reason for Exclusion
Stanley, G. (2012). Children with Disabilities in Foster Care: The Role of The School Social Worker in the Context of Special Education. <i>Children and Schools</i> , 34(3), 190-192.	Not enough focus on the role or perceptions of teachers in supporting LAC in school. Article solely focuses on a school based social worker, littler reference is made as to how they work alongside school staff.
Dent, R, J. and Cameron, S. (2003). Developing Resilience in Children who are in Public Care: the educational psychology perspective. <i>Educational Psychology in Practice</i> , 19(1), 3-19.	Not enough focus on the role or perceptions of teachers in supporting LAC in school. Article focuses on perceptions of Educational Psychologists.
Peak, A. (2011). The Needs of Looked After Children: A rapid response when school placement may be in jeopardy. <i>Educational and Child Psychology</i> , 28(3), 73-80.	Not enough focus on the role or perceptions of teachers in supporting LAC in school. Article focuses on the response of an Educational Psychology service to support LAC.

Appendix 4

Summary of Critically Reviewed Studies

Author and date	Aim of the Study	Type of Study	Main Findings	Strengths and Limitations
Harker, Dobel-Ober, Berridge and Sinclair (2004)	This discussion paper aims to review a project underway in 3 LAs in England, promoting interagency working around the education of LAC.	Discussion/Review paper written in a peer reviewed journal.	The author proposes that there is a lack of interagency working between teachers and social workers due to limited understanding of one another's roles and competing workloads. They propose, joint training days and work shadow opportunities to improve the education of LAC.	<p><i>Strengths</i> One of the authors is involved with the project thus there is some detail provided on methodology and participants (e.g. Qualitative Interviews). The project takes place in 3 different LAs and claims and findings are supported by previous research. Considers teachers perceptions.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> It is not clear whether the paper is a write up of the study taking place or a discussion on the project. The article is referred to as a research paper but the methodological approach to the study is not made clear, there is no mention of ethics or analysis used to understand the interviews.</p>

Boorn (2008)	This paper explores how LAC are perceived by school staff, particularly taking into consideration the difficulties that LAC are reported to experience from teachers perspectives within the school.	'Multi-Method' design. Using a context setting questionnaire and semi structured interviews with teachers.	This study found higher incidences of behaviour problems and poorer educational attainment in LAC than non LAC as perceived by teachers. Teachers undervalued their ability to develop resilience in LAC and saw foster carers as having more expertise in this area.	<p><i>Strengths</i> <i>Doctoral thesis (philosophy). Written by an EP. Takes into account views of teachers in relation to LAC.</i> Quantitative and Qualitative analysis process are both clearly described. The study uses well established questionnaires within the first phase of the study, increasing trustworthiness of the data collected. The study also takes place across three LAs, increasing generalizability of the results. The paper acknowledges the role of EPs and provides a psychological framework for intervention for schools.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> Unpublished.</p>
--------------	--	--	---	---

Woodier (2010)	The aim of this paper is to describe the practice of a teacher working to support LAC. The author draws on general principles that in his view can guide teachers in supporting LAC.	This is a qualitative longitudinal study using a case study design, including observations, a reflective journal and records of work.	This study offers a detailed description of the specialist knowledge of one teacher. Emphasizes teacher's role in supporting LAC to develop a positive view of themselves through identifying inner strengths and fostering resilience. Highlights positive outcomes following work with two young people over 3 years. Offers the reader an insight into one way of working to support LAC.	<p><i>Strengths</i> Study is written from a teacher's perspective, the author acknowledges limitations of subjectivity and bias. Clear rationale for using case study methodology. Describes practice clearly and links to theory and previous research. Easy to follow and make sense of.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> Method of analysis and data collected is not clear. Case Study methodology used is supposed to offer a 'step into action', next steps for teachers are not made clear. It is not clear within the paper whether the author is a mainstream teacher based in the school or a specialist brought in specifically to work with these young people. It is not transparent how a classroom teacher could implement a similar level of support.</p>
----------------	--	---	--	--

<p>Kellet-Boyle (2010)</p>	<p>Investigate LAC and DTs perceptions on what they perceive to be effective support for LAC within school.</p>	<p>Qualitative study using interviews and focused groups.</p>	<p>This study highlights the views of LAC and DTs in relation to what is important in order to provide LAC with effective support in school. The study highlights that LAC value; friendships, supportive and empathic teachers and being treated as an individual but not singled out. DTs valued; being able to empathise with LAC and understand their world, information sharing between professionals (however, this was problematic) and viewed having background information on a child as essential in enabling them to provide targeted support. They also indicated that they had differing expectations for LAC re attainment.</p>	<p><i>Strengths</i> Doctoral thesis, written by and reviewed by EPs. Seeks the views of DTs. Clearly states participants and sampling techniques used. Detailed description of interviews and focused groups used to collect data. Detailed description of process of thematic analysis.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> <i>Unpublished. Not peer reviewed.</i></p>
----------------------------	---	---	---	---

<p>Dann (2011)</p>	<p>This paper aims to explore the effects of early life trauma and insecure attachments on brain development.</p>	<p>This is a discussion paper written by an ex primary school teacher and senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University.</p>	<p>The paper provides a brief description of research linked to trauma and brain development. Raises some key issues for teachers supporting LAC in school and offers some suggestions.</p>	<p><i>Strengths</i> Paper is written from the perspective of a teacher and university lecturer with an interest in the area. Easy to read and follow. Issues and suggestions raised are linked to content discussed within the paper.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> Not all claims/statements are linked to research evidence and theory, nor are justifications provided as to their importance or usefulness (in terms of strategies). Process by which conclusions are made is not made clear.</p>
--------------------	---	--	---	---

<p>Honey, Reese and Griffey (2011)</p>	<p>This paper set out to explore LAC and DTs perceptions of resilience.</p>	<p>Mixed methods study (based on the method of analysis used). Pre-existing questionnaires used to collect data.</p>	<p>This paper highlights key risk factors that schools can work to eliminate and raises important protective factors that can be fostered within schools.</p>	<p><i>Strengths</i> Seeks the views of DTs. Uses a pre existing/ established questionnaire to measure resilience. Detailed description of statistical analysis procedures and rational for choosing different tests. Clearly states participants and sampling method used. Use of comparison (Non LAC) group.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> Study design is not clear as was inferred from methods of analysis used. Double the number of participants were used within the comparison group. Greater emphasis placed on the views of LAC, higher number of participants that DTs. No explicit link to theory/previous research. Limited information on qualitative analysis process. Ethical considerations not mentioned. Difficult to follow and make sense of.</p>
--	---	--	---	--

<p>Brewin and Statham (2011)</p>	<p>This paper aims to explore key factors that support LAC through transition from primary to secondary school, from the perspective of key stakeholders (including teachers).</p>	<p>This is a qualitative study using semi structured interviews.</p>	<p>No single factor is perceived as most important for LAC during transition. Building and maintaining relationships was a key factor for all stakeholders; LACs ability to build and maintain relationships with peers and school staff and stakeholders' ability to build and maintain relationships with key adults in the child's life. Acknowledges role for EPs to support teachers during this stage.</p>	<p><i>Strengths</i> Clearly written and easy to follow. Rational included for chosen methodology. Inclusion of a pilot interview. Participants clearly stated and sampling process explained. Acknowledges limitations, e.g. small sample size. Analysis process described, linked to a framework, rational provided and evidenced. Linked to theory (Bronfrenbrenner). Findings and claims supported by previous research. Reference to ethics and confidentiality procedures. Sought the views of all available stakeholders within the scope of the research.</p> <p><i>Limitations</i> High number of 'Don't know' responses from teachers. Impact on statistics but also highlights key implications for future practice, regarding teachers knowing LAC on an individual basis - not referred to in the discussion.</p>
----------------------------------	--	--	--	---

Appendix 5

Completed Critiques for Articles

Article Title:	What constitutes effective support for Looked After Children: The views of young people in care and designated teachers
Author:	Kellet-Boyle, S. (2010)
Journal:	Doctoral Thesis - Ethos
Peer Reviewed:	No
Aim:	Investigate LAC and DTs perceptions of what they perceive to be effective support for LAC within school.
Design:	Qualitative
Methodology:	Data collection - Interviews and focus groups Data analysis – Inductive thematic analysis
Participants:	5 young people in care (aged 12 to 14) and 5 DTs participated in this study. All LAC were subject to care orders and had been in care for more than 12 months. All of the teachers were in designated roles for LAC in their schools and had been in this post for more than 12 months.
Findings:	LAC valued; Friendships Supportive and empathic teachers Being treated as an individual but not singled out. DTs valued; Having background information on a child as essential in enabling them to provide targeted support. Being able to empathise with LAC and understand their world. Information sharing between professionals (however, this was problematic) Differing expectations for LAC re attainment.
Trustworthiness/ Validity:	Measures what it intended to.
Accessibility:	Easy to read and follow.
Theory	Bronfenbrenner's ecological model.
Ethics:	Taken into account and approval sought.
Limitations:	Unpublished

	Not peer reviewed.
<i>Why is the paper important to the review question?</i>	Considers DTs views on support for LAC. Written by an Educational psychologist and considers the implications of the findings for EPs.

Appendix 6

Web Based Questionnaire – Phase 1

<http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/68937NECNM?preview=true#>

An Exploration of Teachers Perceptions on the Role of Educational Psychologists in Supporting LAC

0%

You and Your Role

1. Please select in which phase you are a Designated Teacher *

- Lower
- Primary
- Middle
- Upper
- Academy
- Free School

2. How long have you been the Designated Teacher for LAC? *

3. Please state the number of LAC currently attending your school? *

4. Do you know who the schools link Educational Psychologist is? *

- Yes
- No

5. Are you known to the schools link Educational Psychologist? *

- Yes
- No

Next Page

Your Experience of Working with Educational Psychologists to Support LAC

6. I have contacted an EP in relation to supporting a LAC in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

7. I have worked directly with an EP in relation to supporting a LAC in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

8. An EP has worked directly with a LAC on roll to the school in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

9. An EP has worked with the school at an organisational level to provide support and training in relation to meeting the needs of LAC in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

10. An EP has worked with the school to ensure multi-agency collaboration for a LAC in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

11. An EP has successfully signposted me to other support services in relation to a LAC in the past year *

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Thrice
- > Three

12. EPs have specialist knowledge that no other service is able to offer *

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

13. EPs are able to support schools to consider 'issues and concerns' from a different perspective *

- Strongly Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

14. Please select the activities an EP has been involved with regarding a LAC in your school in the past year *

- Consultation** - Working collaboratively with school staff, parents/carers and other professionals to problem solve around a particular issue.
- Assessment** - Observation, analysis of work, questionnaires, checklists, curriculum based, dynamic and cognitive.
- Intervention** - Strategies to overcome barriers, may be delivered directly by an EP on a 1:1 or group basis or indirectly through teaching staff supported and monitored by an EP.
- Training** - Advice and support on a wide range of issues depending on the needs of the school.
- Research/Project Work** - Case studies, inquiries, evaluations, literature reviews on a particular topic area.
- Not applicable

Additional Comments

15. Please feel free to make any additional comments regarding your experience of working with EPs to support LAC;



[Previous Page](#)

[Finish Survey](#)

Appendix 7

Phase 1 Information Sheet

Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

13th March 2013

Dear Designated Teacher for Looked After Children,

Research Project: An Exploration of Teachers perceptions on the role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children.

I would like to invite you to take part in the first phase of a research project. Please read the following information carefully before deciding whether or not you would like to participate.

My name is Coleen Whitehouse. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist, studying at the University of East London.

The aim of this research project is to explore teacher's perceptions on the role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children. There is little research in this area at present and it is hoped that this research will help to inform how EPs can improve their practice when working to support Looked After Children (LAC).

If you wish to take part in this study, it will involve completing a brief questionnaire regarding your experiences of working with EPs to support LAC. The information you provide by completing the questionnaire will later be considered in order to gain further understanding of teacher's perceptions on the role of EPs in supporting LAC.

If you choose to take part in this research project, by completing and submitting the web based questionnaire you will be consenting to the information you provide being used within this study. The information you provide will be kept confidential and you will have the right to withdraw at any time during the study - you will not be required to give reasons regarding this. If you decide to withdraw from the study prior to the data analysis phase your information will be destroyed and will not be included as part of this

study.

All information will be kept confidential, stored on locked premises and destroyed following the completion of the study.

I hope this information sheet provides you with enough helpful information to inform your decision regarding taking part. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information on the details below.

If you wish to take part please click the web link attached and follow the instructions provided in order to complete the questionnaire securely.

<http://www.smart-survey.co.uk/LAC>

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet. I look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,



Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Educational Psychology Service

[Redacted contact information for Coleen Whitehouse]

Mary Robinson
Research Supervisor

School of Psychology
University of East London

[Redacted contact information for Mary Robinson]

Appendix 8

Phase 2 - Teachers Perceptions of the role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children

Example Semi-Structured Interview Schedule (45-60 minutes)

- TEP Introductions, aims of the project and explain how the interview will contribute to the research project
- Participant introductions, a little bit about their experience and any questions they may have.

- How long have you been the Designated Teacher for LAC?
- Have you ever carried out this role in another school/LA?
- How many LAC do you currently have on roll?
- Tell me how you see your role/describe how in your role as Designated Teacher you work to support LAC?
- Are you able to describe the level/type of need of your current LAC?
- Is there anything you do that is different from your normal practice when working to support LAC?

- Describe what you know about the Educational Psychology Service?
- How many times have you accessed the service whilst in your role as Designated Teacher?
- Describe your experience of working with the service?
- When requesting the involvement of the service what support/outcome were you hoping for? Was it achieved?
- What has the service been able to offer towards supporting LAC in your school (individual, school and multiagency level)?
- Reflecting on the examples you have mentioned, describe anything else you feel the service could have offered?
- As a school/in your role describe what support you feel the Educational Psychology Service could offer in order to support LAC directly or support you as a school to further meet their needs?

- Thinking about the examples you have mentioned was there anything 'extra' or 'unique' about the involvement of the Educational Psychology service when working to support LAC?
- Based on what you know of the Educational Psychology service how would you like to work with them in the future to support LAC (individual, school, multi-agency)?
- Thank participants for their time and participation, explain the next steps within the research project and provide participants with the opportunity to ask any questions.

Appendix 9

Phase 2 Information Sheet

Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service

18th April 2013

Dear [REDACTED],

Research Project; An Exploration of Teachers perceptions on the role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children.

You are invited to take part in phase two of a research project. Please read the following information carefully before deciding whether or not you would like to participate.

My name is Coleen Whitehouse. I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist, studying at the

University of East London.

The aim of this research project is to explore teacher's perceptions on the role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children. There is little research in this area at present from teacher's perspectives and it is hoped that this research will help to inform how EPs can improve their practice when working to support LAC.

You have been invited to take part in a semi- structured interview. During the interview you will be asked to reflect on your experience working with EPs to support LAC. The interview will last approximately fifty minutes and will be held in a quiet, confidential and convenient space. The information you provide will later be analysed for themes to gain further understanding of how teacher's perceive the role of EPs in supporting LAC.

Each interview will be recorded using a Dictaphone. The information you provide will be kept confidential, each participant will be given a code so that any personal information you provide will only be known to the researcher. All information will be kept in a locked cabinet within the Local Authority building

and will be destroyed one year following the completion of the study. When the study is complete you will receive a written feedback summary on the final results.

If you decide to take part in this research study you will be asked to sign a consent form and keep this information letter. You will have the right to withdraw at any time and you will not be required to provide reasons regarding this. If you decide to withdraw prior to the data analysis phase your information will be destroyed and will not be included as part of this study.

I hope this provides you with enough helpful information to inform your decision regarding taking part. Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information on the details below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. I look forward to your reply.

Yours Sincerely,



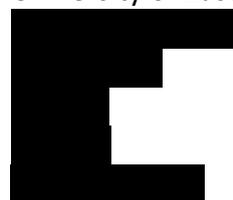
Coleen Whitehouse

Trainee Educational Psychologist

Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service



Mary Robinson
Research Supervisor
School of Psychology
University of East London



Appendix 10

Consent form for Participants in Phase Two

Coleen Whitehouse
Trainee Educational Psychologist
Educational Psychology Service



DATE

Dear Designated Teacher,

Informed consent form – please complete if you are happy to take part in the study.

Title: An Exploration of Teachers Perceptions on the Role of Educational Psychologists in supporting Looked After Children.

Name of Researcher: Coleen Whitehouse

**Please
tick
the
box**

- | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------|
| 1. | I confirm that I have read and understand the research information sheet for the above study. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. | I understand that my participation will involve being interviewed at a time and place to suit me. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. | I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time and without giving reason. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. | I understand that the above researcher from the University of East London who is working on the project will have access to my contact details at school. | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- 5. I understand that any data or information used in any publications which arise from this study will be anonymous.

- 6. I understand that all data will be stored securely and destroyed one year after the study is complete.

- 7. I agree to take part in the above study.

Name of Participant Date Signature

Name of Researcher Date Signature

Appendix 11

Sample Interview Transcript

Interview 1 – Middle School

School 1 Participant 1 (S1P1): Named Designated Teacher for Looked After Children (Head Teacher)

School 1 Participant 2 (S1P2): Named Child Protection Officer (Inclusion Support Lead)

Researcher (R): Trainee Educational Psychologist – Coleen Whitehouse

Interview took place in school, in the Head Teachers office.

17th April 2013 – 3.30 – 4.10

Line no.		Initial Coding	Notes
1	R: So are you joint designated teachers or how does it work in school?		
2	S1P1: Okay, so well I am the designated teacher... erm and C erm is also fully trained as... as a	DT Training	
3	child protection officer. Really she has the same training as I do but I have to be named with		
4	regards to the teacher role.	Understanding of legislation – requirement to be a qualified teacher	
5	R: Yep		
6	S1P1: Because one person has to be the named CPO - so that's me. C deputises it for me in a		
7	variety of, sort of meetings from child protection meetings to working on PEPS for looked after		
8	children so..	Shared responsibility	
9	R: Okay		

10	S1P1: Ye		
11	R: How long have you had the role?		
12	S1P1: So this for me is 2 and 2 thirds of a year, so two full years from September to now.	DT Experience	
13	R: Right ok.		
14	S1P2: And mines 5.	DT Experience	
15	R: Okay and is this the only school you have carried out this role in, or...?		
16	S1P1: I had a sort of co role with it in my previous school but I wasn't the lead, sort of,	Shared responsibility	
17	practitioner for it.		
18	R: So how would you describe your role as a designated teacher? What do you see as		
19	your responsibility?		
20	S1P1: Erm... do you want to start?		
21	S1P2: What as for child protection or for children looked after?		
22	R: For LAC		
23	S1P2: For Children looked after; attending their reviews, making sure their PEPs are current,	Understanding of DT	
24	liaising with the social worker making sure transition from foster placements - if they are moving	role	
25	is sorted – erm... but the biggest one is supporting the child and making sure they have their		
26	well-being sorted here.		
27	S1P1: Ye		
28	R: OK		

29	S1P2: School tends to be the one place that's consistent with everything else going on. Erm...	Stability			
30	S1P2: We've got one particular child who's had two placements within an 18 month – 2 year				
31	stretch, but here has been the solid.				
32	S1P1: Ye				
33	R: Right				
34	S1P1: ye				
35	S1P2: Actually 3...				
36	S1P1: 3 placements, ye ye...				
37	S1P2: We've had one come from out of Borough, which again we made a transition package			Package of support	
38	so...				
39	S1P1: Ye	DT role - Wellbeing DT role - Communication			
40	S1P2: It is about primarily making sure of their welfare and their wellbeing... but making sure that				
41	everybody communicates because sometimes we [school] get lost.				
42	S1P1: Ye				
43	S1P2: We should be actually the pinnacle but everybody else does lots of things and their oh	Hierarchy of responsibility/ priority			
44	ye... but we better notify the school				
45	S1P1: Ye - Ye because in our meetings we've obviously got the LAC meetings erm... which are	Meetings – LAC			
46	far more to do with the home life				
47	R: Yep				
48	S1P2: Medical needs				

Appendix 12

Braun and Clarke (2006) 15 Point Check List for Good Thematic Analysis

Process	No.	Criteria
Transcription	1	The data have been transcribed to an appropriate level of detail, and the transcripts have been checked against the tapes for accuracy.
Coding	2	Each data item has been given equal attention in the coding process.
	3	Themes have not been generated from a few vivid examples (an anecdotal approach), but instead the coding process has been thorough, inclusive and comprehensive.
	4	All relevant extracts for all each theme have been collated.
	5	Themes have been checked against each other and back to the original data set.
	6	Themes are internally coherent, consistent, and distinctive.
Analysis	7	Data have been analysed – interpreted, made sense of - rather than just paraphrased or described.
	8	Analysis and data match each other – the extracts illustrate the analytic claims.
	9	Analysis tells a convincing and well-organised story about the data and topic.
	10	A good balance between analytic narrative and illustrative extracts is provided.
Overall review	11	Enough time has been allocated to complete all phases of the analysis adequately, without rushing a phase or giving it a once-over-lightly.
Written report	12	The assumptions about, and specific approach to, thematic analysis are clearly explicated.
	13	There is a good fit between what you claim you do, and what you show you have done – i.e., described method and reported analysis are consistent.

	14	The language and concepts used in the report are consistent with the epistemological position of the analysis.
	15	The researcher is positioned as <i>active</i> in the research process; themes do not just emerge.

Appendix 13

Detailed Account of the Decisions made at Each Stage of the Thematic Analysis Process

Phase 1: Familiarisation with the Data

This phase of the analysis involved re-reading the nine transcripts. While reading the transcripts the researcher also listened to the recordings of the interviews to double check for accuracy and ensure familiarisation with the data set. During this stage, notes were made of any thoughts that arose in response to reading the transcripts, i.e. ideas that came up which were perceived to be important to DTs.

Phase 2: Generating Initial Codes

Within this phase of the analysis the data extracts were coded. The analysis was data driven rather than hypothesis driven. However, even without hypothesis to lead the analysis, the researcher did approach the data with a few preconceived ideas based on reflections following the interviews and initial notes made during the 1st phase (familiarisation). The main research aim was to explore EP support for LAC from the point of view of DTs. Therefore the researcher was interested in anything said about the needs of LAC, how EPs might be able to meet the needs of LAC as described by DTs, how EPs currently work with DTs to support this group and any ideas the teachers had about the support they want to receive from EPs moving forward. At this stage, each extract within the nine transcripts was coded without any explicit interpretation. See Table A for an example of coding.

Table A Example of coding by the researcher

Participant	Extract and line number	Initial code
School 1	<i>I have to say, the only, we only had one child that we actually had an EP referral (237-238)</i>	Limited EP involvement with LAC
School 3	<i>erm one child from X she's only just literally come into us in the past two weeks. Again she was a domestic violence situation. So she's got both social and emotional needs and then the other two were taken away because of neglect so difficulties with attachment with their, with their parents so they have attachment issues (53-56)</i>	LAC – Individual stories. LAC – individual needs
School 5	<i>It... it kind of then develops with them and so erm... we would meet fairly regularly and they know I'm the point of contact if there's a concern either in school or out of school (142-143)</i>	DT role – regular contact with LAC
School 9	<i>Ye, ye we split the role because it's such a big school. We've got nearly 2000 children here now, so we share the role for that and we share the role for safeguarding (4-5)</i>	Shared responsibility

In order to improve rigour within the analysis process, another Trainee Educational Psychologist read two of the transcripts in order to check agreement with my own coding and ensure that the most meaningful extracts within the data set had been considered. Table B illustrates how my colleague and I coded the same extracts from an interview.

Table B A comparison of coding by the researcher and another Trainee Educational Psychologist

Participant	Extract and line number	Initial code	Colleague code
School 1	<i>And so they've, they sort of missed out the EP level and gone straight into CAMHS (244-255)</i>	CAMHS viewed by DTs as meeting <i>higher level needs</i> .	CAMHS
School 1	<i>but yes, if they felt that we haven't used the EP and we should have done they will just say so. It, it might be to recommend some screening for something or an assessment so ye... (382-384)</i>	EP role – screening and assessment	Assessment
School 1	<i>so it's normally done at a professional level of do you think we need the EP service in.</i>	Joint decisions	Professional decision
School 2	<i>Yeah... and is that education of the EP service of what they do and of what other services do (408)</i>	DT understanding of EP service	Education of the EP service
School 2	<i>which is kind of what we want. We want... you know if people come to me they want a suggestion (368-369)</i>	EP role – provide suggestions	Strategies
School 2	<i>It was a waste of 12 weeks waiting (425)</i>	Frustration-Time	Time scales

It was agreed with my colleague that the most meaningful extracts within the data set had been considered and appropriately coded. Each code was written onto a separate post it note. For ease of cross referencing within the later stages, the interview code and line numbers (e.g. S1P1 334) were written on the post it note beside each code.

Phase 3: Searching for themes and sub-themes

Within the next phase of the analysis I began to identify themes and sub themes by grouping codes together. Writing out the codes onto post it notes enabled me to move codes around into potential groups. To make this process more manageable, I identified three broad categories from my notes and reflections as a starting point. There were a number of codes which represented talk about LAC, EPs and the DTs themselves. It was felt that in order to consider DTs perceptions of the EP role in supporting LAC, DTs will have some understanding of their role as a DT, LAC and theirs needs, and the role of an EP. I used these three groupings as an initial starting point (See appendix 16 initial thematic maps).

From this point, I broke the three areas down further into several groups. Some of these groups might have been large enough to be a theme, or small enough to be a sub-theme. Table C illustrates some examples of extracts, codes and themes after allowing for further interpretation of the data.

Table C Examples of data extracts, codes and themes developed during phase 3 of analysis.

Data extract	Code	Sub Theme
<i>School 9: I'm a contact supervisor for Spurgeons (300)</i>	DT emphasising knowledge and experience	Undertaking additional roles that support knowledge as a DT
<i>School 3: So she's got both social and emotional needs and then the other two were taken away because of neglect so difficulties with attachment with their, with their parents so they have attachment issues (54-56)</i>	LAC Needs – Neglect	General issues associated with LAC
	LAC Needs – attachment	
<i>School 6: we've got quite a skilled staff set and you know the farm is part of that so not all the children that arrive that are low ability, or that have emotional problems go out to the farm. (216-217)</i>	The farm – resource in school	Skills and resources in school
<i>School 3: so, erm... but it's been quite patchy in the past. Because and they didn't really have the capacity to be able to give us a dedicated educational psychologist (104-105)</i>	Limited EP capacity	Lack of EP time

Phase 4: Reviewing Themes

At this stage the researcher went back through the coded data extracts, to consider how well they fit together within each theme. The aim was for the coded extracts within each theme and sub theme to portray a consistent picture. This process helped to consider whether themes and sub themes fit together to convey a similar issue and highlighted potential problematic themes that needed refining.

For example, a potential problematic theme that needed refining, was a theme called 'LAC on roll in schools within the borough', even though all DTs referenced how many LAC were on roll within their school, this was in response to a direct

question within the interview and the aim of the question was to gain further understanding of the context of the school. Therefore it was decided that the number of LAC on roll within each school was not a key theme, but useful background information related to the context in which the research was carried out. Therefore this 'theme' was refined.

The outcome of this phase included splitting up and amalgamating potential themes and subthemes and redistributing them into other themes. A focus was also placed on reviewing groups within the miscellaneous theme and considering whether these groups fit within or overlap with other themes. For example, a potential theme called 'limited access', which aimed to convey the challenges schools faced in contacting and working with EPs, was merged with a theme called 'limitations of the EP input'. After further analysis it was felt that although limited access to EPs was a major point of discussion for DTs it fitted within the story and message being conveyed by the theme 'limitations of the EP input'. Table D indicates how themes were refined and grouped together within stage 4.

Table D, Examples 1 and 2, data extracts, codes and themes developed during phase 4 of analysis - demonstrating how themes were refined, grouped together and renamed.

Example 1

Data Extracts	<i>School 1: but I think, yeah to reiterate what S said I would, it would be done in an area where the social worker and us have said we feel this is the best way forward (420-422)</i>	<i>School 3: I think it's just about promoting positive outcomes for looked after children and just ensuring that everyone in school has a global overview of who the looked after children are and what their issues are (20-23)</i>	<i>School 8: ...the PEP meeting in particular was really just looking at the education. So for those meetings it would be us saying we think this is what we need to do or these are the targets we need to set to make sure the children make expected progress. The LAC reviews were very much more listening to all the other agencies, of which, education, I was just sort of sat there giving my input (133-137)</i>
Codes	Collaborative Approach	DT role – Information sharing	Pep meetings Lac reviews – multi agency approach
Sub theme	DT communication with key personnel		

Example 2

Data Extracts	<i>School 3: mainly learning needs yeah. Sometimes with behaviour if we have issues with behaviour we might go to them erm, but broadly their learning needs (113-114)</i>	<i>School 5: I think there's a bit of both there...I don't think it's widely, widely erm... established that they would offer that kind of It is very much a learning. That's certainly my understanding and that's the way it's always been put across from the SENCO. So I'm sure that's... and that's not just here that's in most schools I've worked (180-183)</i>	<i>S6P7: Ye, No. Not that I can recall in relation to our LAC. I would think if they've got learning needs and we had profiles of children like that then there would be because that's the slot.</i>
Codes	EP role learning needs and occasionally behaviour support	EP role – learning needs	EP involvement to meet learning needs
Sub theme	EPs provide support solely for educational needs		

At the end of this stage I had condensed and refined the number of themes and a large miscellaneous group. A total of 2 overarching themes, 3 core themes, 10 themes, 15 sub themes and 8 subordinate themes were found, a revised thematic map can be found in Appendix 18, illustrating the relationships between themes. I confirmed the extracts from the data set under each theme and related these to the larger picture being communicated.

Phase 5: Defining and Naming Themes

Within the final phase the researcher went back to the description of each theme to ensure it accurately matched the themes and sub-themes. The researcher also asked a colleague to read the descriptions of each theme to make sure the name clearly expressed what the theme or sub-theme was describing.

Appendix 14

Ethical Approval

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY

Dean: Professor Mark N. O. Davies, PhD, CPsychol, CBiol.

UEL
University of
East London

www.uel.ac.uk

School of Psychology Professional Doctorate Programmes

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to confirm that the Professional Doctorate candidate named in the attached ethics approval is conducting research as part of the requirements of the Professional Doctorate programme on which he/she is enrolled.

The Research Ethics Committee of the School of Psychology, University of East London, has approved this candidate's research ethics application and he/she is therefore covered by the University's indemnity insurance policy while conducting the research. This policy should normally cover for any untoward event. The University does not offer 'no fault' cover, so in the event of an untoward occurrence leading to a claim against the institution, the claimant would be obliged to bring an action against the University and seek compensation through the courts.

As the candidate is a student of the University of East London, the University will act as the sponsor of his/her research. UEL will also fund expenses arising from the research, such as photocopying and postage.

Yours faithfully,



Dr. Mark Finn

Chair of the School of Psychology Ethics Sub-Committee

Stratford Campus, Water Lane, Stratford, London E15 4LZ
tel: +44 (0)20 8223 4966 fax: +44 (0)20 8223 4937
e-mail: mno.davies@uel.ac.uk web: www.uel.ac.uk/psychology



The University of East London has campuses at London Docklands and Stratford
If you have any special access or communication requirements for your visit, please let us know. MINICOM 020 8223 2853



Appendix 15

ETHICAL PRACTICE CHECKLIST (Professional Doctorates)

SUPERVISOR: Mary Robinson

ASSESSOR: Miles Thomas

STUDENT: Coleen Whitehouse

DATE (sent to assessor): 04/02/2013

Proposed research topic: An Exploration of Teachers Perceptions on the Role of Educational Psychologists in Supporting Looked After Children

Course: Prof Doc Education and Child

1. Will free and informed consent of participants be obtained? YES
2. If there is any deception is it justified? N/A
3. Will information obtained remain confidential? YES
4. Will participants be made aware of their right to withdraw at any time? YES
5. Will participants be adequately debriefed? YES
6. If this study involves observation does it respect participants' privacy? NA
7. If the proposal involves participants whose free and informed consent may be in question (e.g. for reasons of age, mental or emotional incapacity), are they treated ethically? NA
8. Is procedure that might cause distress to participants ethical? NA
9. If there are inducements to take part in the project is this ethical? NA
10. If there are any other ethical issues involved, are they a problem? NA

APPROVED

YES		
-----	--	--

MINOR CONDITIONS:

REASONS FOR NON APPROVAL:

Assessor initials: MTh

Date: 6th Feb 2012

RESEARCHER RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST (BSc/MSc/MA)

SUPERVISOR: Mary Robinson

ASSESSOR: Miles Thomas

STUDENT: Coleen Whitehouse

DATE (sent to assessor): 04/02/2013

Proposed research topic: An Exploration of Teachers Perceptions on the Role of Educational Psychologists in Supporting Looked After Children

Course: Prof Doc Education and Child

Would the proposed project expose the researcher to any of the following kinds of hazard?

- | | | |
|----|-----------|----|
| 1 | Emotional | NO |
| 2. | Physical | NO |
| 3. | Other | NO |

(e.g. health & safety issues)

If you've answered YES to any of the above please estimate the chance of the researcher being harmed as: HIGH / MED / LOW

APPROVED

YES		
-----	--	--

MINOR CONDITIONS:

REASONS FOR NON APPROVAL:

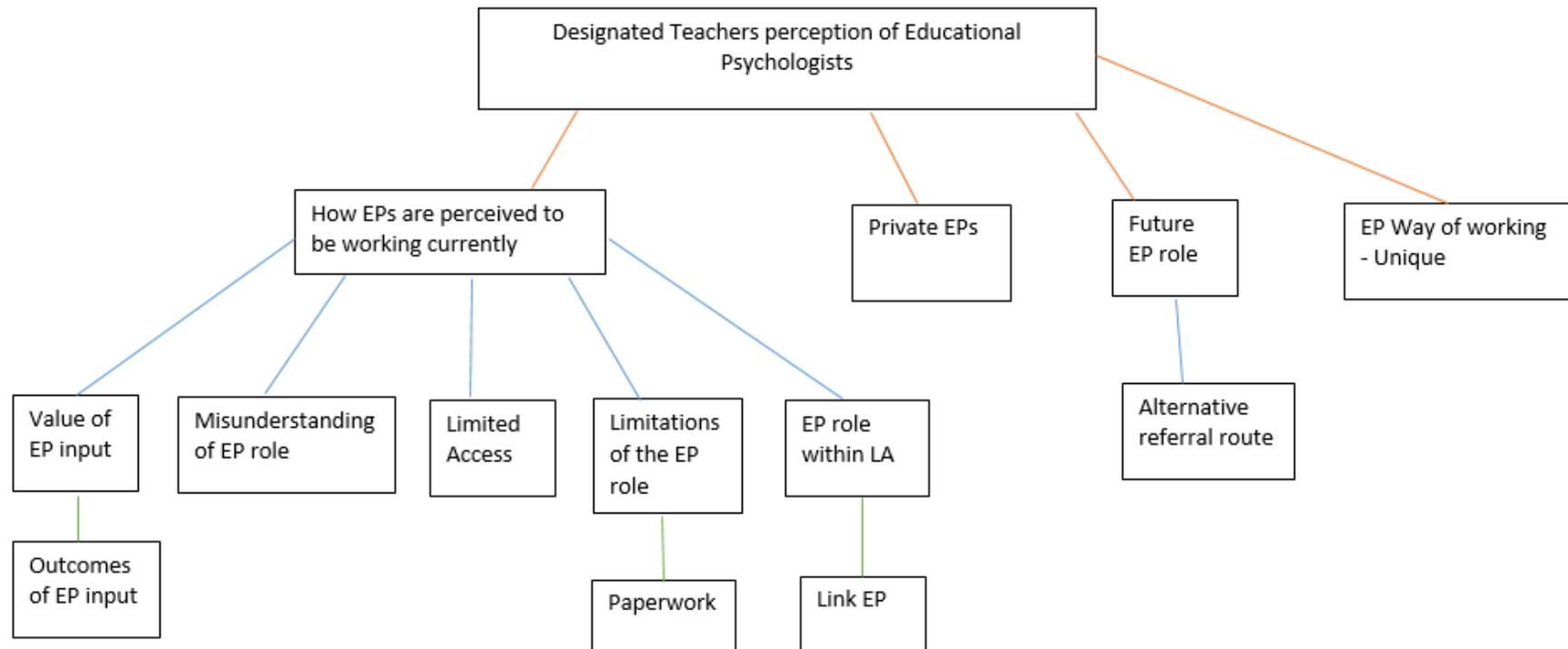
Assessor initials: MTh

Date: 6th Feb 2013

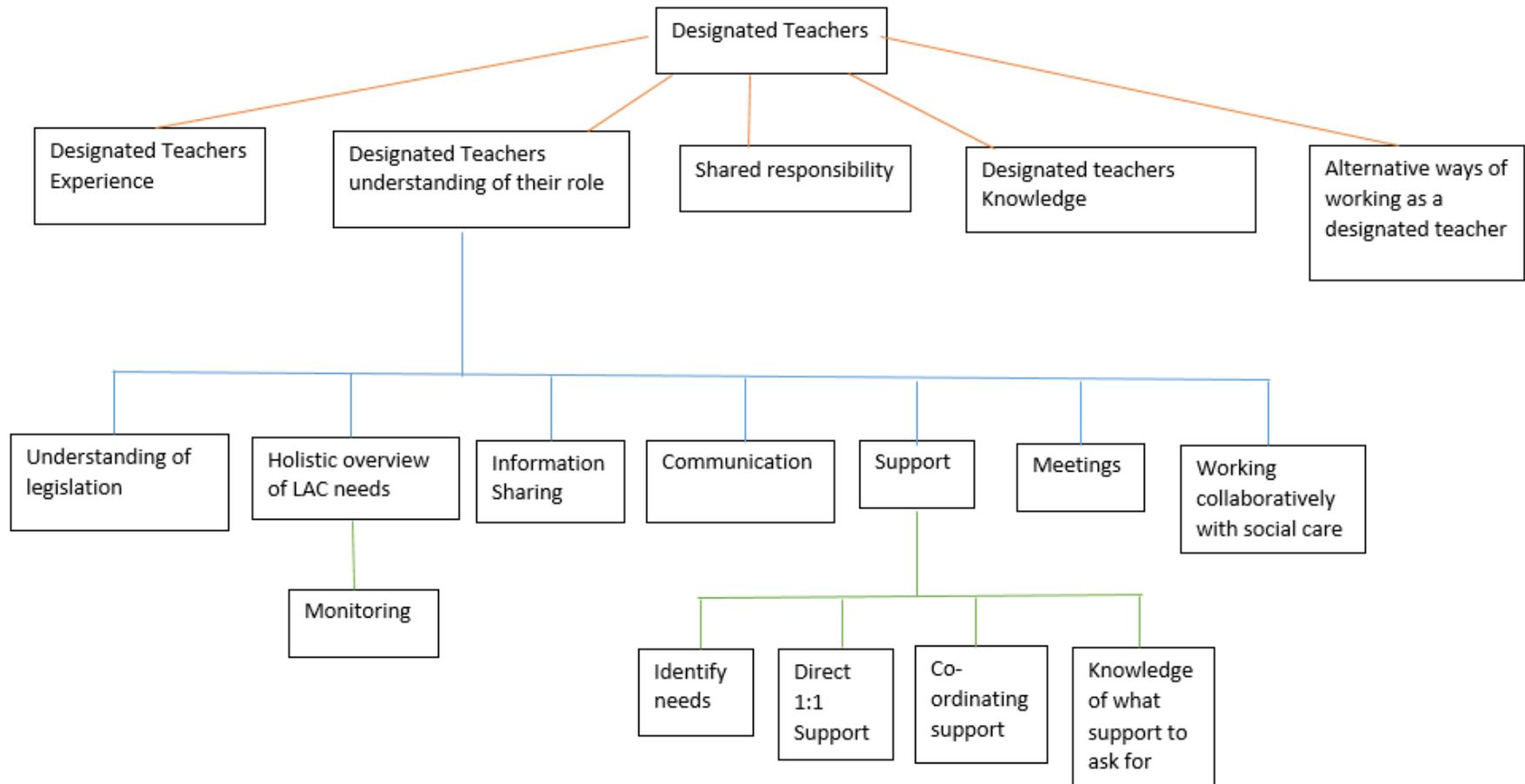
For the attention of the assessor: Please return the completed checklists by e-mail to ethics.applications@uel.ac.uk within 1 week.

Appendix 16

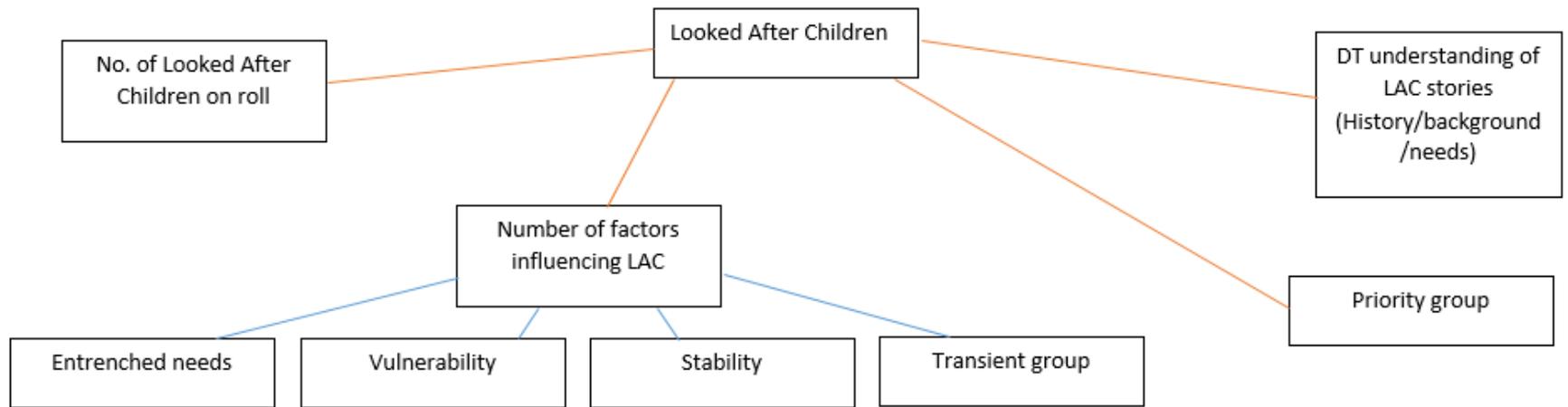
Initial Thematic Map 1 - EP



Initial Thematic Map 2 - DT



Initial Thematic Map 3 - LAC



Initial Thematic Map 4 – Miscellaneous

